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for the period July-December 1959 are shown in an attachment. The accuracy and value of the casualty statistics is, however, open to serious question. Comparison of ARVN data with that obtained from the NPSS and the SDC shows frequent discrepancies in casualty figures.

The post-election intensification of VC attacks began with the completely successful engagement of two ARVN companies on September 26. The poor performance of ARVN during this operation exposed a number of weaknesses which have been commented upon by many CAS and MAAG sources in the Vietnamese Government. MAAG's evaluation of the factors contributing to ARVN's failure include security leaks, inadequate planning, lack of aggressive leadership, failure to communicate information to other participating units and the failure of supporting units to press forward to engage the VC (they were close enough to hear the sound of gunfire at the time). Another factor of importance illustrated in this ambush was the confidence of the VC in their ability to successfully conduct such operations. This self assurance and aggressiveness appear to be characteristic of many actions taken by the VC since September and have probably contributed to the low state of morale reported in GVN security units by CAS sources.

Earlier in 1959 ARVN units were ordered to conduct operations in Phuoc Thanh Province (VC Resistance Zone "D"). From March 8-19 1959 elements of the 7th Division and a paratroop group conducted an indecisive operation against the VC in this area, mainly because of difficulty in locating the VC. Toward the end of March the elements of the 7th Division were replaced by 3 battalions of the Airborne Group, 2 infantry regiments and other miscellaneous units, to seal off and block in the area. The Vietnamese Air Force employed 5 and later 6 F8F fighter planes to conduct air strikes. These strikes employed rockets, bombs and strafing, but the only known result was the destruction of a number of VC buildings and huts. As the rainy season approached the emphasis was switched from operations to providing security for road construction and other civil works teams. Some patrolling in search of VC was continued throughout the rainy season, but contacts with the VC were minor and infrequent. By September, Engineer construction troops had reportedly been set to work doing road work, clearing the forests, planting trees and building houses. The 5th Division was the principal unit engaged in the operation and was still in Phuoc Thanh as of late November, searching for VC. The bulk of the VC had apparently moved on to continue their operations elsewhere.

Major incidents in October were the following: According to a CAS report an ARVN section (which normally consists of about 45 men) immediately surrendered when attacked by a VC group on October 10 in Kien Phong Province. ARVN, however, denies the occurrence of this incident. On October 30 a

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