

I WISH TO TALK ABOUT PNGVR AND CO-OPERATION WITH CIVILIANS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS IN PNG.

I PARADED WITH PNGVR IN MADANG, RABAU, LAE AND GOROKA BUT THE MAJORITY OF MY TIME WAS WITH PNGVR AT MADANG AND GOROKA.

IN MADANG WE HAD A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE POLICE AND THE "OLD AND BOLD" OF THE RSL, AND ACTUALLY HAD A WEEKED BIVOUAC WHERE THE "OLD AND BOLD" PARTICIPATED. ON MANY OCCASIONS MEMBERS OF THE POLICE ACCOMPANIED US ON BIVOUACS AND WE OFTEN HAD "VOLUNTEERS" FROM THE CALABOOSE CARRY OUT MANUAL DUTIES AROUND OUR BIVOUAC SITE.

I WAS PLATOON COMMANDER OF 7 PL C COY, GOROKA, IN LATE 1966. AT THE TIME VIETNAM TACTICS WERE UPPERMOST IN OUR MINDS AND I ORGANISED A WEEKEND BIVOUAC ALONG THE LINES OF "CORDON AND SEARCH" USING THE ASSISTANCE OF VILLAGERS CADETS, POLICE AND CALABOOSE.

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE EXERCISE I VISITED A LOCAL VILLAGE WHERE I WAS WELL KNOWN THROUGH WORK, ACCOMPANIED BY BARRY WRIGHT, WHO WAS TO BE THE LEADER OF THE ENEMY PARTY, A POLICE SERGEANT, AND A CALABOOSE SERGEANT.

WE EXPLAINED TO THE VILLAGE WHAT WE WERE GOING TO DO AND MADE NO SECRET OF THE FACT THAT THERE WOULD BE PREPARATION CARRIED OUT WHICH WOULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON THEM, PLUS THE FACT THAT, DURING THE EXERCISE, THERE WOULD BE THE USE OF WEAPONS AND SIMULATED VIOLENCE. IT WAS STRESSED THOUGH, THAT ANY DAMAGE CAUSED BEFORE OR DURING THE EXERCISE WOULD BE MADE GOOD IN THE FOLLOWING DAYS BY CALABOOSE LABOUR.

HAVING SECURED THE VILLAGERS' AGREEMENT TO THE EXERCISE I LEFT BARRY WRIGHT AND THE CALABOOSE SERGEANT TO EXPLAIN WHAT THEIR PREPARATIONS ENTAILED. DURING THE WEEKS LEADING UP TO THE EXERCISE THE CALABOOSE "VOLUNTEERS" WORKED IN THE VILLAGE MAKING THE VARIOUS PREPARATIONS AS REQUIRED BY BARRY.

THE EXERCISE PLANNED ON USING THE CADETS TO FORM A CORDON OF THE VILLAGE, THE CALABOOSE TO ERECT A SMALL HOLDING ENCLOSURE AND MAN

IT DURING THE EXERCISE, AND THE POLICE TO ACCOMPANY THE PNGVR IN SEARCHING AND QUESTIONING THE VILLAGE INHABITANTS.

ON THE SATURDAY OF THE EXERCISE THE PNGVR, CADETS, POLICE AND CALABOOSE PARTICIPATING WERE THOROUGHLY BRIEFED ON THEIR ROLES AND AN EARLY EVENING WAS HAD BY ALL.

WE WERE ALL UP AT 2AM. THE VILLAGE WAS SURROUNDED AND AT FIRST LIGHT A LOUD HAILER WAS USED TO ADVISE THE VILLAGERS, BOTH IN PIDGIN AND PLACE TALK, OF WHAT WAS GOING TO OCCUR.

THE EXERCISE WENT OFF EXTREMELY WELL. THERE WERE HIDDEN WEAPONS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE VILLAGE, SOME VILLAGERS, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, PLAYED THE PART OF SYMPATHETIC ENEMY, A TUNNEL HAD BEEN BUILT FROM AN OLD HOUSE TO AN OUTLET BY THE ADJACENT RIVER, AND THERE WERE INCIDENTS OF ENEMY BEING LOCATED AND ENDEAVOURING TO BREAK THEIR WAY OUT BY FIRING WEAPONS ETC.

EVERYONE HAD AN EXCITING TIME DURING THE EXERCISE, PARTICULARLY WHEN VILLAGERS TURNED OUT TO BE ENEMY SYMPATHISERS AND TRIED TO BREAK THE CORDON ETC.

AS A RESULT OF THE EXERCISE SOME DAMAGE DID, IN FACT OCCUR, BUT, AS PROMISED, THE CALABOOSE SPENT ALL THE TIME NEEDED TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE TO THE SATISFACTION OF ALL CONCERNED. THE TUNNEL WAS ALSO FILLED IN, NO SMALL OPERATION AS THE DIRT INVOLVED IN BUILDING IT HAD BEEN CARRIED AWAY FROM THE VILLAGE AND HAD TO BE RETURNED. I MIGHT ADD THAT THE VILLAGE CHILDREN WERE VERY DISAPPOINTED AT THIS AS THEY HAD HOPED IT WOULD BE LEFT FOR THEM TO PLAY IN BUT THAT OPTION WAS TOO DANGEROUS.

I SPENT 23 YEARS IN THE CMF BUT NEVER CAME ACROSS THE LEVEL OF CO-OPERATION WITH CIVILIANS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS AS I FOUND IN PNG WITH THE PNGVR.