INTERVIEW WITH VIETNAM WAR PARTICIPANT

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Oct. 15, 66

NAME CH-30

BACKGROUND Squad Leader, Binh Thuan District, Binh Thuan Province

SOURCE THE SIMULMATICS CORPORATION

Interview Number: CH-30

STUDIES OF THE CHIEU HOI PROGRAM:

INTERVIEWS WITH THE HOI CHANH

by

THE SIMULMATICS CORPORATION

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DATA SHEET

INTERVIEW NO. 30

Home Province:	Binh Thuan
Home District:	Han Thuan
Home Village:	Phu Lam
Home Hamlet:	Hamlet A
Date of Interview:	October 15-16
Place of Interview:	Chieu Hoi Center
Date of Rallying:	October 7, 1966
Place of Rallying:	Binh Thuan District
Subject's Category:	Guerilla
Rank or Position:	Squad leader
Area of Operation:	Binh Thuan District
Period in NFL:	2 years
Age:	24
Marital Status:	Single
Present Occupation:	Chieu Hoi rallier
Previous Occupation:	Laborer
Interview Team:	Knight/Sanh
Tapes:	2

INTERVIEW

SUMMARY

INTERVIEW NO. 30

Twenty-five years old, Mr. Quang* was a VC guerilla squad leader for two years before rallying. He was raised by his older brother's family, his father having died when he was twelve and his mother when he was three. He resented performing the tasks required of him at his brother's. Though the family was poor, Quang considers his childhood as having been happy and enjoyed playing games, especially fighting and shooting. He went to school in the village--Phu Lam--for four years and apparently is able to read and write without difficulty.

In his early 20's Quang took a job cutting wood in the jungle. At work he met some VC propagandists, unbeknownst to his family. Over a period of two months they convinced him that he should join their movement. They came "in a very nice way. They asked me about my family and my life...They had sympathy for all my complaints. They told me that youth like us are strong and can pick up weapons and defend the country. We don't have to stay at home and work as laborers...Better stay with us--it's a national just cause that we're fighting for." He also was attracted by the weapons and "the idea of being able to go anywhere" and by "VC pride and heroism".

Quang spent five months at a jungle school training center in Hoa Duc with two hundred other students, taught by a staff which included two with Northern accents. "We didn't have enough to eat," he says, "and we lived a hard life. Sometimes we were very cold." They were taught how to live in the jungle; political warfare; how to use and maintain weapons; methods of hiding, digging trenches, and making foxholes. In the evenings by kerosene lamps, they learned that they were fighting for a just cause, for the country, and for the poor people. Some of the students (including Quang) were promoted to be squad leaders. The qualifications weren't great: some small degree of education and participation during the training period. The respondent says that there were GVN-placed spies in the training center who reflected messages to airplanes with mirrors.

There was considerable discipline in the VC--more, he thought, than in ARVN where men went AWOL. There were generally justifiable criticism sessions--one of which he describes in detail--for "the good of the people" and to "unite" them. Mr. Quang was not criticized in such a session but reports being criticized for not working hard enough in the fields.

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* Respondent's name is a pseudonym.

He practiced religion "very often" and, though they didn't teach anything about religion, the VC had no objection to religious symbols and ceremonies at the training center.

After two years with the VC (according to the data sheet and summary written in Viet Nam, though interview itself covers only five months) Quang turned himself in to the Chieu Hoi. He'd first heard about the program while in the jungle training center. He secretly read leaflets, heard and understood broadcasts, and knew about another VC who had rallied. They were told that the rallier "was a bad guy" who had surrendered his weapon "against the just cause". When Quang arrived at the Center he found a friend and a relative he had known from the village who had rallied earlier and had given up Quang for dead.

He rallied because he was disappointed in the strength of the VC and in the generally poor conditions. "Before...the VC said that if I went I would have a good time, that I would like it, and that the Party would supply everything I wanted. But when I arrived there, they were short of everything...food to eat...clothes to wear...suffering was great...I felt that if I were to die my family wouldn't know anything about me." So, despite propaganda to the effect that leaflets were a hoax and that the Americans "had been defeated," Quang sneaked off while on a mission and contacted his brother who helped him rally. After the completion of his training course he returned home for five days' rest and then rallied.

Mr. Quang had been at the Chieu Hoi Center for less than a week. He attended political indoctrination classes for three days with a teacher present on only one of those days. The students asked more questions and were freer in expressing themselves than VC students. Otherwise he had little to say about conditions at the Center.

The respondent felt generally that any assistance will encourage VC who already want to rally, while those who are loyal to the Front will not be swayed by leaflets, appeals to the sick, or changes in the treatment of prisoners. His own rallying may thus encourage some to follow, Mr. Quang said, but others, including those who have had relatives killed by the ARVN, would probably look upon him as a traitor to his country.

Mr. Quang would like to be a member of the Armed Propaganda Team or serve with the Government troops. Otherwise, if he returns home he will have to work in the fields and the VC will catch him again.

The interviewer comments that Mr. Quang was alert, expansive, proud of his elite training. "He was especially politically minded." The VC was attractive for its glamor and its weapons and the excitement preferable to leading a dull life of work in the fields.

[illegible] anything [illegible] and not [illegible]

[illegible] only five [illegible] mean [illegible] tly [illegible] another [illegible] guy" [illegible]

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[illegible] the Chieu Hoi [illegible] we [illegible] He attended [illegible] indoctrination class [illegible] with a teacher present [illegible] those days [illegible] students [illegible] more question [illegible] than VC [illegible] [illegible] about [illegible] the [illegible]

These [illegible] generally [illegible] will encourage VC who [illegible] while [illegible] Front will [illegible] changes in the [illegible] to follow [illegible] relatives killed by the [illegible] his country.

[illegible] would like to [illegible] serve with the [illegible] will have to [illegible] catch him [illegible]

The interest [illegible] expansive [illegible] of this [illegible] politically minded. The VC [illegible] and the excites [illegible] in the [illegible]

INTERVIEW

Note: The last half of this interview has been lost.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Hamlet A, of Phu Lam village, Han Thuan District, Binh Thuan Province. I have one younger brother. My parents died a long time ago.

Q. Who raised you?

A. I stayed with my older brother's family.

Q. How old were you when your parents died?

A. My mother died when I was three, my father when I was twelve. I am now 24. We were very poor. My father was a laborer, and when my mother died we were even poorer. We did not have enough food to eat. When my father died I went to live with my older brother. Although I was poor with my brother, life was still better. From '56 to '63, after the French had gone, Vietnamese were establishing their own Government.

Q. Have you always lived in this hamlet?

A. Yes.

Q. Was this hamlet always GVN?

A. Yes.

Q. You were poor as you say, but was your family happy?

A. Yes.

Q. When you played games with other children were you a leader or a follower?

A. A leader.

Q. What kinds of games did you like to play best?

A. I liked fighting and shooting and games.

Q. Did you usually win?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you ever gamble?

A. No.

Q. When did you first leave your parents' home?

A. I went to work for a year as a laborer but then returned home at Tet to be with my family. When I was working that year I always returned to my brother's family's home in the evenings.

Q. When did you leave your home for good?

Q. How did you join the VC?

A. February 1966. I left for good to work as a laborer in a nearby village. I used to cut up wood in the jungle. I met the VC in the jungle and they propagandized me and I was convinced. I followed them.

Q. Tell me about the transition between your GVN life and the time you joined the Viet Cong.

A. I got a job and I was living at home. I got a job cutting wood in the jungle. I would go to the jungle in the daytime and come back in the evening. My boss was not a Viet Cong, but while I was in the jungle cutting wood I made the acquaintance of some Viet Cong propagandists and they convinced me that I should come with them. The time of convincing took about two months. And when I went with them I just took the clothes that I was wearing and nothing else.

Q. Did your parents know that you had fallen under their influence? Did they try to dissuade you?

A. No, they didn't know about it.

Q. What would they have done if they had known about it?

A. I escaped from home. If they had known about this they would have tried to have stopped me.

Q. Did you feel at the time that you went with the VC that it was not only because of them, but that you were ready to leave home? Were you seeking adventure?

A. The first reason was the propaganda and the second was the attraction of the weapons. Also the idea of being able to go anywhere was appealing, and VC pride and heroism.

Q. How much older was your brother than you?

A. Ten years.

Q. Did you like living with his family?

A. Although I loved my brother, I didn't like to stay at home so much; I preferred to have a job and live with my boss.

Q. Was your brother married and did he have children?

A. He's married with three boys.

Q. Did you have to do any odd chores around the house when you stayed with them?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you like to do them?

A. I had to because they were my chores but I didn't like them.

Q. Now I would like to explore the two month period in which you were propagandized by the Viet Cong. Tell me as much as you can about these months. How did the Viet Cong approach you when you were working in the jungle? Did they approach you first as a friend and did they later talk about politics? Did they talk about politics first? Did they help you with your work? Did they sit down with you and talk? Did they bring you something to eat from time to time? Tell me as much as you can about these two months.

A. The first time I met them they came to me in a very nice way. They asked me about my family and my life. How was my living--good or bad? They had sympathy for all of my complaints. They told me that youth like us are strong and can pick up weapons and defend the country. We don't have to stay at home and work as laborers, and so forth. But you can't stay at home very long either because you're of age when the Government will draft you and you'll be killed. Better stay with us--it's a national just cause that we're fighting for, and the Government's cause is not just. Some of the people that talked to me were young. Some were old and some adults. Sometimes they'd be sitting around eating cake. This was in the jungle.

Q. Did the same people come back each time or were there different groups of people that you talked to?

A. Usually it was the same people.

Q. Did these people talk to other men like you or just to you?

A. Only to me.

Q. Were they soldiers or civilians?

A. They had weapons, but it's unclear with the Viet Cong whether they were full time soldiers or farmers.

Q. About how many were in this group of people that came to see you?

A. The number varied.

Q. Did you ever see them again in your career with the Viet Cong?

A. There were about four or five people in this group and when I joined the VC, I also saw them around.

Q. When you finally joined was your friendship sustained or did they give the feeling that since you had joined they didn't have to bother with you any more?

A. When I joined the VC they treated me with discipline.

Q. Was the discipline with any sympathy, enthusiasm or compassion? Was it very strict?

A. I can't say if they were strict or not strict, but for example, if I had to cultivate a certain piece of land I was given a deadline, and if it wasn't finished by that time I was criticized in public.

Q. Were you angry when you were criticized?

A. If the criticism was unfair I was angry; if it was fair I was not.

Q. Do you feel they were more disciplined than the GVN?

A. Much more disciplined. The ARVN soldiers for example can go AWOL.

Q. What happens if you go AWOL in the VC?

A. You will be criticized which makes you ashamed. It's okay to be disciplined, but I prefer the discipline of the GVN to the VC because the VC discipline is very strict.

Q. When you joined the VC, did they make formal documents, a dossier of you?

A. No, nothing like that. They just gave me my weapon.

Q. Was your weapon American, Russian, Chinese, what kind?

A. It was American.

Q. What kind was it?

A. An M-1 rifle.

Q. Do you have any idea where they got the weapon? Did they steal, capture, or buy it?

A. It was captured.

Q. Do you know how it was captured?

A. They attacked a GVN post.

Q. What day did you rally?

A. October 17, 1966.

Q. To where did you rally?

A. Phu Lam Village, which is my home village.

Q. Since you were working in your home village, what did your brothers and your family think about it?

A. I was stationed in my home hamlet, but I was only there three or four times. I was in a training course.

Q. When did you go for the training course?

A. On April 2.

Q. And when was it over?

A. Not until September 24.

Q. About the training course, did all of the new people go? Who were they? Where had they come from?

A. I am not quite sure, but the place was called Hoa Duc. I am uncertain because I was walking in the jungle. There were about 200 students and about three teachers. We didn't have any school buildings. We just squatted on the ground under the trees and had our lessons.

[illegible] your work [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] that [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] lift

[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] you [illegible] any idea why they [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Q. Where did you live?

A. We slept under the trees.

Q. How did you keep the rain out?

A. We had plastic sheets that we put in the trees to shelter ourselves.

Q. Who did the cooking?

A. The rear service girls.

Q. How many?

A. About 7 or 8.

Q. Did they cook well?

A. No, they didn't.

Q. Where did they get their food?

A. I don't know.

Q. By jungle, would that be Le Hong Phong, the large dense jungle controlled by Viet Cong in their province?

A. I don't know if that's the one, but it's called Hoa Duc. It took seven days and seven nights to go there walking through Han Thuan to Hoa Duc. It was to the west.

Q. Did the 200 all come at once?

A. We all came at the same time and we all left at the same time.

Q. Did you have the same course in the same place each time, or with each new group did you move to a different location?

A. We changed every few weeks to a different location.

Q. Why did you move around like that?

A. They moved to avoid operations and discovery by the GVN.

Q. Did you ever hear bombs come nearby, or know of any GVN soldiers nearby?

A. Sometimes. They came nearby, but no one was ever hurt. We had trenches dug so that when the bombing came near, we could protect ourselves.

Q. [illegible]

A. [illegible]

Q. [illegible] in out?

A. We had plans [illegible] that we [illegible] times to evaluate ourselves.

Q. Who did [illegible] thing?

Q. The team [illegible] girl?

Q. How many?

A. About 7 or 8.

Q. Did they [illegible] suit?

A. No. They didn't.

Q. Those did [illegible] out their food?

A. I don't know.

Q. By jungle, would that be Le Long Phong, the large Chinese jungle controlled by Vietcong in their province?

A. I don't know if that's the one, but it's called Lua Sun. It took seven days and seven nights to go there walking through Han Thien to Lua Sun. It was to the west.

Q. And the 20 all came at once?

A. They all came at the same time. We all left at the same time.

Q. Did you have the same course in the same place each time, or with each new group did you move to a different location?

A. We changed every few weeks to a different location.

Q. Why do you have proof like that?

A. They would be proud [illegible] discovery by the CVN.

Q. Did you ever hear [illegible] come nearby, or know of any NVA soldiers nearby?

A. Sometimes. They come nearby, but no one was ever hurt. We had, tremendous [illegible] when the Marine [illegible], we could protect ourselves.

Q. Were the 200 students grouped together in any certain way? Were they about the same age? Were they friendly to one another?

A. They were divided into three groups and one teacher taught each one. They were all about the same age.

Q. What kind of people were the teachers?

A. They were from South Viet Nam, had been trained in the North and sent back.

Q. Did you know many people? Did you have many friends?

A. They came from everywhere, but I only knew a few.

Q. Did any of them have strange accents?

A. Yes, Malayan and Montagnard. I only had a few very close friends.

Q. Where were they from?

A. My friends were from my home town, and they had gone to the training center with me when I went.

Q. Were there any older men in the training center?

A. No.

Q. Were the teachers men or women?

A. They were male. One was short, dark skinned, strong but not fat. I don't know what ethnic group, but he was from the South. He had a Southern accent. The other two teachers had North Vietnamese accents; one had a Central accent.

Q. Did they separate the people from North, South and Central or were they grouped together?

A. No, they were together, mixed up.

Q. How good were the teachers? Did they teach well, were they smart, were they experienced?

A. They were good, smart.

Q. Did the teachers live separately from the men? Did they fraternize in the evenings with the trainees?

A. They lived separately. There was strict discipline.

[illegible]

[illegible]

A. They [illegible] me.
They [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] I only [illegible] a few.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

They were [illegible] dark [illegible]. I don't [illegible] but he was from the [illegible] and a South[illegible] [illegible] two [illegible] but North [illegible]

[illegible] from North, South and [illegible] they [illegible]

No, [illegible] stood up.

[illegible] Dis[illegible] well [illegible] were they [illegible]

[illegible] good, [illegible].

[illegible] did they [illegible] for the [illegible] training

[illegible]

Q. Were there any other staff?

A. Only the three teachers.

Q. When you took the course, did you go on any operations?

A. No.

Q. Being in the jungle, with the mediocre food, as you say, and separated from families and so forth, did morale tend to lower?

A. We didn't think about our families very much. We didn't have enough to eat, and we lived a hard life. Sometimes we were very cold.

Q. Did any men desert from this center?

A. No, because they were in the jungle, and there was no place to escape to. But when I left, I heard that there had been some who had escaped.

Q. Did the accumulation of these negative features cause the morale to go down?

A. Yes, the morale went down.

Q. What did you do in the evening?

A. We had political courses for two hours in the evening from seven to nine.

Q. In the dark?

A. We had a light for each one.

Q. What kind?

A. We had kerosene lamps.

Q. What were you being trained about?

A. The policy of the Communists. We were told that we were fighting for a just cause and for the country and for the poor people. Some were promoted to squad leader. The qualifications were small: a certain degree of education, and men who were active during the course.

Q. What were the different categories of subjects?

A. How to live in the jungle, political warfare, and how to use and maintain weapons. They trained us how to use weapons, how to hide, how to dig trenches, how to make foxholes, and about politics.

[illegible]

A. [illegible] the [illegible] reasonable.

Q. [illegible] you [illegible] course, did you [illegible] [illegible]?

A. Yes.

Q. Being [illegible] young, with [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] from families and [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible]?

A. We didn't think about our [illegible] being [illegible] [illegible] enough to eat, [illegible] in fact [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

Q. Did [illegible] leave [illegible] [illegible]?

A. No, because [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Q. What would a typical day be like in the training center?

A. We got up early in the morning, and folded our hammocks into a rucksack, and then we went to gymnastics. After gymnastics we had a rest and then we took military training.

Q. How long did you have military training?

A. A couple of hours. Then a couple of hours of political training, and then we ate lunch. Then at 2 o'clock we took political training, and two hours of military training. We didn't eat breakfast. We were very hungry. Then we had dinner, and they sent people out to guard. From 7 to 9 we studied politics and then we went to sleep.

Q. Were you encouraged in the classes to raise your hands and ask questions or was it only lecture?

A. We were asked to express our impressions and ask questions.

Q. Was this at the beginning or end of the class?

A. We could do this any time, even during the lecture.

Q. Did the students ask questions often?

A. Yes, they did.

Q. Did they ask when they wanted to know more, or just what /was said?/

A. When things weren't clear.

Q. Do you think they had any GVN spies in the training center?

A. Yes, they had GVN spies there. And they had mirrors and they reflected messages to the airplanes. I knew because they discovered the equipment, the mirrors and so forth. No one knew exactly who they were.

Q. What month did you come to the Chieu Hoi Center?

A. October 10, 1966.

Q. Have you been to the political indoctrination classes here?

A. Yes.

Q. What time did you have these classes?

A. The classes began September 27. Since I was late, I had to copy down everything that had been taught.

Q. Did you copy down notes from other students or did you copy down the pamphlets that the teacher had?

A. I copied notes from other students.

Q. How many hours a day did they study?

A. From eight to eleven in the morning and from two to five-thirty in the afternoon.

Q. Do you recall meeting me last Tuesday when I visited the class? What did they teach in that class?

A. I do remember your visit. They were teaching six rules of behavior.

Q. Did you ask as many questions as they did in the training center at Hoa Duc?

A. More. We ask more here than they did in Hoa Duc. We also express our impressions more here than in Hoa Duc.

3.3 Q. Did you receive any vocational training in the Chieu Hoi Center after you rallied?

A. I haven't heard of any vocational training here.

Q. Would you like to have training? If so, what kind of training would you like to have?

A. I would like to be a member of the Armed Propaganda Team.

3.4 Q. How much education have you had?

A. Four years.

Q. Where?

A. Phu Lam school.

3.2 Q. If you could get some more training or education now, what would you like to learn?

A. I would like to be a mechanic.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

3.5.4 Q. Can you read a newspaper to yourself?

A. Yes.

3.5.5 Q. Do you enjoy it or is it too hard?

A. I enjoy it.

3.6 Q. Did they teach reading and writing in the Chieu Hoi Center?

A. I didn't see any.

Q. Could everyone read and write in the Center?

A. No, not all.

Q. Do you think it would be a good idea to have people here to teach them to read and write?

A. I think it would be a very good idea for the Government to send someone here to teach reading and writing, because a citizen cannot be a good citizen unless he has these skills. There were about eight people here who could not read and write.

Q. In your experience, did the VC teach literacy?

A. In some places the VC have centers where they will teach you. And they also teach some arithmetic.

Q. Have you seen or heard of any of these classes?

A. I saw a class, but I didn't attend because I was too advanced. In this school they cut trees to make chairs, they didn't have a class room; they made their own tables and met under a tree. The people had to buy their own books.

Q. Where was this?

A. Suoi Chinh, in Han Thuan District.

Q. Who were the people they taught? What were their ages?

A. Anybody who wanted to go was able to learn.

Q. Did they teach all day or only in the mornings?

A. Every day about 3 hours.

[illegible] Can you [illegible]

[illegible] Yes.

[illegible] enjoy it [illegible]

[illegible] enjoy it.

[illegible] they been [illegible] in obtain [illegible]

[illegible] didn't see any.

[illegible] Could [illegible] the Center.

[illegible] Yes, [illegible]

[illegible] Do you think [illegible] to have [illegible] use to see [illegible]

[illegible] I think [illegible] year [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] education [illegible] [illegible] education [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] Is your [illegible] in [illegible] through [illegible]

[illegible] In some place [illegible] have [illegible] where they will [illegible] and they [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] Have you [illegible] of [illegible]

I [illegible] because I [illegible] in [illegible] own [illegible] decision, they [illegible] a class [illegible] they [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] Just Chinese, [illegible] Thank [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to I [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] meaning

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

5.7.9 Q. Have people discriminated against you because you are a Hoi Chanh?

A. No.

3.7.9 Q. Was the teaching slanted toward politics?

A. They only taught them to read and write. They didn't slant towards politics.

3.7.5 Q. What was the size of the class?

A. There were about twenty in the class.

3.8 Q. Some illiterate people say they are too old to try to start learning how to read and write. If a man has not learned to read and write when he was a boy up to what age does it make sense for him to try and learn?

A. I never went to class; I just saw it from afar. About 40 or 50 years old.

3.9 Q. Some people also say that they are too old to learn a new job. If a man were offered the chance to take a vocational training course, up to what age does it make sense for him to take such a course?

A. I think at any age, but past about 50 it's too hard to make people want to learn.

4.1 Q. Tell me how you first heard about the Chieu Hoi Program.

A. I first learned about it through the leaflets, which said: "You have been led astray from your country and you have left your family, and your lovely country and it is now time for you to come back and the Government will give you clemency. The Government will help your living and your family and will help you to stay with your family when you leave the Chieu Hoi Center. It will give you money and help you find a job when you leave the Center, and you will have a happy life."

Q. What leaflets did you see in the VC?

A. I saw many of number 10 and also number 4 and 3.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

4.2 Q. Did anyone rally from your unit before you did?

A. They said one man left, that he was a bad guy, and that he had surrendered his weapon against the just cause of the Government.

Q. Did leaflets ever drop into the training center?

A. Yes, everywhere. Many times.

Q. What did they do with the leaflets?

A. If there was no population we just left them. We often secretly read them.

Q. Did the VC ever talk about them to one another?

A. Maybe among one or two, but only very close friends.

Q. Did the teachers ever mention or talk about the leaflets?

A. Yes. The teachers did mention the leaflets. They said that the Americans had been defeated in Viet Nam and that they were trying to restrengthen their forces. They were losing, so they sent leaflets, which were in effect a kind of hoax upon the people. It was just a play.

Q. When you graduated from the center, was there a celebration?

A. No, they just announced it was the end of the course.

Q. When you left, where did you go, what did you do as a Viet Cong guerilla?

A. On graduation three others and I headed toward Han Thuan, and the three were left at their home villages. One fellow was taken by the guard to his own hamlet. This was the 21st and 22nd of September. I rested at home five days, and then I rallied.

Q. What would your job have been in the hamlet had you stayed with the VC?

A. I would have been a guerilla squad leader. I would have received instructions from my superiors about what I should have done.

Q. Did you ever meet the members of your squad?

A. No, they were as yet untrained.

Q. [illegible] Did anyone really [illegible] helping you [illegible]?

A. [illegible] asking [illegible], that [illegible] and that [illegible] the [illegible] of the [illegible].

Q. [illegible] Hamlet [illegible] Hamlet [illegible]?

A. I [illegible] everywhere.

Q. [illegible]

A. [illegible] the population [illegible] left them. We often secretly [illegible] them.

Q. Did the Vietnamese [illegible] have to [illegible] anything?

A. Maybe among [illegible], but [illegible] we [illegible] [illegible].

Q. And the Americans ever mention or talk about the future?

A. Yes. The Americans did mention the long [illegible]. They said that [illegible] were born defeating the Vietnamese. They were trying to restore their forces. They were leading [illegible] flights, which were to collect a kind of [illegible] people. It was [illegible] only.

Q. When you [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible], was there a [illegible]?

A. No, they just announced it was the end of the [illegible].

Q. Later you [illegible] where did you go, what did you do as a Viet Cong [illegible]?

A. On the [illegible] Tree [illegible] and I [illegible] town of Ben Thuan, and the [illegible] left at their home [illegible]. The fellow was [illegible] to his own [illegible]. This was the Viet and find of [illegible]. I [illegible] to home like [illegible], and then I [illegible].

Q. What would your job have been in the hamlet and you stayed with the VC?

A. I would have been a guerilla again [illegible]. I would have received [illegible] by [illegible] about what I should have done.

Q. Did you ever meet the workers in your school?

A. No, they were [illegible] [illegible].

Q. Were any of them people you had known in your own hamlet?

A. Yes, they were my friends from before.

Q. Did you see your family at this time?

A. No. I hadn't seen them since I followed the VC.

Q. Did you meet your superior?

A. Yes I did.

Q. What kind of man was he?

A. He was a captain at the village level.

Q. What did this man tell you your job would be?

A. He didn't say. I met him just to get acquainted.

Q. Did you know who was the superior in the military VC?

A. No, I didn't.

Q. What do you think your squad thought when you rallied?

A. Some of them will rally soon, but some of them have very deep Communist ideas, so they feel that I am guilty before my country and people and that there is a blood debt to the people, that I am the bad guy.

Q. Of those who have such deep convictions, how did they get their deep convictions, since we said before that they had not had any official political training?

A. Some had in fact been to the training center before I came back. Others were sons where the whole family were Viet Cong and some of whose members had been killed by GVN, so their Viet Cong roots went very deep.

4.3.1 Q. Could you understand what was said on the air broadcasts?

A. Yes.

4.3.2 Q. What did they say?

A. You people have stayed in the VC ranks. Hurry and go back to the Government side and the true national cause will give you

[illegible] and known in your [illegible]

Yes, they were [illegible]

Did you ever [illegible]

No. I haven't [illegible] fellows.

Did you get [illegible] training?

[illegible]

Did [illegible]

[illegible] medal.

[illegible]

[illegible] not so [illegible].

Do [illegible] the military VC.

[illegible]

[illegible] called

[illegible] Dunwoody, [illegible] they [illegible] I am [illegible] country and people, and the there is a [illegible] to [illegible] that [illegible] for [illegible].

Q. Of those who have been [illegible] deep [illegible] officers [illegible] [illegible]?

[illegible] back been to the [illegible] I came [illegible] Orkney [illegible] where [illegible] family were [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] had been [illegible] by [illegible] Vice [illegible] [illegible].

. Could [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]?

. Yes.

Then [illegible] away?

Your people have stayed in the [illegible]s. Murry and [illegible] the Government [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] cases will give [illegible]

clemency and help you to have a warm life. And lastly, now you are suffering and death is coming eventually. You will have more and more suffering and hardships.

Q. Now that you have rallied, do you think the leaflets were truthful in every respect?

A. Yes.

4.4.7 Q. If the VC were to hear a broadcast from a former cadre about the benefits of the Chieu Hoi Program, would they believe him?

A. Some would and some wouldn't. Some would say you will be cheated; it's a deceiving method.

4.4.9 Q. On the basis of your own experience and what you know, what would you tell those who want to rally about how to do it? What is the best and safest way to rally?

A. The VC ranks must be appealed to because of the suffering and hardship. I would tell them it is better for them to turn to the just national cause. If they have a family, they can bring all of them out and the Government will help them in daily living in the promise of future, and they will have a job and can make their own living. I feel if you intend to rally it's easy and safe. You must choose a certain time, however, a safe time. Rallying is not difficult.

4.4.24.1 Q. What about prisoners captured in battle who say they want to rally? Should they be trusted and treated the same way as Chieu Hoi?

A. No, because they are in such a situation that they want to be safe and so they would only rally for this reason. They would not have made up their minds against the Viet Cong.

4.4.25 Q. Would it be safer and easier to rally if the Government would let you come out in a battle pretending to be a prisoner?

A. No.

4.4.26.1 Q. Do you know that the VC often leave their dead behind on the battlefield?

A. Yes.

Q. Is this really true?

A. Yes, because they can't pick them up.

Q. What effect do you think it might have to make up a leaflet with photographs of the bodies left behind?

A. I think it would be effective.

Q. Do men worry about being left behind or being buried in an unmarked grave?

A. Yes, they do.

Q. Why?

A. They are afraid that they will be left behind, and that would hurt their propaganda because their propaganda says they take care of everybody at death.

Q. If the VC knew the sick were offered adequate medical care, would the sick rally?

A. Yes.

4.4.27 Q. If you were asked to write a leaflet which would be dropped on the VC, what would you write? What do you think would be most effective in causing other men to rally?

A. I would tell them that the VC would be defeated soon, and because they are suffering and they have a hard life and are near starvation they should rally. If you do not rally, I would say you will be killed in the front, and be buried in an unmarked grave, and when you die, your family will not know where your body is, and you will not have any connection with your family, and your family will be very sorry and will mourn for you. I would say the VC is not a just cause, because they do not know what they are fighting for. If you come back to the Government, the Government will not punish you, but will help you to work your way back into Vietnamese life. If we did this, some we could trust and some we couldn't trust. Life in the front is pretty tough and maybe if we said these things in a lot of instances there would be people who would come over.

4.4.28 Q. Would many VC surrender in battle if the Government did that?

A. Maybe.

4.4.29 Q. Would they generally keep their promise or would they go back to the VC?

A. It's very difficult to understand another's intentions.

4.4.14 & 4.4.16 Q. Now, would you tell me which of these leaflets is the best? Which one do you think would cause the greatest number of men to rally? Which one is the worst? Why do you think this is the worst? What is wrong with it?

A. The better leaflets are number 1, number 3, 12, 6, 9, and 4. Number 3 is good, not as good as the others, but also good, because it shows you their weapons, and they can see the pictures and know how much money they will get.

4.4.18 Q. On leaflet number 1, do you agree that the VC are "lackeys of the Chinese Communists"? How do you think men who have not rallied would react to that statement?

A. If you want to rally, the appeal by calling the VC lackeys of the Chinese is a good appeal. If you don't want to rally, the VC will just say that it is propaganda, and that if is not true.

Q. What is wrong with the ones you felt were not good?

A. On number 5, I feel that the pictures are good, but the message is too short. It doesn't cover anything. And number 10 is good because it serves to introduce the rallier to the Allied forces, and the colors are attractive, but the message on the reverse side doesn't have any appeal. I feel number 8 is good. The Viet Cong do not have very much compassion for people, but the people like compassion and if the leaflet shows compassion, they will like it. Leaflet 2, however, doesn't show compassion. And besides, the middle picture on the front isn't good, because it shows Viet Cong as ugly. They wouldn't believe this because when the VC are killed, they are either carried away or they die in the field.

Q. Did you see any leaflets in Hoa Duc at the training center?

A. No.

Q. What radio stations did you listen to in your home village?

A. Saigon stations.

4.10 Q. Were you ever criticized at the self-criticism sessions?

A. No.

4.10.1 Q. Were you free to criticize the political officers?

A. Yes.

4.10.2 Q. Did your political officers criticize themselves in front of you?

A. Yes.

Q. Was this in the training center or back in the village?

A. Both.

Q. For what kinds of things were people criticized?

A. They were criticized for bad behavior and not following discipline and for not doing their jobs.

Q. The people who were criticized, were they criticized justly or unjustly?

A. Justly, I think.

Q. How often did you have these sessions?

A. Sometimes once every one and a half months, sometimes once every two months.

Q. Were you ever afraid of being criticized?

A. No.

4.10.7 Q. How did you feel about them?

A. The point of the self-criticism sessions are for the good of the person and to unite the people.

Q. Do you think it would be a good idea for the GVN to have self-criticism sessions?

A. Yes, it would be very good if the Government had this. It would help understanding.

Q. Did you ever go to a self-criticism session?

A. Yes.

Q. Could you briefly describe what a self-criticism session is like? Who was in charge? How were the people called up?

A. I took part only once. For example, the chief of the unit gathers the people around and announces, "Today is self-

criticism session day. Does anybody have any problems or anything to say? Let us discuss these things." Then if anyone knows someone who has done something wrong, he will declare it to the people. For example, perhaps a certain person was talking loud or was ill-mannered with girls or telling someone else to do something wrong. They discuss these things and try not to do them again. That's all.

4.14 Q. Did you have any close friends in the VC?

A. No, I didn't.

4.15 Q. How was your health when you were in the VC? Were you ever sick or wounded? How was your health when you rallied?

A. I was just tired, that's all.

4.16 Q. How were you treated by your superiors in the VC?

A. If you are good, they treat you well. If you are undisciplined, they punish you.

4.17 Q. What was the worst thing about being in the VC?

A. In military activities, they didn't have enough strength against the enemy and they had to go on operations with very few people. Nonetheless they made people go even if they were tired or even if they were sick or didn't have enough money or enough food to eat. They still had to go on the operation.

Q. Did you have to go on operations?

A. No.

4.20.1 Q. Have you heard about any cases of hu hoa in your unit?

A. No. I don't know what hu hoa is.

4.23 Q. Were you afraid of the VC before you joined them?

A. No, I wasn't.

5.5 Q. Were any of your relatives politically minded?

A. Yes.

Q. Will they be happy to see you or will they not be happy since you are a Hoi Chanh?

A. My father and relatives will be happy regardless.

Q. Is any relative in the VC?

A. No.

5.19 Q. Did you ever practice any religion?

A. Yes, often.

Q. What did the Viet Cong teach about religion? Or did they teach anything about religion?

A. They didn't talk at all about religion.

Q. Did they object, when you were in the training center, to your putting up say, a small statue of the Buddha and a couple of candles, something of this sort?

A. They didn't object.

Q. Did any people have such a statue of Buddha or candles or something of that sort by their bed?

A. No. Even if someone died, they didn't have the joss sticks that are placed on the altar.

5.3.8 Q. What would you say were the main reasons you rallied?

A. Before I went to the training center, the VC said that if I went I would have a good time, that I would like it and that the Party would supply everything I wanted. But when I arrived there, they were short of everything. They didn't have enough food to eat, didn't have enough clothes to wear and suffering was great. The jungle weather was cold and I suffered hardships. Lastly, I felt that if I were to die my family wouldn't know anything about me.

Q. When did you decide to rally?

A. At the training center.

Q. How long between your decision to rally and the time you rallied?

A. About a month.

Q. [illegible] may not be happy since you are a Hot Object?

A. [illegible] relaxed [illegible] cooperation.

Q. [illegible] in the [illegible]

Q. [illegible]

5.10 Q. Did you ever practice [illegible] rally?

A. Yes, often.

Q. [illegible] that the VC [illegible] long tours [illegible] tiplo[illegible] [illegible] than been [illegible] [illegible]

Q. [illegible] tal [illegible] all [illegible]

A. [illegible] foot, when you [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Rud[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Q. [illegible]

A. [illegible] such a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] their [illegible]

Q. [illegible] died, they didn't have the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

5.3.8 [illegible] what were the main reasons you rallied?

A. [illegible] [illegible] training [illegible], the VC [illegible] [illegible] if I [illegible] [illegible] good time, that I would like it and that [illegible] Army would supply everything I wanted. [illegible] when I [illegible] there, they were short of everything. They didn't have [illegible] enough food to eat, didn't have enough [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible]. The jungle weather was cold and I suffered [illegible]. Lastly, I felt that if I were [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] anything about me.

Q. [illegible] you looking to rally?

A. [illegible] the training [illegible].

Q. [illegible] long between [illegible] rally and the time you rally?

A. About a month.

5.4.1 Q. How did you go about doing it?

A. There was an occasion when I went on a mission. I had two pairs of clothes--the best one I wore and the other I left. I had an old hammock, but I didn't take that. I took the rifle with me and went on the mission with the VC. I acted as the guard.

Q. Guard of what?

A. As the guard outside of the area where the operation was taking place. This was a hamlet. And when they went into the hamlet, I went in the opposite direction to hide in the bushes at Phu Lam village. I hid in the bushes near my family's home. I hid there until morning. And I didn't eat for a day and a night. When the day broke, I went to my relative's house and told them I had to go to my brother's house saying that I wanted to rally. My brother went to the Han Thuan District Chieu Hoi Office, and told the District Chief and the District Chief sent someone for me.

Q. The District Chief went himself?

A. A policeman from the District Chief went to the house of my relative where I was hiding. I didn't know what operation was to be in the hamlet.

Q. Who was head of the operation?

A. The head of the operation was a platoon leader.

Q. What was your rank when you went on this operation?

A. I didn't know what my rank was exactly, but I was in charge of the platoon.

Q. How many men went on this operation?

A. Only five. The head of the operation was a platoon leader. I don't know who this man was. I was merely one of five who went with his platoon leader on an operation to a hamlet. I didn't know what the mission was.

Q. Did you rally with a weapon?

A. No, I didn't because I was a political cadre. When I went on the operation I had a weapon. And one other fellow had a weapon, and two fellows didn't have a weapon.

Q. Did the head of these five not have a weapon?

A. Yes, he did. I hid my weapon.

[illegible]

Q. How did you go about doing it?

A. [illegible] an occasion when I was at a friend's wedding. I had [illegible] or cloth [illegible] and was around the [illegible] I had [illegible] old [illegible] I took [illegible] and [illegible] the W. I [illegible]

Q. [illegible]

A. [illegible] place. [illegible] I work [illegible] Lancashire [illegible] Then the [illegible] I had to [illegible] by a [illegible] told them [illegible] [illegible]

Q. [illegible]

A. [illegible] relative [illegible] I was [illegible] to be [illegible]

Q. [illegible]

A. The [illegible] platform [illegible]

Q. What [illegible] on that?

A. I didn't [illegible] of the [illegible]

Q. [illegible]

A. Only [illegible] I don't [illegible] one of [illegible] [illegible] a [illegible]

Q. [illegible]

A. No, I didn't [illegible] ritical [illegible] the one [illegible] and [illegible] a [illegible]

Q. [illegible] and have a [illegible]

A. Yes, he did.

Q. What sort of uniform did you wear?

A. I only had a light green hat which looks somewhat like a cowboy hat. It's made in Han Thuan District. It was a hat which could be worn by a VC or a GVN.

Q. How can the Government get more ralliers to its side?

A. The first thing is to educate the people to make them understand the policy and the idea of the Government of Viet Nam. We should check out the families who have children who have gone with the VC, and make them realize that if their children come back from the VC they will be well treated. And we should also enlarge the dropping of leaflets in VC areas to give them the opportunity of knowing the Chieu Hoi Program.

Q. How long did it take you to get from Han Thuan where you met the police to here?

A. One day and one night.

Q. Where did you stay the night?

A. I spent the night in the district headquarters.

5.5.0 Q. Were you beaten at any time?

A. No.

Q. Do you think any of the people in the center are fakes, i.e. not really ralliers?

A. I think any people who come to this Chieu Hoi Center have a true intention to rally.

Q. Did any VC come just to rest?

A. I've been here such a short time I can't guess.

Q. You were in the training center which you said had spies. Do you think here at the Chieu Hoi Center there are Viet Cong spies?

A. No.

5.5.7 Q. When you were in the Chieu Hoi Center what did the men talk about most of the time?

A. They talked about the war and about the Chinese who try to pursue aggression against Viet Nam, but they don't realize until they rally the truth of these things.

5.5.8 Q. Did you exchange experiences in the VC in the Chieu Hoi Center?

A. No, no. I haven't heard of any doing that.

5.6.1 Q. Who chose the squad leaders and chief representative of the Hoi Chanh, the Center Director or the Quy Chanh themselves?

A. The ralliers.

5.6.2 Q. Did the squad leaders and representatives of the Quy Chanh have any real power in running things, or did they just do what the cadre told them?

A. They would do what the Chieu Hoi cadre instructed them to do.

Q. Do you have any close friends in the Center?

A. Yes, one. I have one friend I have known since I was a little boy. He came from a different village, but we were schoolmates.

Q. Was your friend in the training center with you?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he rally at the same time as you?

(Correction: He has one close friend and one relative here in the center. Both were in the training center with him.)

Q. Did they rally at the same time you rallied?

A. They rallied before me.

Q. Did they ever talk to you in the training center about rallying?

A. No, but they were so glad to see me when I came to the Chieu Hoi Center. They thought I had died in the VC. I did not know them in the training center.

Q. Were they at the training center before you were there?

A. Yes, and they both rallied before I did, but we didn't see each other at the training center.

Q. You say that they rallied before you did. Did you know immediately when they rallied?

A. I knew because I heard people talking.

Q. Were people happy or sad because they had rallied?

A. Everyone was expected to criticize them.

Q. Did you learn that they had rallied when you were in Hoa Duc?

A. When I came back, after the training center, I knew they had rallied, and I already had the idea of rallying myself.

Q. Did your learning that your friends had rallied give you more courage to rally?

A. Yes, it influenced me. It gave me more courage.

5.6.4 Q. What was the political indoctrination like in the Chieu Hoi Center? How was it taught?

A. We copied from the blackboard. We had for example: Are the Americans the aggressors in Viet Nam, or the Chinese? And we gave the answers. Another example: Between North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese, who are the people that betray their country? The VC divided the land for the poor people, but what was their main object in doing this?

5.6.4.1 Q. Can you tell me what else they told you in that course?

A. We learned that the Viet Cong is not a legitimate government since they're not selected by the people. And they call themselves the Liberation Front and they want to liberate the South Vietnamese, but they come and force the rich people and rob the peoples' land to divide to the poor people, but they exploit the peoples' labor. The people do not understand this, because they divide the land for the people, but the people also have to pay very high taxes to the VC. On that appeal they want the farmer to work for them, for example, to carry ammunition for them, and work for them freely. Because they have given him land, they say he must help them in return. It is such a small return. That is the conspiracy of the Viet Cong. They exploit the farmer and the poor people, but the poor people don't understand this.

Q. When the teacher writes on the board, from what does he write? Does he write from a pamphlet, his own experience, or what?

A. From a document and from memory.

Q. When you were in the Chieu Hoi Center what was the daily schedule?

A. We got up at six and we cleaned around the Center; from eight until eleven we had the political course. In the afternoon, from two-thirty to five, we also had class.

5.6.4.2 Q. You had political indoctrination courses both when you were in the VC and in the Chieu Hoi Center. Leaving the contents aside, which did a better job in methods of teaching? Why?

A. The method is better in the Chieu Hoi Center because if there is anything we don't understand the instructor will explain it carefully.

Q. Who was your teacher?

A. I don't know how to describe this man. He's just a teacher.

5.6.4.4.1 Q. Did you ever sit in a classroom without a teacher?

A. We've had the course now for three days, but we've only seen the instructor one time.

Q. Do you have to sit in the classroom for the whole time even if the teacher doesn't come?

A. Yes, if there is no teacher, we will practice the old lessons. The instructor here has explained the reason why he couldn't come to class. Because the Chieu Hoi Chief had to go to a convention and so this man had to take his place, so he didn't have time to teach us.

5.6.4.6 Q. What did they do to keep you from falling asleep during the classes?

A. Many of us fall asleep, but then they have entertainment--singing.

5.6.4.8 Q. How often did the teachers ask questions of the Hoi Chanh in class?

A. Very often.

5.6.4.9 Q. Could you understand the lectures?

A. Yes.

[illegible] Are you in the Cancer Center what was the daily activities?

A. [illegible] to get an [illegible] and [illegible] the Center from [illegible] until [illegible] the [illegible] cancer. In the afternoon, [illegible] or five [illegible] was not alive.

5.6.1.2. Q. You [illegible] when you were in the [illegible] Center, [illegible] the continuum value, [illegible] Dr?

A. The [illegible] in [illegible] Hell [illegible] when if there is anything [illegible] the [illegible] will exist in it [illegible].

Q. [illegible]

A. [illegible]

Q. I don't [illegible] Dr. [illegible] the just [illegible] Dr.

5.6.1.3. Q. Why [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

A. [illegible] the [illegible] Dr. [illegible] but [illegible] only [illegible] the [illegible]

Q. Do you have to fill in the [illegible] in the [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] Center's [illegible]

A. Yes. If there is no [illegible], we will [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] explained the reason [illegible] [illegible] come in [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] Chief [illegible] [illegible] connection [illegible] [illegible] have time to [illegible].

5.6.1.4. Q. What did [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the disease?

A. Many of us felt [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

5.6.1.5. Q. How often did the [illegible] [illegible] in the Chemo in [illegible]?

A. Very [illegible].

5.6.1.6. Q. Could you [illegible] [illegible]?

A. Yes.

5.6.5.0 Q. Were there radios or newspapers in the Center?

A. Yes, we had both.

5.6.5.01 Q. How was the work schedule? Were there any self-help projects? Contract money-earning projects?

A. No.

5.6.5.1 Q. What suggestions do you have to improve the program?

A. Since I just came here I haven't had enough time to consider such things.

Q. How long have you been here?

A. Since the 10th of October. (Interviewer's note: This is the 14th of October.)

5.6.6 Q. How was the food in the Center?

A. Each of us receives 24 piasters a day. Women ralliers do the cooking. We pay them to do the cooking for us. The food is good enough. I suggest if there are any VC who have families in secure areas, we should let them visit their homes and encourage them to get their sons to rally.

Q. Do you get your 24 piasters every day?

A. No.

Q. But when?

A. We get it in the evening every two days.

5.6.8.1 Q. How much were you paid when you came in ?

A. Two pairs of black pajamas, no pocket money. I'm wearing a pair of the black pajamas now. I brought an M-1 rifle and the District Chief gave me 1200 piasters. No pocket money.

Q. Do you have any fear of Viet Cong threats against you when you leave?

A. I'm afraid I will never return to my family. I am very afraid. I would like to find a job or take part in the Government troops. If I go home, I will have to work in the fields and the VC will catch me again.

Q. Are there many VC in your home village or hamlet that might try to catch you and hurt you?

A. There are a few. But I know who they are.

INTERVIEWER'S COMMENTS

The respondent was very alert and often expansive in his answers.

He was proud of the elite training he received in the VC and enjoyed talking about it.

He was not especially politically minded. He was attracted to the VC by the glamour of weaponry and the adventure of leaving a rather dull life of work in the fields.

He was cooperative and frank.

The interview was conducted in the Chieu Hoi Center in private, comfortable quarters.