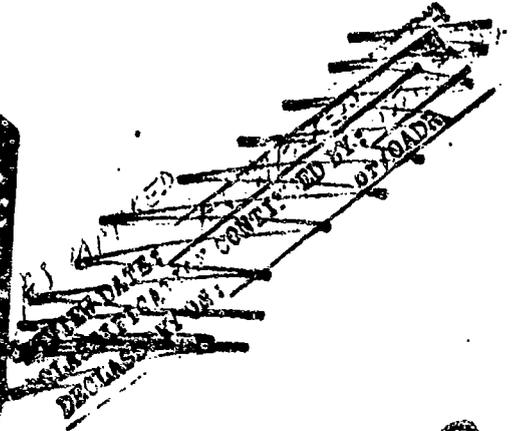


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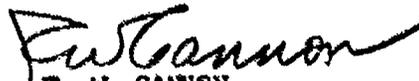
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Title Page . . . . .	i
Letter of Promulgation . . . . .	ii
Distribution . . . . .	iii
Table of Contents. . . . .	v
Frontispiece . . . . .	xii

### CONTENTS:

#### CHAPTER I - SETTING THE STAGE

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
THE ENEMY. . . . .	2
FRIENDLY FORCES. . . . .	3
THE DIPLOMATIC SCENE . . . . .	4
The United States Position . . . . .	5
The North Vietnamese Position. . . . .	5
The South Vietnamese Internal Situation. . . . .	7
Footnotes. . . . .	9

#### CHAPTER II - THE ENEMY

THE ROLE OF NORTH VIETNAM. . . . .	11
The Leadership of North Vietnam. . . . .	11
Relations with Moscow and Peking . . . . .	12
Soviet Aid to NVN. . . . .	13
Chinese Communist Aid to NVN . . . . .	14
North Vietnam's Armed Forces . . . . .	15
Viet Cong and NVA Forces in South Vietnam. . . . .	16
NVA/VC Strategy and Tactics. . . . .	19
INFILTRATION INTO RVN. . . . .	22
Infiltration through Laos. . . . .	23
Infiltration through the Demilitarized Zone. . . . .	24
ICC Efforts to Check Infiltration. . . . .	26
Infiltration through Cambodia. . . . .	27
Maritime Infiltration. . . . .	28
Exploitation of Stand-Down Periods . . . . .	30
ENEMY OPERATIONS IN RVN. . . . .	31
Operations in I Corps Tactical Zone. . . . .	31
Operations in II Corps Tactical Zone . . . . .	38

# UNCLASSIFIED

Operations in III Corps Tactical Zone. . . . .	42
Operations in IV Corps Tactical Zone . . . . .	45
ENEMY SUPPORT OPERATIONS . . . . .	48
Enemy Logistics. . . . .	48
Enemy Weapons. . . . .	51
Enemy Intelligence . . . . .	53
Viet Cong Tax Collection . . . . .	54
VC EFFORTS TO DISRUPT GVN ELECTIONS. . . . .	55
THE ENEMY SITUATION AT YEAR'S END. . . . .	58
Footnotes. . . . .	60

## CHAPTER III - THE INCREASING TENPO

THE TROOP BUILDUP. . . . .	65
US Army Buildup and Deployment . . . . .	65
Free World Military Assistance Force Deployments . . . . .	82
Additional FMAF Support for RVN . . . . .	83
Republic of Korea Forces . . . . .	86
Additional Australian Forces for RVN . . . . .	92
New Zealand Assistance to RVN. . . . .	94
Philippine Assistance to RVN . . . . .	95
Republic of China (ROC) Contributions. . . . .	97
Thai Assistance to RVN . . . . .	98
Spanish Medical Assistance . . . . .	100
RVNAF Deployments and Strengths. . . . .	100
The RVNAF Buildup. . . . .	101
The Desertion Problem. . . . .	103
ARVN Strength and Organization . . . . .	105
Regional and Popular Forces. . . . .	108
Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDG) . . . . .	110
National Police and Armed Combat Youth . . . . .	111
VNAF Equipage Changes. . . . .	112
VNN Buildup. . . . .	113
Buildup of VNNC. . . . .	115
RVNAF Training . . . . .	116
National Training Centers. . . . .	117
RVNAF Command Leadership Program . . . . .	118
RVNAF Deployments. . . . .	121
USMC Buildup . . . . .	122
USAF Buildup and Deployment. . . . .	125
USN/USCG Buildup and Deployment--the NMAF . . . . .	132
THE COMMAND POSTURE. . . . .	144
Morale and Welfare . . . . .	144
Living Conditions. . . . .	144
Post/Base Exchange Program . . . . .	148
The Rest and Recuperation Program. . . . .	150
Out-of-Country R&R . . . . .	150
In-Country R&R . . . . .	159

# UNCLASSIFIED

Tour Length . . . . .	160
Awards and Decorations . . . . .	164
Uniformed Services Savings Deposit Program . . . . .	173
The USO in RVN . . . . .	173
American Red Cross . . . . .	175
Postal Operations . . . . .	175
Discipline, Law and Order . . . . .	178
Military Justice . . . . .	178
Criminal Acts Against Vietnamese . . . . .	184
Foreign Claims Against the US Government . . . . .	185
Black Market . . . . .	186
Corruption . . . . .	189
Currency Control . . . . .	189
Narcotics and Marihuana . . . . .	191
Physical Security of US Personnel and Installations . . . . .	191
The Threat to Saigon . . . . .	192
Terrorism . . . . .	194
Examples of VC Terrorism . . . . .	194
Measures Against Terrorist Attacks . . . . .	196
Port and Shipping Security . . . . .	197
Security of the Nha Be Tank Farm . . . . .	200
Airfield Security . . . . .	201
Footnotes . . . . .	205

## CHAPTER IV - BROADENING THE LOGISTICAL BASE

BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTS . . . . .	230
SUPPLY . . . . .	236
Common Supply System . . . . .	236
III MAF Logistical Support . . . . .	238
MARKET TINS and GAME WARREN Forces . . . . .	239
Transfer of HEDSUPPORT Functions . . . . .	239
Common Stockage Objectives and Reduced Stockage Levels . . . . .	242
Transfer of USA Logistical Functions . . . . .	244
Supply and Distribution . . . . .	245
Class I . . . . .	245
Classes II and IV . . . . .	247
Class III . . . . .	249
Class V . . . . .	253
Special Air Munitions Problems . . . . .	259
2.75-inch Rocket . . . . .	260
Bombs . . . . .	261
Other Air Munitions . . . . .	263
Naval Munitions . . . . .	265
Ground Munitions . . . . .	266
Expedited Supply Procedures . . . . .	269
Automatic Resupply System . . . . .	270
USA Red Ball Express . . . . .	271

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USAF Speed Through Air Resupply (STAR) . . . . .	272
USMC Red Ball Express . . . . .	272
USMC CRITIPAC . . . . .	272
US Navy Casualty Report System (CASREPT) . . . . .	273
FLAGPOLE . . . . .	273
HAWK Missile Parts . . . . .	274
Non-Standard End Items for the 1st Cav Div (AM) . . . . .	274
Machine Accounting . . . . .	275
Traffic Management Agency . . . . .	275
MAINTENANCE . . . . .	276
7th Air Force . . . . .	277
III MAF . . . . .	278
Component . . . . .	280
by Vietnam . . . . .	281
PRIMARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM . . . . .	284
OF THE M-16 RIFLE . . . . .	289
Y AIRLIFT COMMAND . . . . .	292
OF COMMUNICATION . . . . .	294
Railroads . . . . .	294
Ports . . . . .	296
The Aerial LOC . . . . .	300
COMMUNICATIONS . . . . .	306
Tactical Systems . . . . .	306
Integrated Wideband Communications System (IWCS) . . . . .	308
Project 439L . . . . .	311
SCAITACS . . . . .	311
Project Talk Quick . . . . .	312
Satellite Communications--Pacific . . . . .	313
Frequency Allocations . . . . .	314
ation Problems - Time Block 2 . . . . .	316
ity of Installations - Use of Civilians . . . . .	316
and Radio in RVN . . . . .	318
Television . . . . .	318
Radio . . . . .	320
Footnotes . . . . .	321

## CHAPTER V - MILITARY OPERATIONS--THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

IX . . . . .	338
ARTICLES . . . . .	350
Rules of Engagement . . . . .	353
The DMZ . . . . .	353
Laotian Border . . . . .	353
Cambodian Border . . . . .	356
Operations in I CTZ . . . . .	359
Small Unit Operations in I CTZ . . . . .	369
Operations in II CTZ . . . . .	371

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Operations in III CTZ . . . . .	380
Operations in IV CTZ . . . . .	387
AIR SUPPORT OF GROUND OPERATIONS . . . . .	390
Air Support for Search-and-Destroy Operations . . . . .	393
R-52 ARC LIGHT Program . . . . .	395
DMZ Air Operations . . . . .	398
ARC LIGHT Bombing Assessment . . . . .	400
USMC Air Operations in I CTZ . . . . .	402
Herbicide Operations . . . . .	403
NAVAL OPERATIONS . . . . .	404
Organizational and Control . . . . .	404
Operation MARKET TIME . . . . .	405
The <u>Point Grey</u> Trawler Incident . . . . .	406
The <u>Point League</u> Trawler Incident . . . . .	407
Operation GAME WARDEN . . . . .	409
SEVENTHFLT Operations . . . . .	410
Air Operations . . . . .	410
Naval Gunfire Support . . . . .	410
Operations SEA DRAGON and TRAFFIC COP . . . . .	411
AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS . . . . .	415
AIR OPERATIONS OUT-OF-COUNTRY . . . . .	420
Weapons Employment in Laos . . . . .	426
Photo Reconnaissance Out-of-Country . . . . .	427
Extension of TIGER HOUND Concept to NVN Panhandle . . . . .	428
USAF ROLLING THUNDER Operations in NVN . . . . .	429
Footnotes . . . . .	436

CHAPTER VI - THE US ADVISORY EFFORT

THE RVNAF IN 1966 . . . . .	451
The Effect of the US Buildup on the Advisory Effort . . . . .	452
RVNAF Pay Scales . . . . .	455
ARVN and Its US Army Advisors . . . . .	458
ARVN Effectiveness . . . . .	460
Sector and Subsector Advisory Program . . . . .	468
The VNAF Advisory Program . . . . .	473
VNAF Organization . . . . .	476
US Navy Advisory Program . . . . .	482
US Marine Advisory Program . . . . .	488
Footnotes . . . . .	493

CHAPTER VII - PACIFICATION AND NATION-BUILDING

FROM RURAL CONSTRUCTION TO REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	501
The Rural Construction Program at Year's Beginning . . . . .	501
US Planning for RC Support . . . . .	503
The Ministry of Revolutionary Development . . . . .	506

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The PROVN Study. . . . . 510  
The RD Cadre Program Develops. . . . . 513  
A Critical Evaluation of the RD Program. . . . . 516  
Methods to Improve Revolutionary Development Support. . . . . 522  
The US Mission Reorganizes for Better RD Support. . . . . 533  
Measurement of Progress. . . . . 540  
RD Planning for 1967. . . . . 548  
The RD Program at Year's End. . . . . 551  
PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS. . . . . 554  
    Background. . . . . 554  
    Organization and Planning. . . . . 555  
    The Chisu Hoi Program. . . . . 558  
    Leaflet and Broadcasting Operations. . . . . 567  
        Psyops Campaigns and Themes. . . . . 567  
        Fact Sheet Operations. . . . . 571  
        The Trail Campaign. . . . . 574  
        Cambodia. . . . . 576  
    Civic Action Programs. . . . . 577  
        Medical Civic Action Program. . . . . 584  
        Military Provincial Hospital Augmentation Program. . . . . 585  
Footnotes. . . . . 587

CHAPTER VIII -- CONTINUING CHALLENGES

CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE IN RVN. . . . . 598  
    From Political Crisis to a Constituent Assembly. . . . . 598  
    Economic Problems and Solutions. . . . . 628  
    Vietnamese Reactions to the US Presence. . . . . 640  
CONFLICT OF OPINION AT HOME. . . . . 646  
    The US Government Position. . . . . 646  
    Political Arguments. . . . . 648  
    US Public Opinion. . . . . 653  
WORLD-WIDE REACTION TO THE WAR. . . . . 655  
    India. . . . . 657  
    Japan. . . . . 657  
    Indonesia. . . . . 659  
    France. . . . . 659  
    The United Kingdom. . . . . 659  
    Yugoslavia. . . . . 660  
    Reactions to Hanoi-Haiphong POL Bombing. . . . . 661  
    Asian Peace Initiatives. . . . . 662  
    The Manila Conference. . . . . 663  
Footnotes. . . . . 664

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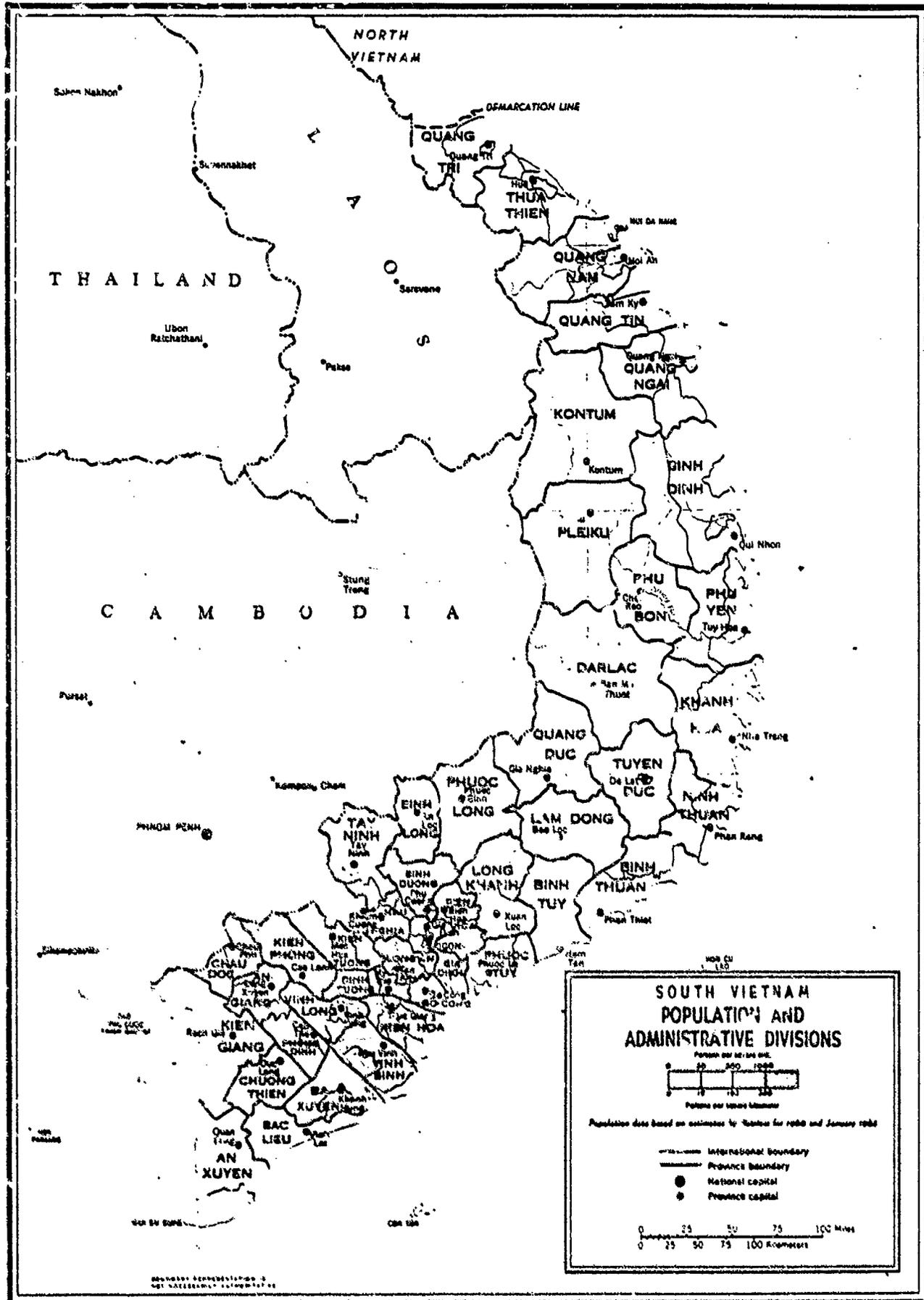
## ANNEXES

A - PRISONERS OF WAR. . . . .	675
B - THE MONTAGNARD PROBLEM. . . . .	697
C - THE SAIGON PORT. . . . .	709
D - THE HOP TAC SECRETARIAT. . . . .	736
E - CONTINGENCY PLANS AND MACJ5 STUDIES. . . . .	743
F - CIVILIAN CASUALTIES. . . . .	756
G - RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. . . . .	763
H - WATERWAYS CONTROL. . . . .	778
I - MEDICAL ACTIVITIES. . . . .	792
J - COMMANDERS AND PRINCIPAL STAFF OFFICERS. . . . .	809
K - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY. . . . .	814
L - GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS. . . . .	858
M - SPECIAL OPERATIONS (Published Separately). . . . .	872

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece. . . . .	xii
Enemy Organizational Structure. . . . .	17
Principal NVA/VC Units in SVN. . . . .	32
US&WVF Build-Up. . . . .	81
MDNAF Organization. . . . .	140
National Priority Areas. . . . .	342
National Priority Areas/Area for Priority of Military Offensive Operations. . . . .	351
Map of South Vietnam. . . . .	354
Orientation Map - ARVN Corps Tactical Zones & VC Military Regions. . . . .	357
Map - I Corps. . . . .	360
Map - II Corps. . . . .	373
Map - III Corps. . . . .	382
Map - IV Corps. . . . .	389
SEASIA Operational Activity Areas. . . . .	422
USN Sorties Flown 1966. . . . .	433
Revolutionary Development Cadre Group. . . . .	509
Combined Organization for RD. . . . .	536
Chieu Hoi Returns. . . . .	565
Examples of Safe Conduct Passes. . . . .	566
A North Vietnamese Soldier's Poem to His Mother. . . . .	575
Map of South Vietnam - Administrative Divisions. . . . .	600
Map/Chart - The Government of the Republic of Vietnam Field Administration and Local Government (fold-out). . . . .	627
Map - South Vietnam Ethnic Groups. . . . .	699

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CHAPTER I

SETTING THE STAGE

INTRODUCTION

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(U) As the year 1965 had been the Year of Decision in the Free World's efforts to contain communist insurgency directed against the Republic of Vietnam (RVN), so the year 1966 marked the apparent turning point in the fortunes of this strange and difficult operation. At the beginning of 1966, the American people and their allies had been brought to realize the criticality of the Free World stand in Vietnam, and if there were Americans unable to agree with their country's well-defined position, yet the great majority of Americans rallied behind the cause--to an extent that Time had selected as its year-end representative "Man of the Year" the Commander of the United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV), General W. C. Westmoreland. By the end of 1966, it was clear to all, except perhaps the enemy, that Free World forces in RVN could not be beaten militarily, but in the capitals of America and her allies, voices were raised both dispassionately and angrily as to the best means to be employed to bring the fighting to a successful conclusion.

(U) On the diplomatic front, the United States opened the year 1966 by pressing a peace offensive against the backdrop of an extended cessation of bombing of military targets in North Vietnam (NVN). Worldwide probing, however, uncovered no sign that the enemy was prepared to move the conflict from the battlefield to the conference table. COMUSMACV believed that the enemy's continuing strategy was to sustain military pressure coupled with psychological pressure and terrorism inside RVN, while stepping up propaganda internationally with the twin aims of creating dissension among allies and eroding the support of the American people for the war.<sup>1</sup>

(TS) In these circumstances US forces, Free World Military Assistance Forces (FMAF), and Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) persisted in their basic mission of defeating the enemy and extending Government of Vietnam (GVN) control throughout the Republic. Military operations, psychological warfare efforts, and what came to be called "Revolutionary Development" programs were directed toward this end. On the ground, COMUSMACV's instructions to his commanders were "to

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undertake operations which will find, fix and destroy Viet Cong (VC) forces by sustained and aggressive action.<sup>2</sup> Aside from securing base areas and major population centers, friendly forces were now penetrating areas long conceded as VC territory; the majority of operations were initiated to deprive the enemy of command and operations centers, training areas, and supply bases. Increasingly, operations were taking the form of spoiling attacks to keep the enemy off balance and deny him the option of fighting when and where he chose: when sufficient intelligence was accumulated to indicate a sizeable enemy buildup, large forces were committed to engage him. In contrast to mid-1965 when operations were generally conducted for only a few days, some now lasted a month or longer. Additional emphasis was also being given to the security of rice and salt-producing areas. In the air, US and Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) planes flew around-the-clock support missions for ground operations, strike missions against enemy facilities and infiltration routes, extensive reconnaissance missions, and psychological warfare missions. Despite the 37-day standdown on NVN bombing until 31 January 1966, and the 21-24 January blanket air-strike standdown over the Lunar New Year (TET) holiday, the January total of US in-country and out-of-country air combat sorties was a monthly record for the war.<sup>3</sup> Off shore, US Navy (USN) elements, in addition to air strikes and naval gunfire support, were preparing to extend their anti-infiltration coastal surveillance with the Vietnamese Navy (VMN) into the Mekong Delta area.<sup>4</sup> Complementing the military effort, US psychological warfare agencies in-country were being bolstered, and larger and more sophisticated programs were being undertaken. A systematic three-month Psychological Operations (PSYOP) campaign was planned against North Vietnamese Army (NVA) infiltrators, and a massive Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program was underway, with maximum emphasis timed for TET, to encourage enemy defections.<sup>5</sup>

#### THE ENEMY

(S) The evidence early in 1966 was that the enemy remained confident of eventual victory but was now looking toward a protracted and difficult war. NVN Defense Minister General Vo Nguyen Giap issued a major analysis of the war in late January, in which he confidently insisted that no US buildup, no matter how large or how lavishly accompanied by modern weapons and equipment, could defeat "the great people's war of the Vietnamese nation." Giap declared that the United States could not win over the people of South Vietnam, nor create a viable army or government in the Republic.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, Hanoi realized that its forces had suffered heavy casualties and gained little in the months since the US buildup had begun. COMUSMACV felt this may have accounted for the fact that the VC early in 1966 were avoiding actions which would cause further losses. It was also noted that friendly forces had taken the military initiative in some areas, launching operations which disrupted and forestalled enemy plans. COMUSMACV's estimate of enemy intentions was that

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they would attack in mass whenever they thought victory was possible. At the same time, they would continue terrorism, harassment, sabotage, propaganda, and small hit-and-run attacks aimed at controlling the population and blocking any significant gains in GVN nation-building.<sup>7</sup>

(TS) Confirmation of a significant addition to the enemy's fire-power came in January when 120-mm mortars were used for the first time in attacks on the Khe Sanh Special Forces (SF) Camp and the Da Nang airbase. The situation in the Saigon area and the enemy's combat potential in the coastal provinces from Binh Dinh north were of particular concern to MACV and RVNAF. VC strength in the immediate vicinity of the capital was approximately 4,600 men at the beginning of the year, with about 39,000 located within an 80-kilometer radius. The RVNAF Joint General Staff (JGS) believed VC activity was aimed at isolating Saigon from the rest of the country and demoralizing the urban population, with harassment of critical installations in the Capital Military Region (CMR) likely to increase. The vulnerability to mortar attacks of such installations as Saigon's Tan Son Nhut (TSN) airbase and the petroleum-oil-lubricants (POL) storage facility at Nha Be was a constant worry to COMUSMACV.<sup>8</sup>

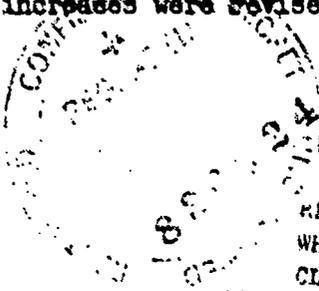
(S) Infiltration of regular NVA units and VC recruitment within the RVN continued steadily. This force increase closely approximated the buildup rate of friendly troops, so that--despite casualties--at the beginning of 1966 the ratio of US/FWMAF/RVNAF to VC/NVA strength was still about 3.5 to 1, as it had been a year earlier.<sup>9</sup>

(S) MACV estimated total VC/NVA strength at 229,759 on 1 January 1966, having confirmed 19 enemy regiments and 107 battalions in-country.<sup>10</sup>

FRIENDLY FORCES

(S) The overall in-country strength of friendly forces at the beginning of 1966 was 777,931, which included 571,213 RVNAF, 184,314 US and 22,404 FWMAF. There was a total of 193 maneuver battalions (149 RVNAF, 34 US and 10 FWMAF), along with sizeable artillery forces.<sup>11</sup> In addition, MACV and RVNAF had at their disposal more than 3,000 aircraft, including more than 500 strike aircraft and about 1,700 helicopters. Four tactical fighter wings (TFW's) and five combat support groups (CSG's) were based in-country and 3 TFW's and 2 CSG's operated from Thailand.<sup>12</sup>

(TS) As enemy strength and capability rose, projected US troop increases were revised upward. Eventually, an aggregate of 264 friendly



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maneuver battalions (162 RVNAF, 79 US and 23 FVMAF) was programmed for January 1967.<sup>13</sup> RVNAF continued to be plagued by desertions, its most serious manpower problem. The January 1966 desertion rate was 14.6 per 1,000—about 50 percent higher than the January 1965 rate.<sup>14</sup> Planning for deployment of additional Free World forces in early 1966 was based not only on operational requirements, but also on the professed political need to have more Free World flags in RVN. However, only three countries—Australia, Republic of Korea, and the Philippines—had definite plans for deployments in 1966.<sup>15</sup> (For a detailed discussion of the friendly buildup, see Chapter III).

(TS) To support the ever-increasing US and Free World commitment in Vietnam, a massive logistics and construction effort was underway. The basic fact was that the buildup depended upon this effort. The deployment of tactical units was limited as 1966 began by inadequate facilities and service support units in and out of the RVN. It was COMUSMACV's decision to proceed with the maximum possible combat buildup, compensating for shortfalls through substitution of units, civilian contracts, and the use of expedients.<sup>16</sup> (See Chapter IV). By the beginning of the year, two US logistical areas had been established at Cam Ranh Bay and Saigon, and four support areas were operational at Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang and Vung Tau.<sup>17</sup> Plans were made to increase the number of deep-draft berths in-country and to reduce the port congestion that had seriously slowed the supply effort.<sup>18</sup> MACV's construction program was directed toward three major goals: airfield expansion, construction of terminal facilities, and construction of cantonments and depots in support of major troop concentrations.<sup>19</sup> Maintenance was a critical problem, particularly of aircraft engine heavy equipment, and Material Handling Equipment (MHE). High-priority resupply systems were instituted for repair parts, while a high-priority reporting procedure was in effect to deal with such important shortages as munitions, certain types of helicopters, combat uniforms, and tropical boots.<sup>20</sup> The buildup also caused great communications demands. By early 1966 several communications systems had been developed or improved, but the effort was hampered by equipment and heavy machinery shortages, transportation delays, excessive offloading time, and local labor shortages.<sup>21</sup>

#### THE DIPLOMATIC SCENE

(U) The beginning of 1966 saw the United States engaged in an intensive diplomatic effort to achieve an equitable settlement of the Vietnam conflict. This "peace offensive," accompanied by the prolonged cessation of bombing in NVN, met absolute enemy intransigence and, as a result, failed. These were the key points in the declared positions of the two sides:

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### The United States Position

- Readiness for unconditional discussions or negotiations based on the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Accords.
- Reciprocal reduction of hostilities with a cease-fire the first topic of discussions or negotiations.
- Readiness to withdraw US forces as soon as RVN could determine its own future without external interference.
- No desire for a continued US presence or bases in Vietnam.
- Democratic determination by the South Vietnamese people of their country's future political structure.
- Determination of the issue of unifying the two Vietnams by free elections of the two peoples.<sup>22</sup>

### The North Vietnamese Position

- Withdrawal of US and "satellite" troops from South Vietnam.
- US recognition of the National Liberation Front (NLF) as the sole genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people.
- US engagement in negotiations with the NLF.
- US acceptance of North Vietnam's four-point stand, which called for eventual reunification of Vietnam and a political settlement in RVN in accordance with the VC program for a coalition government.<sup>23</sup>

(C) The NVN position was outlined by Ho Chi Minh in a late January letter to a number of heads of states. Deriding the US peace offensive, the letter declared that the US must "end unconditionally and for good all bombing raids and other war acts" against NVN. His demand that the US deal directly with the NLF represented a new element in the enemy's negotiating stance. The US Mission in RVN saw the letter as an attempt to prolong the bombing pause and to put pressure on the US for further concessions. It was also viewed as a possible answer to criticism of Hanoi's failure to respond directly to US peace overtures. During the bombing pause, NVN and VC propaganda media had, on at least two occasions, sharply attacked US peace efforts. On 3

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January, Hanoi, in a sarcastic commentary declared that "despite all the fine words and the new and attractive appearance given to it, the campaign in quest of peace which Lyndon Johnson is continuing in the Texas manner can by no means hide its deceitful and hypocritical nature." The commentary said the US peace offensive was merely a prelude to and an excuse for further intensification of the war. Five days later the Viet Cong radio carried a broadcast entitled, "Johnson is saying his prayers while dropping bombs and spraying toxic gas to massacre the South Vietnamese people." The VC concluded that the US was seeking negotiations since it "can no longer endure our deadly blows."<sup>24</sup>

(C) This declared determination to continue the war may have been bolstered by the visit to Hanoi then underway of Soviet Praesidium member Alexander Shelepin and a delegation which included some impressive military personages. With much fanfare about "fighting friendship and fraternal cooperation," the Soviet guests and their NVN hosts found no trouble in agreeing about the justification of the SVN "liberation war" and in castigating US "imperialistic" and "aggressive" acts. However, Shelepin's public criticism of the US peace offensive were more reserved than the bitter, elaborate NVN verbal assaults on the "peace swindle." The NVN leaders also found it necessary (and, presumably, awkward) during Shelepin's visit to refer publicly to the "sincere, great and vigorous" aid they were receiving from the Chinese—who throughout the entire period never wavered in their insistence on complete communist victory as the only solution in Vietnam, and in their savage denunciations of US peace moves. The organ of the Chinese Communist Party, People's Daily, editorialized on 24 January that President Johnson's State of the Union address and Defense Secretary McNamara's 20 January presentation to Congress had demonstrated that the US was "sliding down the path to wider war and is determined to impose a more brutal and barbarous war of aggression on the people of Vietnam and other countries in Indochina."<sup>25</sup>

(S) GVN remained determined to prosecute the war and skeptical of any favorable communist reaction to the peace offensive. GVN Foreign Minister Tran Van Do, in an end-of-1965 press interview, said that negotiations at that time "would be like negotiating with a burglar while he was busy looting the house." The North Vietnamese should first leave South Vietnam, Do said, and he warned that the communists would simply use a cease-fire to build up their own forces and continue infiltration, feeling free to resume hostilities when they judged the time favorable. On 16 January US Secretary of State Rusk concluded a 26-hour visit to Saigon during which he and Premier Nguyen Cao Ky agreed on the necessity of pursuing peace, but with adequate guarantees for South Vietnam. A joint communique noted no present indication that NVN "was prepared to take positive steps to peace" and said the GVN "and its allies must continue to take all necessary military measures, while remaining alert to all proposals and initiatives that might lead to peace." GVN Chief

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of State Lt Gen Nguyen Van Thieu used his Lunar New Year (TET) message on 21 January to attack the idea of "peace at any price," and to warn against a settlement like that of the 1954 Geneva Accords. "Our standpoint is crystal clear," Thieu said. "Peace will be reestablished only after the communists can no longer have any opportunity or means to create sabotage and warlike acts."<sup>26</sup>

(TS) A constant preoccupation of the GVN was its own fragile political base. On 28 January Thieu expressed to COMUSMACV an interest in the resumption of bombing in NVN, making the point that the possibility of a coup d'etat in Saigon was increased during the standdown period. Thieu said that cessation of bombing suggested appeasement of the communists and eagerness to negotiate, which were not consistent with the GVN's policy. Therefore, parties inclined to negotiations with the communists would try to develop popular support and might attempt to overthrow the present government. Thieu noted that the bombing pause was being portrayed by the enemy as a victory, as well as a sign of weakness by the US and the GVN. Thieu felt that Vo Nguyen Giap, who enjoyed great prestige for his victory over the French, had probably assured the NVN leaders of military victory in the new conflict as well. Until it became clear that Giap could not make good, Thieu maintained, Hanoi would not show any willingness for a peaceful settlement.<sup>27</sup>

#### The South Vietnamese Internal Situation

(C) Apart from the direct military effects of the war, the GVN faced a staggering array of internal problems as 1966 began. The ten generals in the ruling National Leadership Committee (NLC) or Directorate seemed to have achieved a reasonable degree of political stability in the six months they had held power. But, with the exception of I Corps Commander Lt Gen Nguyen Chanh Thi, none of the leaders was considered to enjoy any significant civilian support. The government's effectiveness depended on maintaining the unity of the Directorate; such factors as personalities, religion, home region, and private interests were potentially divisive. Although steps toward representative government for the country were being considered, the political scene was not encouraging. Premier Ky conceded on 15 January that "the government still is unable to create a favorable political climate." The Buddhists and Catholics, the two strongest political forces, were exercising almost no positive political dynamism. Of the political parties, only two former anti-French nationalist groups, the VNQDD and the Dai Viet, had any sort of tradition; however, their limited strength was concentrated in the I Corps Tactical Zone (I CTZ) and factionalized there by province, and neither party had formulated up-to-date policies that

PAGE 7 OF 872 PAGES

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might attract adherents. Otherwise, there were more than 60 tiny unimportant parties. Two new possible political factors were the Southern Old Students' Association, led by retired General Tran Van Don, and the Vietnamese Veterans' League headed by Directorate Secretary General Lt Gen Pham Xuan Chieu. The governmental system itself was a major problem: one of South Vietnam's political facts of life was that programs agreed upon at the national level were frequently emasculated, sabotaged, or simply ignored by officials at lower levels who enjoyed considerable autonomy. Misuse of funds and other corrupt practices had long been endemic. The GVN had been unable or unwilling to solve the festering problem of the discontented Montagnard tribes in the highlands.<sup>28</sup>

(U) Throughout the country there was mounting discontent over the extremely serious economic situation. Inflation was relentless. The amount of money in circulation in the RVN had increased by 75 percent during 1965 and prices had risen 40 percent. In Hue, with its perennially disgruntled intellectual-Buddhist colony, the cost of living had risen almost 100 percent in the six months prior to January 1966. Major causes of the inflation were growing GVN budget deficits, military expenditures, and economic dislocation. COMUSMACV and the US Mission in RVN were engaged energetically in countering the inflationary effects of the US military buildup and accompanying construction programs. GVN rice supplies were kept adequate only through extensive imports, as VC activity and adverse economic factors held down deliveries from the Delta. Almost half a million refugees were in temporary centers, generating severe pressure on the country's inadequate housing supply. On 15 January, presenting what he termed a (lunar) "year-end balance sheet," Premier Ky listed these other items on the negative side of the ledger: Saigon's continuing electricity shortage, congestion, and inadequate bus system; war disruption of the inter-provincial communications network; scarcity of milk, sugar, and cloth; long waiting periods for motor bikes; and "numerous injustices . . . in all classes of society."

(U) However, Ky maintained, political stability and national solidarity had been achieved in the face of the enemy, the military tide had turned in the GVN's favor, and most food shortages had been eliminated. Ky also cited progress in land reform and distribution, rural electrification, low-cost housing, health, social welfare, the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program to attract VC personnel to GVN control, education reform, school construction, cultural activities, and administrative reform. Late in 1965 the GVN had begun displaying keen awareness of past mistakes and had enthusiastically prepared and released funds for a number of programs for 1966. The outlook at the beginning of 1966 for the crucially important rural construction program seemed particularly bright.<sup>29</sup>

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Footnotes

1. General Westmoreland's Press Briefing (U), 18 Feb 66.
2. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV, 070002Z Dec 65. These instructions were issued, COMUSMACV said, because "We have not yet succeeded in bringing the enemy to combat with sufficient frequency to achieve the results we must attain in order to perform successfully our mission in South Vietnam."
3. Command Status Report (S), 7th Air Force, Apr 66.
4. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV, 280730Z Jan 66.
5. Ltr (S), COMUSMACV No 00892, 5 Oct 65, Subj: Employment of US Psyops Units (S); Msg (C), COMUSMACV, 180135Z Dec 65.
6. New York Times, 2 Feb 66.
7. Msg (S), COMUSMACV, MAC1015, 5 Feb 66.
8. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV, MAC00006, 1 Jan 66; Embtel (S), Saigon 2795, 3 Feb 66.
9. MACV Briefing (S) for Dr. Cheatham, DIRAE, 3 Apr 66.
10. US MACV 1965 Command History (TS). An additional 3 regts/11 bns were carried as probable—see Msg (C), COMUSMACV, MACJ234, 03093, 310849Z Jan 66. The JCS estimate of total enemy strength was about 250,000—see Embtel (S), Saigon 2795, 3 Feb 66.
11. USMACV Command History (TS), 1965.
12. Command Status Report (S-NF), 2d Air Div, Jan 66.
13. Msg (TS), JCS DOC 2343/760-17, 31 Mar 66 w/revision 4 Apr 66, Subj: Deployment Program for Southeast Asia and other PACOM areas (U); MACV Briefing (S) for Dr. Cheatham, 3 Apr 66.
14. Msg (S-NF), COMUSMACV, MACJ1, 1851A, 301230Z May 66, Subj: RVNAP Desertions (U).
15. Interview (TS), with LTC R. Kemworthy, FWM10, by CPT D. Collier, Military History Branch (MHD), 14 Feb 66.
16. Fact Sheet (S), MACJ42, 22 Mar 66, Subj: Measures to Overcome Shortfalls in Logistics Units (U).
17. Briefing (S), MACJ4, Oct 65, Subj: Log Briefing (U).

PAGE 9 OF 872 PAGES

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18. USMACV Command History (TS), 1965.
19. Briefing (TS), MACJ4 to COMUSMACV, 20 Dec 65, Subj: Wrap Up Briefing (U).
20. Data Sheet (C), MACJ42-MS, 22 Mar 66, Subj: Expedited Supply Procedures (U).
21. Msg (S), COMUSMACV, 271600Z Dec 65.
22. New York Times, Feb 66, US UN Ambassador on US VN Position; Telegram (C), SECSTATE, 1471, 4 Feb 66.
23. Ltr, Ho Chi Minh to Heads of State, 28 Jan 66, quoted in New York Times, 1 Feb 66.
24. Embtels (C), Saigon 2364, 3 Jan 66; Saigon 2440, 8 Jan 66; and Saigon 2734, 30 Jan 66.
25. Embtel (C), Saigon, 2470, 10 Jan 66; Msg (LOU), AmConsul Hong Kong 517, 25 Jan 66, Subj: Peking Continues Attack US Peace Offensive.
26. USMWR (C), 26 Dec 65 - 1 Jan 66. Telegram (LOU) AMEMB, 2553, 16 Jan 66, Subj: Ky-Rusk Communique Text. USMWR (S), 16-22 Jan 66.
27. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 1 Feb 66.
28. Embtel (C), Saigon 3092, 24 Feb 66, Subj: Non-Communist Elements Within the Vietnamese Body-Politic.
29. JUSPAO Wireless File (U), 15 Mar 66; Embtel (C) Paris 285, 29 Mar 66; Msg (C) AmConsul Hue, 136, 24 Jan 66, Subj: Assessment of Current Situation and Trends in I Corps; USMACV Command History (TS), 1965; Embtel (U), Saigon 2544, 15 Jan 66, Subj: Text of Ky's Address.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE ENEMY

#### THE ROLE OF NORTH VIETNAM

##### The Leadership of North Vietnam

(S) The strength and sophistication of the NVA/VC insurgency in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) was a direct result of the leadership provided by the Government of North Vietnam (GNVN). The GNVN planned, directed, and coordinated activities in South Vietnam and provided moral support and justification for the continuing war. The instrument of control was the Lao Dong Party of Premier Ho Chi Minh. Premier Ho was 76 years old. There were occasional reports that the NVN Premier did not look well, but there was more convincing evidence that he was in reasonably good health and that he continued to exercise decisive authority within the regime. It was not clear how the succession might have been provided for among the five probable contenders-- party secretary Le Duan, Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, Commander-in-Chief Vo Nguyen Giap, party organizer Le Duc Tho, and National Assembly Chairman Truong Chinh. There was some evidence of disagreement in the top ranks of NVN political leadership, but the extent of this disagreement and its significance were difficult to assess. There were hints in the polemics from Hanoi of continuing disagreement over the proper strategy to be employed against the Free World forces in the RVN. In foreign policy Truong Chinh and possibly Le Duan appeared to oppose negotiations until a decisive defeat could be inflicted on the US forces in RVN. Pham Van Dong and Gen Giap reportedly had been more in favor of entering negotiations in mid-1965, and may still be inclined to negotiate without a clear military victory over US forces. The US State Department believed that Ho Chi Minh could remain on the scene for several years. Not only the outcome of the war in Vietnam but events in China, and the concomitant changes in the pressures from China, could be determining factors in the succession. Ho Chi Minh's departure from the Premiership could weaken the Lao Dong Party and control apparatus for a period, but there was no evidence that Ho's departure would lead to sharp changes in the policies of NVN.<sup>1</sup>

(C) The objective of the GNVN was to subvert the government of RVN in such a manner as to supplant it with a communist government.

PAGE 11 OF 872 PAGES IS PAGE PROGRAMS UNCLASSIFIED

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The instrument employed to gain control in RVN was the National Liberation Front (NLF). Militarily, command and control of the insurgency in RVN was maintained through a complex organizational pyramid. The apex of this pyramid was Hanoi and the broad base was the many local VC party cells.

(C) The role of the GNVN in any possible cessation of the conflict in RVN was clear. The most authoritative statement of the NVN negotiating position was made on 18 April 1965 by NVN Premier Pham Van Dong and since then has been repeated often. Premier Dong listed four points which he described as the necessary basis for any political settlement of the war in the RVN. He called for the following: 1) cessation of US "aggression"; 2) adherence to the military provisions of the Geneva Agreements; 3) settlement of internal affairs of the RVN by the South Vietnamese themselves, in accordance with the NLF program; and 4) reunification by the Vietnamese themselves without foreign interference. In essence the NVN position viewed the conflict as an internal problem which had to be settled by the South Vietnamese in accordance with the VC program and only after the withdrawal of US forces and assistance. The NVN regime continued to adhere to this uncompromising line throughout 1966. On the first anniversary of Premier Pham Van Dong's statement the NVN press devoted much space to reinforcing and justifying the NVN position.<sup>2</sup>

(C) The allied peace offensive and the temporary cessation of bombing operations over NVN in December 1965 and January 1966 failed to convince the leaders in Hanoi that the US desired to arrange a settlement. The respite was used as an advantageous period for free movement, rebuilding, and for preparing additional defensive installations. It was also clear that the NVN used the stand-down to accelerate infiltration into RVN.<sup>3</sup>

#### Relations with Moscow and Peking

(C) The relationship of NVN with Red China and the USSR was of great interest to COMUSMACV. Vietnam had become a focal point of the Sino-Soviet dispute; Moscow and Peking vied with each other to gain influence in Hanoi at the expense of the other. Each used the issue of support to NVN to attempt to discredit the other in the eyes of communist parties throughout the world. On this and other similar issues the Chinese Communists vigorously attacked the Soviets. The Soviets generally responded with moderation, but occasionally counter-attacked the Chinese sharply. Despite the Chinese invective against any country that would follow a middle course between Moscow and Peking, NVN continued with some success to do just that. Moreover, NVN spokesmen abroad asserted clearly that any decision by Hanoi on the question of

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PAGE 12 OF 872 PAGES

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negotiations would be influenced by neither the Chinese nor the Soviet view. Independence and creative thinking were increasingly stressed by Lao Dong Party journals in Hanoi. Toward the end of the year, Peking seemed to become increasingly uneasy about relations with NVN, and continued to press for the hard terms in any possible settlement of the Vietnam conflict. Meanwhile the leaders of NVN also became uneasy about the widespread political disturbance in Communist China, and the uncertain effect these disturbances could have on Peking's role in the Vietnam war.<sup>4</sup>

#### Soviet Aid to NVN

(S) The estimated value of all types of Soviet aid to NVN since 1953 was nearly \$1.5 billion. About \$1.0 billion of this support had been extended since 1964. Through 1964, Soviet economic aid to NVN reached a total of about \$370 million. Military aid during the 1953-1964 period was estimated at about \$220 million and included armored vehicles, artillery, small arms, and aircraft. Of the nearly \$1.0 billion in aid extended since 1964, it was difficult to determine what portion was military support. However, large portions of ostensibly non-military shipments did include motor vehicles, spare parts, POL, wire, cable, and other similar materiel which had direct military application. Since early 1965 the principal contribution made by the USSR to NVN was to provide an advanced air-defense system, which included surface-to-air missile (SAM) battalions, radar, communications equipment, antiaircraft guns, and jet fighter aircraft. In late August, US officials reported that NVN had sent a high-level mission to Peking and Moscow to arrange for increased economic and technical assistance. The mission went first to Moscow and stopped in Peking enroute back to Hanoi. It appeared that NVN may have been attempting to get clearance for the transit through China of Soviet hardware. The resulting new aid agreement probably pushed the total Soviet aid to NVN to close to \$2.0 billion by the end of 1966.<sup>5</sup>

(FOUO) The 28 August issue of Pravda carried a feature article with photographs of NVNAF pilots being trained by Soviet aces at a Soviet facility. The article noted that Soviet-trained Vietnamese were piloting aircraft already engaging US aircraft over NVN. Other evidence of Soviet support of the NVNAF appeared in the 2 October issue of Red Star, the Soviet Armed Forces publication. The Red Star article told of Soviet officers and noncommissioned officers in NVN training NVN personnel in the use of conventional antiaircraft weapons and SAM's. The article did not disclose the magnitude of this support or how long the program had been in operation. The item reported that US bombs fell on firing pads where Soviet personnel were present, but no mention was made of casualties. The article did not say that the

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Soviet personnel themselves took part in antiaircraft operations against US aircraft; on the contrary, it was stressed repeatedly that the Soviet personnel looked on during the firing. A news report from West Germany stated that the USSR had put over 100 large cargo aircraft into operation in their airlift service to NVN. Some of the larger aircraft reportedly flew non-stop to Hanoi and to Nanning in South China. Approximately 10,000 Soviet and satellite personnel reportedly were employed in the operations of this Soviet airlift, which made stops at logistical support bases in northern Laos, North Korea, and in Red China. The news item stated that US air reconnaissance had shown that the Soviet airlift carried not only small arms and ammunition, but also large mortars, field guns, radar equipment, and antiaircraft missiles.<sup>6</sup>

#### Chinese Communist Aid to NVN

(C) Peking continued to stress in political discussions that the war in Vietnam was a "do-it-yourself" war for NVN and VC. In July Mao Tse-Tung was quoted in the People's Daily as saying that the Vietnamese people should and could rely only on themselves to make revolution and to wage the war in their own country. Mao stressed that though other people might help, no outside aid could replace the arduous struggle required for the VC to defeat the US. It appeared that Red China took this line in order to defend the paucity of its support of the NVN and perhaps also to downgrade the importance of Soviet aid to NVN. Chinese Communist aid to NVN for the ten-year period 1955-1965 was valued at about \$125 million. \$50 million of this was provided in 1965. Chinese economic assistance consisted of soft coal, fertilizer, rice and other foodstuffs, clothing, and some machinery and spare parts. Military aid included weapons, ammunition and between 50 and 60 MIG-15/17 aircraft.<sup>7</sup>

(S) The Chinese Communists also supported NVN with the deployment of military units to serve in NVN. The number of troops and units deployed to NVN was difficult to determine. COMUSMACV estimated that 40,000 to 50,000 CHICOM troops were assisting in NVN. There were anti-aircraft artillery units assisting in air defense along the LOC's from China to Hanoi, and there were railway units, engineer units, and miscellaneous logistic and other supporting units in NVN. It was possible also that coastal artillery units were assisting in constructing or manning defense installations along the coast north of Hanoi. There were indications in 1966 that the Chinese assisted in the construction of the airfield complex at Ben Bai. Railroad construction projects in which the Chinese were engaged included the two rail lines northwest of Hanoi, the rail line from Pingxiang south to a point between Kep and Hanoi, and possibly the standard-gauge line from Kep to Thai Nguyen. Another important Chinese contribution was in road construction. Most

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of the assistance projects which the Chinese undertook enhanced the NVN capability to support the war in RVN, but they also improved the logistic base for the deployment of CHICOM tactical units into or through NVN if required in the future.

(S) There was a low-level indication early in the year that a joint CHICOM/NVA command had been formed. This type of report emphasized the threat to COMUSMACV's mission posed by the large CHICOM force deployed in southern China. At the end of 1966 this force consisted of 30 army divisions, including 22 infantry, two artillery, and six border-defense divisions. The air component of this force had 603 jet fighters, capable of close support as well as defense missions. There were 15 IL-28 light jet bombers which had the capability of striking as far south as Saigon by staging through bases on Hainan Island and in NVN. These forces gave Communist China the capability to support NVN politically, economically, and militarily; to move forces into NVN; to assist in the air defense of NVN; and to support the NVN aggression against RVN.<sup>8</sup>

#### North Vietnam's Armed Forces

(S) Of particular concern to COMUSMACV were the armed forces of NVN which were backing the uncompromising political stance of Hanoi with significant military capability. The NVA strength was 12 divisions, including 10 infantry divisions, one artillery division, and one AA division. In addition, there were four infantry brigades, eight infantry regiments, five engineer regiments, one armored regiment, 80 AA regiments and 32 SA-2 (SAM) battalions. The total strength of the NVA, including forces in RVN and Laos, was approximately 387,660. In addition, there was a 27,100-man Armed Security Force and a militia potential of over three million men. Thus the total potential strength of the NVA was almost three and one-half million men.

(S) The NVN Air Force (NVNAF) had 14 MIG-21's, 55 MIG-17's, eight IL-28 jet light bombers, and 38 IL-2/14 light bombers. The NVNAF had grown rapidly from a very small transport force to a modern combat force operating late-model jet fighters and light bombers. A complex of modern jet bases was under construction or improvement, and several bases were in operation. COMUSMACV estimated the total NVNAF personnel strength at 3,600. Despite the increased capability of the NVNAF, the air defense of NVN was provided mainly by AAA and SAM units. This antiaircraft capability had been greatly expanded in 1965 and 1966.

(S) The operational threat of the North Vietnam Navy (NVNN) was less than that posed by ground and air forces. The NVNN had only four sub-chasers, four minesweepers, nine motor torpedo boats, 20 motor

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gunboats, and approximately 40 other surface craft. The strength of the NVNN was estimated at approximately 2,500.<sup>9</sup>

### Viet Cong and NVA Forces in South Vietnam

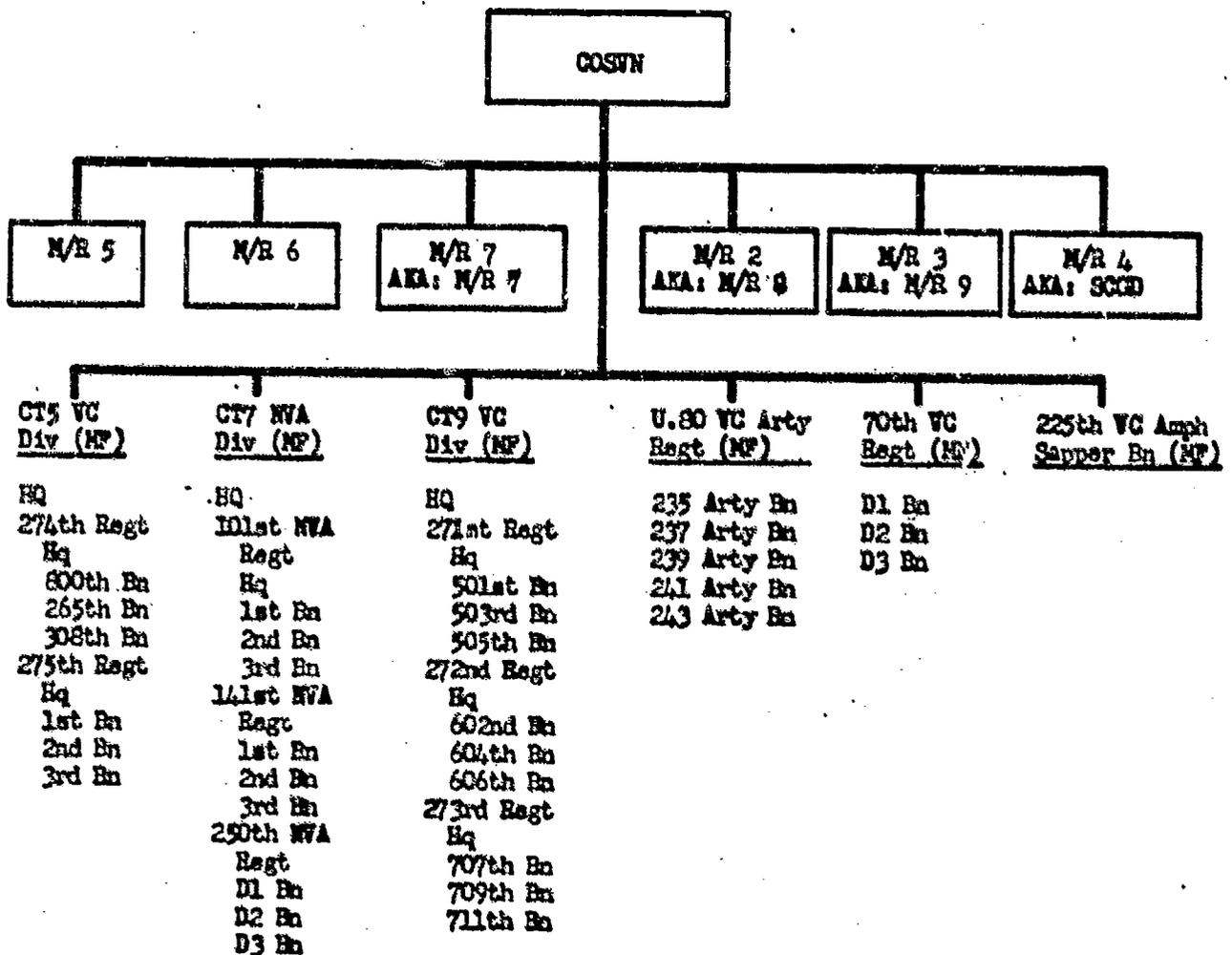
(C) VC and NVA forces in RVN fell into five broad categories: Main Force, Local Force, Combat Support, Militia, and Political Cadre. Main Force units were the primary combat elements. The command and control structure of VC/NVA units had undergone a reorganization since 1965 with the introduction of regimental and division-level headquarters. The organization of these divisions generally included three subordinate regiments, and from three to seven subordinate support battalions. Although administrative and political authority was still exercised by the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN) and the Military Regions, in most instances tactical control of combined VC/NVA regiments was exercised through division headquarters. There had been one instance in which an infantry regiment apparently had been detached temporarily from one division to another for a specific operation. Information from captured documents and statements from VC and returnees had provided the basis for acceptance by MACJ2 and J2 JCS of seven confirmed, one possible, and one probable division-level units subordinate to COSVN and Military Region 5. Total forces available to the enemy in RVN at the end of 1966 consisted of nine division headquarters, 34 regimental headquarters, 152 combat battalions, 34 support battalions, 196 separate companies, and 70 separate platoons. Personnel strength totaled 280,600, of which 123,665 were combat or support troops, 112,760 were militia, and 39,175 were political cadre. The combat support battalions included artillery, AA, engineer, transportation, medical, and signal battalions.<sup>10</sup> (See Chart--Enemy Organizational Structure.)

(C) At the end of the year the enemy's strength in I CTZ was 66,200 troops, consisting of two divisions (both NVA), nine regiments (seven NVA), 54 battalions (37 NVA), and 41 separate VC companies. The II CTZ had a total of 67,317 troops, consisting of four divisions (all NVA), ten regiments (all NVA), 58 battalions (44 NVA), 51 separate VC companies, and 32 separate VC platoons. In the III CTZ the total was 65,013 troops, consisting of three divisions (one NVA), 13 regiments (four NVA), 53 battalions (13 NVA), 34 separate VC companies, and 27 separate VC platoons. In the IV CTZ there were approximately 82,070 VC troops, consisting of two regiments, 21 battalions, 70 separate companies, and 11 separate platoons. The war in the Delta area of IV CTZ was basically in Phases I and II of guerrilla operations, whereas the enemy was attempting in the other CTZ's to move into Phase III with large-unit operations.<sup>11</sup>

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## ENEMY ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE ORGANIZATION CHART - VC UNITS IN RVN



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(S) The disposition and composition of NVA forces indicated that the main battle area was to be MR5 in the northern highlands. The mountainous and heavily-jungled terrain of the highlands, and its close proximity to Laos, Cambodia, and NVN made this battle area more favorable to enemy forces than to US and Free World forces. The NVA/VC would create a holding area between the highlands and the Delta and maintain sufficient forces in this holding area to threaten the US/GVN capability of reinforcing the main highland battle area. The Delta, as a support area, would continue to provide manpower and logistics. COMUSMACV estimated that by the first quarter of 1967 MR5 would have approximately 61 percent of the total NVN/VC combat strength and would be directly under Hanoi. COSVN, also directly under Hanoi, would control the holding and support areas. The total estimated enemy force would be 12 divisions, 46 regiments, 199 infantry battalions and 103 combat support battalions.<sup>12</sup>

(S) There were many indications that NVN was having difficulty meeting manpower requirements. For example, despite a minimum draft age of 18, a few 17-year-olds had been drafted. The maximum age had been extended from 25 to 45, and a large number of veterans, reportedly up to age 45, had been recalled. However, MACV reported that newly-infiltrated troops from NVN were better trained than those that infiltrated in late 1965. As an example, the major elements of the 324B Div had trained for six months before beginning to infiltrate southward in May. An analysis of the backgrounds of 924 former NVA soldiers, obtained from interrogation reports and captured biographical statements, revealed some clear differences in the composition of infiltration groups. Group I infiltrated before 1966, Group II infiltrated from January through May, and Group III infiltrated after May. The educational level had improved from the US equivalent of the seventh grade to the eighth grade, a shift which reflected the partial termination of education deferment from the draft. The average age decreased from 24.5 years for Groups I and II to 22.1 for Group III. The pre-infiltration military experience of the NVN troops increased significantly. In Group I, 47 percent had less than a year of service prior to infiltration, and 24 percent had less than six months. In Group II, the figures were 43 and eight percent. Of Group III, only 12 percent had less than six months. Thus the NVA soldier who infiltrated into RVN in 1966 was better educated, younger, and had more military experience than his predecessors.<sup>13</sup>

(S) Interrogation of enemy captives and returnees indicated that inadequate rice, inadequate medicine, malaria, air strikes, personal hardships, and the prolonged conflict definitely had contributed to a general lowering of morale. The forced abandonment of the enemy plan to enter Phase III of the conflict also had contributed to lower morale. These factors were especially applicable to NVA soldiers who had suffered the additional hardships of long marches, separation from

PAGE 18 OF 872 PAGES

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their families, and disillusionment that the battle was not almost won, as they had been told in NVN. Most NVA troops came from the lowland rice-producing provinces of NVN. This explained partly the rapid physical deterioration of NVA troops during and after their infiltration through the highlands. Despite these indications of lower morale there had been no appreciable rise in military defections during 1966. MACV could not detect signs of imminent mass defections or any weakening of the will to fight among a significant number of enemy soldiers.<sup>14</sup>

### NVA/VC Strategy and Tactics

(C) The overall NVN political strategy was aimed at the demoralization of the RVN and the collapse of resistance in the south, as well as the closely related contingency of US withdrawal from Vietnam. In their planning to accomplish this strategy the NVN leaders were influenced by their experience during the Indochina War, when the Viet Minh had relied on the unwillingness of the French people to continue to support a long and costly "dirty war." Although the US was a more formidable enemy, NVN leaders apparently believed that the same political strategy would succeed again, and that their own will to fight would outlast that of the Americans. The enemy expected that the high financial cost, the loss of American lives, international pressures, and domestic dissension inevitably would force the US Government to withdraw military forces from RVN. The enemy's long-range plan of military strategy had three phases. The first phase called for the creation of a political organization and a guerrilla capability, and the initiation of guerrilla warfare. The second phase called for the establishment of larger bases from which a "strategic mobility" effort could be launched. The third phase called for the initiation of the final large-scale attacks that would annihilate the opposing forces. During the first phase of the NVN plan the Lao Dong Party established a firm party organization by the creation of the NLF. Concurrently, NVN began guerrilla-type operations, established secure bases for larger operations, and began to force the RVN into a defensive posture. Infiltration routes from NVN were established and a system of logistic support for the base areas was set up. In order to accelerate the transition to the final phase of annihilation, NVN began to move regular NVA troops into the RVN. This activity was first indicated in April 1964, when the 325th NVA Div began accelerated training in preparation for deployment to the RVN.<sup>15</sup>

(C) An important facet of the second phase was to attain "strategic mobility" in order to counter the tactical mobility of RVN and FW forces. The object of a "strategic mobility" was to mass a large number of maneuver battalions in several widely-scattered areas. These maneuver battalions would tie large numbers of Allied forces to static defense roles, and permit the NVA/VC to attack specific positions at times of their own

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choosing. The buildup in the number of battalions, and particularly the infiltration of larger NVA units, would be done covertly with the object of initiating the larger-sized attacks by surprise. The version of "strategic mobility" implemented by Gen Vo Nguyen Giap was a "defensive/offensive" strategy which had the following objectives: 1) to develop strong multi-division forces in dispersed areas that were secure and accessible to supplies; 2) to entice FW forces into prepared enemy positions so that the entrenched communist forces could inflict heavy casualties on them; and 3) to continue country-wide guerrilla action to tie down Allied forces, destroy small units, and extend control.<sup>16</sup>

(S) The NVN and VC emphasized in guidance put out to their people that the war would be won in the highlands of MR5, an area that the enemy envisioned as a "killing zone." The mountainous and jungled terrain favored VC operations in that the highlands were closer to the NVA buildup areas near the DMZ and to the secure base areas in Laos and Cambodia. These factors made the highlands a much more favorable battle area for the NVA/VC than for the FW forces. The enemy would also be able to place sizeable forces on the entrance routes to the heavily populated coastal areas. In order to use the highlands as the killing zone in the war for RVN, the enemy hoped first to establish an "equilibrium of forces" in the highlands, and then to launch an offensive in one or more districts. The enemy had thus hoped in 1966 to launch ever-larger attacks in the highlands, to concentrate his troops and firepower, and, with improved command and control, to attack and hold important objectives.<sup>17</sup>

(C) During the same enemy time-frame that the highlands were being exploited as the killing zone, the enemy had other plans for the Delta area and for Saigon. The Delta was to be the support area and as such was to continue to provide manpower and fill logistic requirements for the other operational regions, particularly MR5. Insofar as possible, it was planned that the Delta should move also toward the second phase of larger-unit "strategic mobility." The Delta, being the seat of the old revolutionary political organization, was to be the originating point of new political organizations sent out to support the offensive in the highlands. In his plans concerning Saigon and the surrounding areas, the enemy intended to dominate all routes leading into the city, to isolate the city economically, and to create an atmosphere of insecurity in and around the city. It appeared that the enemy intended to capture and hold important areas in an arc above the Capital Military District (CMD). For this purpose several special units had been formed and were operating in the area of Saigon.<sup>18</sup>

(S) The NVA/VC avoided initiating actions which might result in large and unacceptable casualties from the firepower of Allied forces. During the year the enemy became increasingly cautious in the face of

PAGE 20 OF 872 PAGES

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increased Allied strength. The enemy tended to attack only when he had overwhelming superiority of numbers, such as during the attack in March on the Special Forces outpost at A Chau. VC tactics were designed to conserve main force strengths for the most opportune targets. The NVA/VC avoided attacking large Allied units of regiment or brigade size, but did attack isolated battalions and companies using sufficient strength to insure great numerical superiority. It was typical of the enemy to attack with one-third of his available force and to employ the remaining two-thirds of the units to set up an ambush of the Allied relief column. During attacks the NVA/VC used a hugging tactic as a means of protecting themselves from Allied artillery and air strikes. The enemy often withdrew by small squad-sized increments, using multiple routes. To defend against surveillance and artillery and air strikes, the enemy dispersed into the jungle in small units, moved frequently, and made maximum use of darkness and periods of low visibility.<sup>19</sup>

(C) The NVA/VC had planned to shift into the final annihilation phase as far back as early 1965. The buildup of US forces in particular in late 1965 and early 1966 inhibited the shift by the VC into their final phases. As an alternative the enemy attempted to build up larger forces in certain areas in accordance with Giap's version of "strategic mobility." The areas wherein the enemy attempted these buildups were Quang Tri Province in the I CTZ, and the border areas opposite the highlands in the II CTZ. In July it appeared that the enemy might also attempt to create a holding area between the highlands and the Delta by the use of sufficient forces to prevent the US and FW forces from reinforcing the main threat in the highlands.

(S) During late June and early July the NVA attempted to move the 324B Div across the DMZ without detection and establish a base area complete with underground shelters and supply caches. At the same time the NVA/VC attempted to establish a base for a two or three division force in the southwestern part of Kontum Province. In addition, it appeared that in War Zone C an attempt would be made to train and re-equip the 9th VC Div and reinforce it with a regiment of the NVA, and to establish a base area east of Tay Ninh. With the advent of the northeast monsoon season in October the NVA/VC had planned to launch attacks from the base area into Quang Tri and Thua Thien. The NVA 2d Div was to make diversionary attacks along the coast between Quang Tri and Quang Ngai. From the base area in southern Kontum an attack to the east would be made in coordination with the NVA 3d Div in Binh Dinh. The objective

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was to control the Pleiku-Quy Nhon axis, a classic element of strategy which long has been of interest to the NVA and VC. The main effort in the III CTZ was an attack from the base east of Tay Ninh by the 9th VC Div and the 101st NVA Regt. The aim of this attack was to control Tay Ninh, Bien Dong, and Hau Nghia, the three provinces north-west of Saigon. In the Delta the VC continued random attacks on outposts and isolated units. Toward the end of the year the enemy disposition of one division in Quang Ngai, one in Binh Dinh and one in Phu Yen indicated a possible intention to retain control over large population centers and LOC's and to increase his access to rice, fish, and salt. The enemy dispositions also made it possible for him to threaten to isolate the I CTZ.<sup>20</sup>

#### INFILTRATION INTO RVN

(C) At the end of the year MACV had accepted a figure of 48,400 infiltrators during the year. An additional 25,600 infiltrators may have infiltrated into South Vietnam on the basis of information evaluated as possibly true. This total of 74,000 "accepted" and "possible" infiltrators was based upon information available to MACV as of 31 December 1966 and represents only the number of infiltrators known at that date to have entered South Vietnam. The nature of the enemy's infiltration of personnel is such that it is difficult to detect many groups until after they have been in South Vietnam for as long as six months or even longer. Therefore, the figures for the period 30 July 1966 to 31 December 1966 were incomplete at the end of the year. Considering only the data for the first six months of 1966, the average monthly infiltration rate for this period was 9,100, including both "accepted" and "possible" figures. The following table represents North Vietnamese infiltrators as known to COMUSMACV at the end of the year.

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PAGE 93 OF 872 PAGES

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<u>Month</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Possible</u>	<u>Total</u>
Jan	3,032	1,785	4,817	2,070	6,887
Feb	6,600	1,708	8,368	2,410	10,788
Mar	7,557	1,324	10,861	3,550	14,411
Apr	90	791	881	20	901
May	2,800	2,890	5,690	3,465	9,155
Jun	10,460	600	11,060	1,315	12,375
Jul	2,600	120	2,720	4,806	7,526
Aug	1,550	400	1,950	3,180	5,130
Sep	1,400		1,400	300	1,700
Oct	115	500	615	4,200	4,815
Nov				280	280
Dec					
TOTAL	<u>38,184</u>	<u>10,178</u>	<u>48,362</u>	<u>25,596</u>	<u>73,968</u>

(S) Infiltration had increased from a monthly average of two battalion-equivalents per month during the last six months of 1964 to approximately 15 battalion-equivalents per month during the first six months of 1966. This high infiltration rate was still below the infiltration capability of the NVA. Of the 40 NVA infantry regiments in NVN, 14 were believed to constitute the strategic reserves. This left 26 regiments which could be used to cadre and train new units. If the NVA utilized all of these units as training regiments, and if each trained a new light infantry regiment every 90 days, then NVN could train 78 new battalions every three months. This would give the NVA the capability of sending 17,600 trained replacements into RVN each month. However, as will be discussed in a subsequent section, NVA logistical limitations would probably limit the energy input.<sup>22</sup>

#### Infiltration through Laos

(S) During 1966 most of the infiltration from NVN went through Laos, as it had during previous years. Aerial reconnaissance, reports from road-watch teams, and other intelligence indicated that throughout the year extensive troop infiltration and vehicular traffic continued to filter through Laos into RVN. In addition to the numerous trails, there was a road net of approximately 500 miles; by the expenditure of considerable energy and manpower, the NVA/VC kept some 200 miles of this road net open the year around. Infiltration through Laos was organized as part of a system that stretched from the 17th Parallel south to the Cau Mau Peninsula in RVN. The system consisted of a net of way-stations, manned by permanently-assigned personnel, at which trucks were

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provided with POL and maintenance. South-bound supplies, including ammunition, were accounted for and stockpiled at these stations. A NVA PW interrogated in July gave considerable information on the use of trucks to carry cargo south through the Laotian infiltration routes. The PW revealed that the majority of material sent south for combat operations in RVN was carried by trucks. He also indicated that truck travel was generally restricted to daylight hours and required the expenditure of much manpower because of the effectiveness of US and PW air interdiction.<sup>23</sup>

(S) Comprehensive information on the effectiveness of air interdiction of Laotian infiltration was difficult to develop. However, during the last half of the year over 300 NVA trucks were destroyed and additional vehicles were damaged by air strikes. More than 1,300 road cuts and landslides were caused by air action during the last six months of 1966; repairing or bypassing the damage caused by these air strikes necessitated the use of sizeable road crews. The NVA/VC made many attempts at camouflage or deception. Ground observation teams reported that extensive portions of the Laotian road net were covered by a bamboo trellis over which branches had been placed to conceal the road. Aerial photography revealed that a new technique of deception was employed by the NVA to conceal the true condition of highway bridges on infiltration routes leading south. Tension cables were stretched over what appeared to be an unserviceable section; at night temporary decking was placed on the cables and traffic continued until dawn, when the decking was removed. MACJ2 reported that there were six base areas located in Laos and adjacent to the I CTZ. These areas were located on infiltration trails at or near the terminus of known routes or avenues of approach to RVN. From these bases in Laos the NVA/VC could attack isolated outposts such as Khe Sanh and withdraw into Laos.<sup>24</sup>

#### Infiltration through the Demilitarized Zone

(U) The demarcation line and the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) were created in 1954 at the Geneva Conference. The DMZ was to serve as a buffer zone between the French and the Viet Minh and was to remain free of armed forces except police. Hanoi had nevertheless been infiltrating men and material through the zone for many years. The VC also had been active in the areas of the DMZ south of the demarcation line.

(S) Forward Air Controllers (FAC's) flying along the southern edge of the DMZ reported the existence in the DMZ of camouflaged road and rail nets, road construction, and support structures. The development of these facilities and LCC's appeared to be supporting the

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movement of troops in the DMZ and north of it. In April COMUSMACV received an indication that a NVA division was moving southward toward the DMZ. By June he was convinced that major elements of the 324B Div had moved across the DMZ into Quang Tri Province. Intelligence reported that the mission of these forces was to liberate the two northern RVN provinces of Quang Tri and Thu. Thien. There were also intelligence indications during June and the following months that division-sized units were being deployed south from MRA in North Vietnam to the area of the DMZ. During operations in June additional intelligence was developed through secondary explosions, aerial photography, and combat reports. This intelligence confirmed that the NVA had gone to great lengths to establish supply areas and structural facilities in the DMZ and adjacent to it.<sup>25</sup>

(S) By October numerous trail patterns in the DMZ area had been investigated and it appeared that new trails up to motorable size had been constructed in northern Quang Tri through the DMZ. There were two general routes into Quang Tri Province. The western route went south from Route 102, crossed the Ben Hai River in the DMZ, then traveled west and entered RVN. The other route followed a dense trail and road net from Route 102, turned east, and after following the Ben Hai River for about 10 kilometers, turned south and exited into RVN. In December FAC's reported that an east-west road from Route 1 just north of the DMZ had been greatly improved. COMUSMACV reported his concern and requested authority to interdict the road with artillery and naval gunfire.<sup>26</sup>

(S) CG III MAF completed an analysis in November of NVA/VC activities in the area of the DMZ. The study showed that the NVA was establishing extensive fortifications and positions in the area of the DMZ and that there was an emphasis on AA and artillery positions. The construction of AA positions was considered by CG III MAF to be a major threat. The large number of firing positions provided the NVA with great flexibility in locating AA weapons effectively against US and VNAF aircraft operating in and near the DMZ. COMUSMACV noted a similarity between AA strength in the area of the DMZ and the situation that obtained at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. The loss of four aircraft in the area during a relatively short period in November drew additional attention to this new threat.<sup>27</sup>

(S) MACJF reported in September that the NVA had deployed SA-2 missiles into the vicinity of the DMZ. One site reportedly was established within eight miles of the DMZ. Camouflage efforts were sufficient to call attention to the distinct possibility that there were other missile sites in the area. In November COMUSMACV announced to the Mission Council that he had suspended the B-52 raids in the DMZ primarily because of the SA-2 missiles.<sup>28</sup>

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(S) In addition to ground infiltration, the NVA/VC continued in 1966 to resort to water-borne infiltration. Intelligence based on SLAR contacts, aerial reconnaissance, and secondary explosions indicated that the NVA continued to move military cargo by water around the DMZ and into the areas adjacent to the DMZ. This activity was particularly high in August. MACJ2 noted that the maritime traffic carried material as far south as the Ben Hai River. Intelligence assessments of the extent and pattern of maritime traffic indicated that most travel was within two kilometers of the shore and was carried out at night, with a midnight peak and predawn cessation. Maritime infiltration could be distinguished from the operation of fishing sampan fleets by the general irregularity of the movement of the infiltrators as they attempted to avoid repeated landings at the same point on successive nights. COMUSMACV pointed out that the Rules of Engagement permitted the NVA to transport supplies down the coast with certain impunities. For example, the maritime infiltrators could travel southward outside the three mile airstrike limit until they reached the safety of the no-strike zone below 17°03'N. Thereafter, the infiltrators could proceed into the Ben Hai estuary or move directly across into RVN. This activity prompted COMUSMACV to propose interdiction by US surface units of COMSEVENTHFLT and COMNAVFORV.29

(S) At the end of the year COMUSMACV continued to be concerned about the infiltration of the NVA/VC through and near the DMZ. He believed that not enough had been done to counter NVA activities in the DMZ, particularly in the more populated eastern half. MACJ2 continued to report infiltration in the eastern areas of the DMZ, along with evidence of a buildup of NVA units in that area. COMUSMACV again was considering the possibility of further B-52 strikes in the DMZ.30

#### ICC Efforts to Check Infiltration

(C) The International Commission for Supervision and Control (ICC) in Vietnam had been relatively inactive in the DMZ for several years. However, the increased enemy infiltration through the DMZ and the sharpening of combat contacts in the area during July and August drew attention to the ICC and its intended role. In August the GVN protested sharply to the ICC about the increasingly flagrant NVA violations of the DMZ. The GVN backed the protest with photographs of NVA installations in the zone and with statements made by PW's who had infiltrated through the zone. The GVN also indicated their readiness to cooperate with the ICC patrols and inspections. On 19 August the ICC requested that Free World forces suspend activities in the DMZ as of 27 September in order that ICC Mobile Team 76 could be reestablished and resume patrolling of the DMZ. The usual ICC patrols, accompanied

PAGE 36 OF 872 PAGES

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by RVN liaison officers, were resumed in the southern sector of the DMZ. However, the ICC was unsuccessful in its effort to patrol the northern half of the DMZ.<sup>31</sup>

(S) In early October COMUSMACV and CINCPAC agreed that the suspension of operations in the eastern part of the DMZ was working to the advantage of the NVA/VC. COMUSMACV reported that the ICC patrols could not be effective, and expressed strong concern that the resumption of ICC patrols only in the southern half would hamstring the Free World military response to NVA actions. The North Vietnamese continued to refuse to cooperate with the ICC, so that on 13 October the restrictions on military operations in the extreme eastern portion of the DMZ were rescinded and COMUSMACV again was authorized to conduct military operations in the DMZ.<sup>32</sup>

#### Infiltration through Cambodia

(S) Limited logistic support of the NVA/VC in RVN had been provided by Cambodians on a local basis for several years. However, in late 1965 and early 1966 MACJ2 reported evidence that the NVA/VC in both Laos and RVN had been receiving large amounts of logistical support from and through Cambodia. In addition to personnel movements, a major support item was rice, which was delivered to the NVA/VC both on a local and unofficial basis and reportedly as a result of official national-level contracts between the governments of Communist China, NVN, and Cambodia (RKG). The exact role of the RKG in these contracts was not clear. It was, however, clear that the RKG supported at least passively the cross-border movement of personnel and supplies into RVN and Laos.<sup>33</sup>

(C) In late 1965 MACJ2 reported that the number of NVA infiltrators entering RVN through Cambodia had been increasing steadily. Intelligence resources were focused on developing additional information on the Cambodian extension of the Ho Chi Minh Trail system. This portion of the infiltration route linked Laos with the RVN highlands and the Delta area, and with Cambodian rivers and roadways. Considerable portions of this trail system were in Cambodia and thus had the built-in advantage of immunity from damaging air attacks and interdiction. MACJ2 reported in early 1966 that new sections of the trail had been constructed farther west in Cambodian territory. It appeared that aggressive Allied military operations in Kontum and Pleiku Provinces had made the western routes more attractive to the NVA/VC. MACJ2 stated that the realignment of the Cambodian infiltration routes permitted the NVA/VC to make the trip south and enter RVN only on the final leg of their journey. Thus the NVA/VC soldiers were much better prepared and rested for operations in RVN. Cambodian infiltration trails were described in September as being from

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one to three meters wide and well concealed by the jungle canopy. MACJ2 stated that most evidence showed that the Cambodian portion of the trail was operated and controlled by NVA personnel. Stationed along the trails was a net of way-stations similar to that in Laos. These stations provided infiltrating personnel with provisions and necessities for the trip.<sup>34</sup>

(C) The maritime nature of the RVN Delta made it accessible by infiltration from Cambodia by sea as well as by rivers and canals. The numerous rivers and canals crossing the Cambodian-RVN border presented a formidable interdiction problem to Free World forces; even during the dry season there are thousands of miles of navigable waterways. Supplies were believed to have entered Cambodia also at the major ports of Sihanoukville, Kampot, and Phnom Penh. From these ports there were inland water routes which provided access to RVN including the Delta, the central highlands, and all but the northern most provinces. Some of these inland water routes followed rivers such as the Se San and the Sre Bok, which with their tributaries accommodated small native craft. Other waterways, including the Mekong and Bassac Rivers, provided access to most points in the RVN Delta. It was believed that considerable rice was sent from the Delta into Cambodia on these major rivers. From Cambodia this rice then went to VC units in the central and northern highlands.<sup>35</sup>

#### Maritime Infiltration

(C) The discovery of a VC supply ship in Vung Ro Bay on 16 February 1965 provided the first confirmed evidence that the NVA/VC were attempting large-scale infiltration into RVN by sea. The VC supply ship was a steel-hull trawler approximately 100 feet in length and having an estimated full-load displacement of 280 tons. In response to this amplified logistic threat, COMUSMACV initiated the MARKET TIME sea patrol operations. A MARKET TIME destroyer detected the next large-scale infiltration attempt on 31 December 1965, when another large trawler similar to that which had been discovered in Vung Ro Bay was detected about 30 miles off the Ca Mau Peninsula. This trawler altered course when detected, headed seaward, and was subsequently tracked into the territorial waters of Communist China. Despite effective MARKET TIME surveillance operations of the USN and the VNN, the NVA/VC continued in 1966 to attempt to infiltrate weapons and supplies on a large scale. On 10 May another of the 100-foot steel-hull trawlers was discovered adjacent to the Ca Mau Peninsula off the eastern coast of An Xuyen Province, near the mouth of the Ro De River. The USCG Cutter Point Grey, aided by VNN craft, forced the trawler aground. In order to insure that the cargo did not fall into the

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hands of the VC, it was necessary to call in air strikes and destroy the trawler. Subsequent salvage operations recovered small arms, mortars, a recoilless rifle, and various types of ammunition and demolitions. Items such as a radio, audio visual equipment, and propaganda material, all originating in Communist China, were also recovered.<sup>36</sup>

(C) The next large-scale enemy infiltration attempt was intercepted on 20 June on the coast of Vinh Binh Province in the IV CTZ. A trawler was captured intact with approximately 250 tons of predominantly Chinese Communist-made weapons and ammunition intended for the VC. It appeared that the destination of this ship's cargo was the Thanh Phong VC base area in Kien Hoa Province in the IV CTZ. Study of the captured ship and comparison with other evidence revealed that it was identical with the one sighted off the Ca Mau Peninsula on 31 December 1965 and the ship destroyed on the eastern coast of An Xuyen Province on 10 May 1966. The fact that the NVA/VC were risking ships of this size and type so frequently indicated to MACJ2 that an effort was being made to replenish diminishing stockpiles in the Delta.<sup>37</sup>

(C) On 23 December yet another steel trawler, this one heavily loaded, was sighted by MARKET TIME aircraft approximately 80 miles north-east of Qui Nhon. This trawler was kept under air surveillance as it maneuvered on various courses and finally turned north and entered the Hainan Straits. Photographic analysis indicated that the trawler had the same type hull as those used previously for infiltration attempts. This incident was evaluated as an attempt to infiltrate cargo into Binh Dinh Province.<sup>38</sup>

(S) A NVN PW captured when a PT boat was sunk in July, gave considerable information on the organization, equipment, and procedures employed to infiltrate supplies, weapons, and ammunition into RVN. A special unit of highly-motivated naval personnel was organized into a "Group 125" to carry out maritime infiltration missions. The group reported directly to the high command, rather than to the NVNN. The PW gave additional information on assembly points, loading procedures, and routes used to approach RVN. Significantly, the PW described the craft used by "Group 125" as steel-hull ships similar to the trawler that landed in An Xuyen on 10 May and the one that was captured on 20 June on the Vinh Binh coast.<sup>39</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV estimated that in 1965 approximately 70 percent of the NVA/VC resupply was accomplished by maritime infiltration. In mid-1966 COMUSMACV considered that the success of MARKET TIME operations was such that not more than ten percent of NVA/VC logistic support came by sea. By the end of the year COMUSMACV was able to state that there was no credible evidence of any significant infiltration of enemy troops or supplies by sea since November 1965. All indications were that Operation MARKET TIME had interdicted this avenue of resupply.<sup>40</sup>

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### Exploitation of Stand-Down Periods

(S) During the 1966 Christmas and New Year stand-downs the NVA/VC made a concerted effort to take maximum advantage of the cease-fire periods to accomplish a major resupply effort, to make tactical redeployments, and to initiate incidents that resulted in US, FVMAF, and RVNAF casualties. Supplies were moved by rail, road, and coastal and inland waterways. It appeared that the NVA/VC were able to move a significant amount of supplies and equipment into the DMZ and adjacent areas. The most prodigious logistic effort took place in the northern coastal waterways of the SEA DRAGON area. During the 48 hours of the Christmas stand-down sightings of water craft in the SEA DRAGON area almost equalled the total sightings of the first two months of the whole SEA DRAGON operation. A detailed study was made of water-borne logistic movements during the Christmas stand-down. Situation reports just prior to the stand-down revealed little water-borne logistic traffic in the SEA DRAGON area. However, during the stand-down at least 20 junks approximately 80 feet in length, a 140-foot craft and ten or more smaller craft moved from the north into the Kien Giang and the Giang Rivers. This water-borne logistic activity was capable of moving 1,250 tons of war material from NVN into the area just north of the DMZ, a point from which the material could be introduced into the infiltration pipeline across the DMZ or through Laos. A traffic analysis of this infiltration during the stand-down showed that all traffic either entered or exited the Kien Giang River or the Giang River, and that a great deal of traffic traveled between the two rivers, reaching a density of 20 to 50 junks at one time during the stand-down. An estimated 10,000 tons of cargo could have been moved to within 10 miles of the DMZ by this shuttle traffic. Similar activity probably was carried out during the 48-hour New Year stand-down. Some 48 water-borne logistic craft were active in the Giang River area and southward during this period. Some of these craft were armed cargo carriers, a type that previously had not been identified by intelligence.<sup>41</sup>

(S) The stand-downs also provided the NVA/VC with opportunities to make advantageous tactical movements of their troops with impunity. For example, an attempt was made by the VC to infiltrate and mass a large force near USMC areas in the I CTZ. The attempt was discovered by III MAF patrols and disrupted at least partially. However, COMUSMACV considered this enemy action a serious and unwarranted threat to friendly troops. The advantage that could be gained by the VC during the stand-down was demonstrated shortly after the Christmas truce when on the night of 27 December the VC were able to overrun the positions of a US artillery battery in Binh Dinh Province. Heavy casualties--including 27 KIA and 65 WIA--were inflicted on the battery. COMUSMACV assessed the action and concluded that the preceding cease-fire and stand-down had provided the VC with the tactical opportunity to mass for the attack. Monitoring of the Christmas and New Year stand-downs led COMUSMACV to conclude that

PAGE 30 OF 81 PAGES

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such arrangements served also to provide the NVA/VC with opportunities to initiate incidents. During the New Year stand-down there were at least 169 VC/NVA-initiated incidents. These resulted in 14 US and 5 RVN personnel KIA. During the Christmas cease-fire there were 3 US and 14 RVN personnel KIA.<sup>42</sup>

#### ENEMY OPERATIONS IN RVN

(C) Despite increased US and Free World activity the enemy retained considerable control over the size and character of combat actions in general and a great deal of control over harassing attacks, terrorism, and sabotage. It will be evident in the discussions which follow that the nature of the enemy threat and his efforts to increase that threat varied considerably in the four CTZ's as different determinants continued to apply in each of the zones. Historic and geographic differences, and even the basic differences in proximity to NVN, were increasingly manifest in the war. In order to highlight these differences, the discussions which follow depict the enemy operations throughout the year in each of the CTZ's.<sup>43</sup> (See Map--Principal NVA/VC units in SVN.)

#### Operations in I Corps Tactical Zone

(C) During January the number of VC-initiated incidents decreased to 369 as opposed to 432 for December 1965. There was a sharp decrease in the number of attacks from 29 in December to 13 in January. The TEF lull was believed to have contributed to this decline. Mortar attacks were the primary VC activity throughout the I CTZ. On 4 and 5 January the VC fired approximately 70 rounds of 120-mm mortars at the Khe Sanh CIDG camp--the first positive identification of 120-mm mortars in the I CTZ. On 17 January the VC fired 29 rounds of 81-mm mortar into Quang Ngai City; some of these rounds fell near the MACV compound and others landed near an orphanage. On 19 January the province headquarters at Tam Ky was hit by 57-mm recoilless rifle and both 60- and 81-mm mortar fire. At the same time, a refugee village 5,000 meters south of the province headquarters was attacked by an estimated VC platoon. On 25 January the Da Nang area came under 81-mm and 120-mm mortar fire. On 28 January a CIDG reaction unit was dispatched to relieve an outpost under attack and was ambushed near Tra Bong by a superior VC force. Intelligence indicated that the 18th NVA Regiment had moved from southern Quang Ngai Province to Binh Dinh province in the II CTZ. In the Da Nang area the major threat was company-size raids conducted by specially trained sapper teams, and the possibility of terrorist attacks against US installations and billets.

(C) In February the number of VC-initiated incidents decreased to 284. The VC placed particular emphasis on the interdiction of the National Railroad, with 12 incidents of rail damage and five incidents of train mining. On 12 February, the VC ambushed two vehicles in the Ai Van Pass, killing five ARVN and wounding five. On 17 February a squad of VC attacked the An Cuu National Police station in Hue, killing one policeman and wounding seven others. This attack took place approximately 700 meters southwest of the MACV compound.

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Prisoners captured during Operations LAM SON 234 and 235 indicated the possible formation of two provisional regiments in the 11th DTA. During combat action in Quang Tri Province the 808th VC Bn sustained casualties which seriously reduced its effectiveness. VC incidents of minings, harassments, and attacks on posts and bridges in the Quang Nam Special Sector increased. The VC 70th Bn was believed to have suffered significant casualties. In the 12th DTA, harassments and attacks increased both in Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces, with the latter receiving the greater number. Throughout the CTZ, the VC retained the capability to launch regimental-size attacks at a time and place of their choosing.

(C) In March the number of VC-initiated incidents rose to 435. The most significant VC activity was the attack on A Chau on 9 and 10 March. Information obtained prior to 6 March gave indications of an enemy buildup and preparation for an attack. The camp was reinforced on 8 March by a CIDG strike force company and 17USASF. At 0950 on 9 March the camp began receiving heavy concentrations of 81-mm mortar fire. The attack continued until 1730 hours on 10 March, when evacuation and escape-evasion plans were implemented. Elsewhere in I CTZ the VC retained a capability to launch regimental-size attacks at any time and place of their choosing. During March there were indications of a significant buildup of enemy forces in Quang Ngai Province. The 1st VC Regt and the 21st NVA Regt were confirmed in northern Quang Ngai, and another regiment had been reported moving into northern Quang Ngai; reports and unit sightings indicated the 2d VC Regt and the 18th NVA Regt moved from Binh Dinh Province into southern Quang Ngai Province. These moves increased the threat to the Tra Bong SF Camp and hamlets and the RVNAF units along Route 1.

(C) In April the number of VC-initiated incidents decreased to 263. The VC made no multi-battalion attacks in April. It appeared that the VC used the unsettled political period to reorganize, recuperate, and increase their influence in the populous lowland regions. Attacks in the area of Phu Loc and along Highway 1 indicated an increased VC effort to interdict the route south of the Hue and Phu Bai area, and to sever overland supply in anticipation of a spring campaign in the two northern provinces. A returnee reported a VC plan for liberating the plains of Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces. Phase I of the plan had been conducted during February and included operations to test and probe friendly forces; this phase resulted in over 600 VC killed. Phase II, according to the returnee, was to begin in April and would employ three regiments, four separate battalions, and support companies. The objectives of Phase II operations were to gain control of the coast of Quang Tri Province and the coast and plains of Thua Thien Province. Reports continued to reveal NVA forces in the area surrounding Khe Sanh, and indications were that an attack on the camp could take place at any time. In Quang Ngai Province, personnel and weapons losses suffered by the 1st VC Regt in Operation HOT SPRINGS/LEEN KET 36 disrupted

PAGE 3 OF 4

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VC plans in northeastern Quang Ngai. However, the presence of at least two regiments (the 1st VC and the 21st NVA), and probably another (the 31st NVA), continued to indicate that a major VC effort would be directed at attacking and harassing RVNAF units and posts in an attempt to destroy morale and increase VC control over the population. On 10 April the 937th RF Co, located at My Dai, was attacked by an estimated VC battalion. On 14 April two companies of the 2/4 ARVN Regt also were attacked by an estimated VC battalion. This attack resulted in a reaction operation which produced contact with the 90th Bn of the 1st VC Regt and the 22d Bn of the 21st NVA Regt. On 28 April MACV reported the 620th NVA Div was in the 12th DTA; this division consisted of two confirmed regiments, the 1st VC and the 21st NVA.

(C) In May VC-initiated incidents remained at the relatively low level of 225. In the 11th DTA, two significant VC attacks occurred on 19 May. At 0245 hours, Gia Linh outpost received 150 rounds of 81-mm mortar fire, followed by a ground assault by an estimated VC battalion. Although the VC momentarily penetrated the outpost, they failed to overrun it. Friendly casualties were 43 KIA including one US, and 54 WIA. Enemy losses were seven KIA and 10 weapons captured. At 0310 hours, Con Thien outpost was hit by mortar fire and assaulted by an estimated VC company. ARVN losses were 20 KIA and 12 WIA. VC losses were 20 KIA and five weapons captured. Reports indicated that the 810th Bn was operating in the vicinity of Phu Loc to harass hamlets and units along Highway 1, while the 314th Bn was operating in northern Quang Tri province to protect VC supply bases. Reports indicated that two NVA divisions, the 312th and the 324th, were preparing to enter Quang Tri Province for operations. Captured documents resulted in the acceptance of the 31st NVA Regt and four additional battalions (RQ 20, 22, 23 and 24) in southern I CTZ. These units all were subordinate to the 620th Div located in the Quang Tin area. Movements of units into this area indicated that the 620th would soon be up to its programmed strength of five regiments. This posed a significant threat to friendly forces, since this division could be used to carry out the enemy plan to seize Quang Ngai Province.

(C) During June VC-initiated incidents remained at the same low level with a total of 224. In the 12th DTA, the 745th RF Co and one PF platoon were attacked on 28 June by an enemy force estimated at three companies. Friendly casualties were 21 KIA and eight WIA. Enemy casualties were estimated at 30 KIA; one VC was captured. Significant enemy movement was noted in Quang Tin Province and both returns and FN's confirmed the presence of three subordinate regiments of the 620th Div in south central Quang Tin. Enemy capabilities increased in June to the extent that the enemy was capable of attacking in greater than regimental strength in the 11th and 12th DTA's. As the political situation stabilized in the I CTZ, enemy opportunities for political subversion and agitation diminished. COMUSMACV believed more direct military action could be

PAGE 34 OF 872 PAGES

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expected. Of significance was the possible infiltration of elements of the 324B Div into northern I CTZ.

(C) The number of enemy-initiated incidents increased slightly in July with 245 incidents reported. Troop infiltration through the DMZ in May and June was confirmed as large-scale infiltration developed in July. During operation LAM SON 288, the ARVN 2d Abn Bn made heavy contact with a large VC force--probably the 812th NVA Regt of the 324B Div. Operation HASTINGS resulted in ground combat actions involving forces up to battalion size, coupled with heavy air and artillery strikes against the enemy. On 18 July an estimated 1,000 NVA troops in full battle dress assaulted the 3/4 Marines command post near Cam Lo. Following this action contact was infrequent as enemy capabilities were reduced. Friendly units continued to clear pockets of resistance and to press extensive air attacks on the enemy buildup area north of the DMZ. There were indications that a division-size force, possibly the 304th, was located just north of the DMZ. The 324B Div was in the southern portion of the DMZ and additional NVA forces of regimental or division size had deployed into the DMZ east of 324B. MACJ2 reported that the mission of the 324B Div was to help the forces in the area to liberate Quang Tri Province and to cover the infiltration route along Route 9. The major objectives of the 324B Div reportedly were Dong Ha, Cam Lo, Cua, Ca Lu, and Ba Long. Forces in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces were to attack all reinforcements moving from Hue to Quang Tri Province. One unidentified division would attack from Laos along Route 9 and cover the supply corridor. One NVA division in MR 4 in NVN would be in reserve and ready to reinforce. The NVA 304th Div was sent to replace the 324B Div at Ha Tinh and would reinforce as required in RVN. There had been no contact with major elements of the 620th Div since early July; however, subordinate units reportedly continued to resupply, train, replace depleted ranks, prepare defensive positions, and concurrently to harass outposts in the Quang Nam-Quang Tin border area. Movement patterns showed regimental-size units concentrating in the three areas of southern Quang Nam Province, central Quang Tin Province, and on the Quang Nam-Quang Tin Province border. Intelligence indicated that the 620th Div was in position to initiate operations in the Chu Lai area.

(C) The number of enemy-initiated incidents increased in August to 266. On 16 August the 917th RF Co was attacked by an estimated two enemy companies. Friendly casualties were 28 KIA and 2 WIA; equipment losses were one 60-mm mortar, 40 individual weapons, and three AN/PRC-10 radios. Intelligence indicated that the VC main force was operating primarily in platoon and company-size units, in conjunction with local forces, in the lowlands of Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces. As the enemy posture improved throughout the I CTZ, his capability to support a water offensive increased. Elements of the 324B Div were contacted in Quang Tri Province, indicating new infiltrations. It

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was considered possible that there were at least two newly-infiltrated regiments in Thua Thien Province. The enemy force that threatened friendly forces in the two northern provinces consisted of five confirmed and possibly as many as seven regiments. In addition, confirmed separate battalions in Thua Thien Province had the capability to operate as one regiment. Operations COLORADO/LITW KET 52 confirmed the presence of the 620th Div in Quang Tin Province early in August. It was probable that two additional unidentified regiments infiltrated from the Laos/RVN border area beginning in June and arrived in Quang Ngai Province in August. The 620th Div and units newly-infiltrated into the southern part of the I CTZ were deployed to engage friendly forces in support of enemy operations in northern I CTZ.

(C) During September the number of enemy-initiated incidents increased to 310, with a sharp rise just prior to the elections. On 13 September a company of the 4th ARVN Regt was attacked by a VC battalion at Nui Dong outpost. Following a mortar attack the VC launched a ground attack and overran the outpost. The ARVN casualties were 35 KIA, 37 WIA, 24 MIA. In addition, two 105 howitzers, one AN/GRC-87 radio, 4 crew-served weapons, 89 individual weapons, and three AN/PRC-10 radios were destroyed or captured. The VC battalion suffered four KIA and five individual weapons were captured. VC activity was heavy in two other areas during September. In northern Quang Tri Province, agents, PW's, and other intelligence sources indicated that the 324B Div had moved just south of the DMZ and that other large units may have been moved to positions just north of the DMZ. In Quang Ngai Province, information indicated that two regiments were located in western Son Tin and eastern Tra Bong Districts. Intelligence indicated that the enemy planned offensive action in at least regimental strength in Quang Tri Province, and continued infiltration into northwest Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces. On 26 September a troop concentration and base area was discovered approximately 14 km northeast of Khe Sanh. After Operation HASTINGS the combat effectiveness of the NVA 324B Div was considered to be 75 percent. During September, the regiments of the NVA 620th Div continued to occupy positions in the same area of Quang Tin Province. The 620th Div was considered to be 80 percent effective.

(C) VC initiated-incidents in October dropped to the lowest level in four months, with only 194 incidents reported. In the I CTZ activity near the DMZ and in Quang Tri Province diminished to light contact and patrolling by both NVA and friendly forces. An exception was a regimental-size contact between NVA and RVN forces in the Con Thien area on 4 and 5 October. Following the contact, NVA forces withdrew to the north. Captured documents indicated that units of the 31st and 32d Regts of the NVA 341st Div had been involved. Captured documents and prisoner interrogations continued to indicate that the enemy planned a fall and winter campaign in Quang Tin and northern Quang Ngai Provinces, and a secondary campaign in Quang Nam Province. The general plan of the fall and winter campaign

PAGE 36 OF 872 PAGES

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was to attack isolated installations with guerrilla units and to attack reaction forces with main force units of the 620th Div. In the NVA 324B Div, seven of the nine infantry battalions were considered combat effective, and all nine battalions of the 2d Div were considered combat effective.

(C) During November the number of significant enemy-initiated incidents dropped to 132--the lowest level of 1966. There were a number of friendly aircraft losses in November. A USAF O-1E was downed by antiaircraft fire near the Khe Sanh Special Forces Camp on 9 November. On 11 November at Dong Ha four aircraft were shot down, including two FAC's, one F8, and one A1E. On 17 November an Air America C-46 was downed by machine gun fire near the Tam Ky runway. Agent reports and aerial photography confirmed that in the DMZ the enemy had received replacements, supplies, and equipment; was conducting training, and had constructed SAM sites, antiaircraft emplacements, bunkers, and entrenchments. Intelligence indicated that the 341st Div would replace the 324B Div in RVN in December. Later information indicated the 324B Div withdrew to an area within or north of the DMZ to receive replacements and equipment, and to restore morale. The strength of the 324B Div was estimated at 7,200 and its nine battalions were considered combat effective. The strength of the 341st Div was estimated at 9,400 and its nine battalions were also rated combat effective. The strength of the NVA 2d Div was estimated at 7,000 and all nine battalions were considered combat effective.

(C) In December there were 271 VC-initiated incidents. In I CTZ most elements of the NVA 321st and 324B Div remained in positions north of the Ben Hai River. Enemy forces along the DMZ avoided major contact with US units during December but carried out mortar attacks on USMC units and engaged ARVN units in battalion strength. Activities in the DMZ area consisted primarily of stockpiling ammunition and supplies along known infiltration routes, conducting reconnaissance, and making preparations for offensive operations. FAC's noted two large storage areas along Route 109 in NVN above the western part of the DMZ. Reconnaissance and probing actions by NVA forces were intensified in eastern Quang Tri Province. In central I CTZ, there were two battalion-size contacts in late December. During Operation CHINOOK in Thua Thien Province, US Marines were attacked by elements of the VC 802d Bn and possibly elements of the NVA 6th Regt. In southern I CTZ the enemy continued harassing and small unit actions. Ba To and Duc Pho were potential targets for enemy operations. The NVA 2d Div and subordinate regiments (the VC 1st, NVA 3d, and NVA 21st) remained in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin Provinces.

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PAGE 37 OF 872 PAGES

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Operations in II Corps Tactical Zone

(C) Except for battalion-size attacks in Phu Yen and Binh Dinh Provinces, the enemy in the II CTZ continued to avoid any sizeable combat action during the month of January. The anticipated post-TET offensive failed to materialize. The greatest number of VC-initiated incidents occurred in the provinces of Phu Yen, Darlac, Khanh Hoa, and Quang Duc. During early January the VC continued to attack small RF and PF installations in Phu Yen. The largest of these attacks occurred on 7 January when an estimated VC battalion attacked and attempted to overrun an RF outpost of Son Cau District headquarters. On 31 January a VC force of an estimated two battalions attacked the bivouac areas of the 9th and 10th Cos of the 2d ROK Mar Bde in Phu Yen Province. The unit which attacked the 9th Co was believed to be the 30th Bn, 3d VC Regt. The unit attacking the 10th Co was believed to be an NVA unit, possibly a part of the 95th Regt. CHICOM weapons and equipment were found in the area and the 217 VC dead were stripped of clothing. Elsewhere in Phu Yen Province the VC continued to confiscate rice and to terrorize the populace.

(C) During February major enemy units continued to avoid combat with large Free World forces whenever possible. However, the number of VC attacks against RF/FF units and outposts increased. Of these attacks against the RF/FF units, three were battalion-size, eight were company-size, and seven were platoon-size. During February there were a number of important developments. The existence of a Field Front and a new NVA regiment in Binh Dinh Province were confirmed. There were also indications that another Field Front was operating in Phu Yen Province. It appeared that the enemy was preparing for increased activity in the western highlands, particularly in western Pleiku Province. A large share of VC-initiated incidents occurred in Darlac and Binh Thuan Provinces. The 966th Bn, 32d NVA Regt, and 3d Bn, 33d NVA Regt, were identified in Darlac. These identifications, the high incident rate, and information from a captive suggested that the entire 32d NVA Regt was operating in Darlac Province. The enemy Field Front in Binh Dinh Province was designated SAC VANG and controlled at least three enemy regiments. They were the 2d VC and 18th NVA Regts and the newly-identified 22d NVA or Quyet Tam Regt. In addition to these three regiments the SAC VANG had other subordinate companies and battalions, including AA, signal, transportation, and medical units.

(C) The number of VC-initiated incidents during March in the II CTZ surpassed the high February rate by 38 percent, continuing a steady increase since January. Enemy forces made six battalion-size attacks in March. As in February most attacks were made against RF/FF units, outposts, and ARVN units. The attack on Bu Prang by a reinforced battalion was the largest enemy effort of the month, and large enemy units avoided contact with ARVN and FVMAF units. Following Operation MASHER/WHITE WING in Binh Dinh Province, the enemy initiated efforts to regain control of the coastal

PAGE 38 OF 872 PAGES

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Lowlands and to prevent the GVN from consolidating control and furthering RD in the area. VC and NVA units in battalion and regimental strength were reported in the mountain area of Binh Dinh Province. Infiltration of NVA units apparently continued. Identifications of new units included the 500th Transportation Co of the SAO VANG Field Front. Following the ARVN and FWWAF operations in Phu Yen Province, the enemy made no effort to prevent further GVN rice collection in that area. Phan Thiet Airfield was attacked by mortar fire on 24 March, and nearby hamlets, outposts, and Highway 1 were attacked repeatedly by the VC. Preemptive operations of the US 1st Cav Div (AM) in western Pleiku probably delayed enemy attacks in that area.

(C) VC-initiated incidents continued in April at a high level. Except for two battalion-size attacks against ARVN units, the enemy continued to avoid contact with friendly forces. NVA infiltration, however, was continued at a heavy pace. Regimental-size infiltration groups 303 and 304 were located in western Pleiku Province and in the area of Cambodia opposite the Chu Pong Mountains. Interrogations revealed that the NVA 15th Engineer Bn and elements of the 16th Signal Bn also were operating in the area south of Chu Pong Mountain near the Cambodian border. Both battalions reportedly were supporting the 340th NVA Div, which suggested that the 340th Div headquarters was the control headquarters of all NVA units in that area. The enemy continued to harass and attack New Life Hamlets, RF/PF outposts, and LOC's. Attacks also were launched against US units and installations in the vicinity of Pleiku, Qui Nhon, and An Khe.

(C) Enemy incidents dropped sharply during the first two weeks of May, but by the end of the month had again reached a relatively high level. The enemy launched two battalion-size attacks during May. Infiltration continued and newly identified units included the 24th and 88th NVA Regts in Kontum Province, the 558th, 559th and 580th Infiltration Groups in Pleiku and Binh Dinh Province, and the 95th NVA Mortar Bn (120-mm) in Pleiku Province. The enemy logistic-support capability kept pace with this infiltration of new units.

(C) During June enemy-initiated incidents remained at a moderately high level, with a major increase noted within the VC MR 4 portion of II CTZ, specifically Binh Thuan, Lam Dong, and Quang Duc Provinces. A significant increase from two to nine battalion-size attacks was reported during June. This increase was probably in response to an MR 4 directive which ordered a major increase in activity, including operations by regimental-size units, with the objective of destroying ARVN and RF/PF elements. The MR 5 portion of the II CTZ was also active. The 18B Regt was confirmed in Phu Yen Province following a move from Cambodia. The 49th NVA Regt was reported in southwest Pleiku Province. The 24th NVA Regt was forced to move from central Kontum to

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the RVN-Laos border after having suffered over 50 percent casualties. Both the Ia Loi Div in western Pleiku Province and the SAO VANG Field Front in Binh Dinh Province were prepared for either separate or joint operations. The greatest threat to the II CTZ was a coordinated multi-pronged offensive in widely scattered areas. Friendly reaction forces in the CTZ would be hard pressed to counter effectively such widely scattered attacks.

(C) Enemy units in the highlands of II CTZ were relatively inactive during July, except for an attack on an ARVN battalion by the DL Lt Bn in northern Darlac Province. This attack resulted in 12 ARVN KIA and 105 VC KIA. Significantly, the VC initiated this attack without their usual numerical superiority. Operation NATHAN HALE reportedly interrupted plans of the NVA 18B Regt to attack Dong Tre Camp.

(C) During August enemy activity in II CTZ centered in the western highlands, where captives and returnees reported movements of large units. In addition, a new control headquarters, the NVA 5th Div, was formed in Phu Yen Province. Intelligence indicated that four regiments--the 32d, 33d, 66th, and 88th--were operating in western Pleiku, PW's from units in Pleiku Province reported that their units were understrength and without adequate replacements, that food and ammunition were in short supply, and that approximately 40 percent of the NVA soldiers had malaria and low morale. Despite the evidence of a continued buildup of forces in western II CTZ, the shortages of supplies and food continued to limit seriously the enemy capability for sustained combat operations. A westward shift of enemy units in late August suggested that the refuge offered by Cambodia was an essential enemy requirement for the support of NVA operations in the II CTZ.

(C) September began with a large-scale VC effort to disrupt the GVN elections by propaganda and terrorism. During the period the enemy launched one multi-battalion and three battalion-size attacks against ARVN troops. These attacks were in Binh Dinh Province and were carried out by units of the NVA 12th Regt of the 610th Div. Operations THAYER, MAENG HO 6, and BINH PHU 27 were launched in an effort to engage the 610th Div, but no significant contact was made. It was evident later that the 610th Div had moved into Cambodia in late August to evade friendly forces during Operations PAUL REVERE II and III.

(C) During October friendly operations in Binh Dinh Province hurt enemy military and paramilitary units and disrupted the VC infrastructure in areas that had been under VC control for as long as three years. The 610th Div, local VC units, and guerrilla forces in northeastern Binh Dinh Province sustained over 1,600 killed during Operations IRVING, DAI BANG 800, and MAENG HO 6. In addition to the heavy casualties, the enemy lost large amounts of rice and ammunition and was denied the use

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of several northern base areas in the province. The 12th Regt of the NVA 3d Div was reduced by combat action to approximately one battalion plus regimental support units. In addition VC units including the E210 and 50th Local Force Bns, in the Phu Cat Mountain area, were reduced by combat losses. During October elements of the 630th Div returned to RVN from their Cambodian sanctuary. There were indications that the NVA 32d and 33d Regts and the 1st Div were in southwestern Kontum and northwestern Pleiku Provinces. In Phu Yen Province, light contacts with enemy forces were reported. The headquarters of the NVA 5th Div was reported to be located in the northwestern portion of the province. The NVA 95th Regt was located in central Phu Yen, and the NVA 18B Regt was reported to be in northern Khanh Hoa Province.

(C) During November Operation PAUL REVERE IV apparently thwarted VC plans to launch a concerted offensive against the Plei Djereng Special Forces Camp. In November elements of the 95B, 88th, 32d and 33d Regts were identified in northwestern Kontum Province. Friendly operations in the highland area forced the enemy to withdraw from the Plei Djereng area. The 88th and 33d Regts apparently were withdrawn to the west and relocated along the Cambodian border, where they could operate with relative safety. In northeastern Binh Dinh Province the NVA 3d Div avoided major contact during November. Because of the October combat losses the division did not have the capability of division-size operations. Friendly operations in Phu Yen had denied a large portion of the rice harvest to the NVA 5th Div, but the two regiments of the division remained a significant threat.

(C) In December enemy units avoided major contact, particularly during the early part of the month. NVA units located north and west of Plei Djereng Special Forces Camp in the western highlands moved further west into the sanctuary area. The NVA 10th Div was tentatively accepted and located in the western highlands area with the 88th, 95B, and possibly the 101C Regts as subordinate. In eastern II CTZ, the NVA 3d and 5th Divs avoided contact in early December, after suffering heavy losses during October and November. A late December contact in Binh Dinh Province indicated that elements of the 3d Div had returned to their base areas and were resuming an offensive posture. On 17 and 18 December US forces engaged elements of the 18th Regt of the 3d Div in Binh Dinh Province. These enemy troops were occupying prepared defensive positions in Base Area 227. Also in Binh Dinh, an estimated enemy battalion attacked a friendly battalion during Operation THAYER II. The 5th Div remained in Phu Yen and Khanh Hoa Provinces. PW's from the 5th Div indicated that morale was low and most of the soldiers feared air and artillery strikes. They stated that there was a general shortage of food and medicine, and in some units ammunition was also short.

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PAGE 41 OF 872 PAGES

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### Operations in III Corps Tactical Zone

(C) During January there was little large-scale VC activity in the III CTZ and the enemy avoided contact with major ARVN units whenever possible. However, the number of VC incidents increased to 485 compared with 430 in December 1965. The most important of these was a battalion-size attack against the 1/49th Regt, near Trang Bang. Intelligence indicated that all or part of the 273d VC Regt had departed War Zone C and moved east toward War Zone D. It was reported that the 6th Bn of the 165A Regt, the Dong Thap (DT) 2 Regt, and two organic battalions (267th and 269th) were in Hau Nghia Province. A returnee identified a new unit, the 225th VC Engr Bn, in the RSSZ and reported that one company of this battalion had participated in the attempted mining of the merchant ship King on 2 December 1965. The battalion reportedly had the mission of blocking the deep-draft channel to Saigon by sinking a ship in a narrow stretch of the Long Tao River.

(C) During February there was a sharp decrease in VC incidents, particularly in propaganda and harassments. The two largest VC attacks in February were an ambush of an RF company in Tay Ninh Province on 8 February and an attack on the 1/43d in Binh Tuy Province on 28 February. By early February the 273d VC Regt had moved eastward out of Tay Ninh Province toward War Zone D. The 271st VC Regt also moved toward War Zone D from the Binh Long-Tay Ninh border area. Units of these two regiments were identified during a 24 February VC attack against units of the 173d Abn Bde. The D800th Bn of the 94th VC Regt also was identified in this battle. On this and other occasions elements of two or more regiments took part in offensive operations under one tactical headquarters.

(C) VC activity decreased 23 percent in March, with 198 incidents reported compared with 257 in February. Enemy activity in the III CTZ continued to reflect the VC effort to isolate Saigon from the remainder of the country. In addition to sabotage and terrorism, there were several attacks in the provinces immediately adjacent to Saigon. A returnee reported that the 156A and 156B Regts were in the Saigon/Gia Dinh area. Later in the month the 165A Regt, also known as the Capital Liberation Regiment, was confirmed in the Saigon area.

(C) During April VC activity decreased 22 percent to 156 incidents. On 11 April a VC force estimated at one battalion surrounded and attacked C/2/16th Inf, 1st Inf Div, during Operation ABILENE in Phuoc Tuy Province. The attack lasted about three hours and inflicted heavy casualties on the US unit. On 13 April the VC struck Tan Son Nhut Air Base with approximately 157 rounds of 81-mm mortar and 75-mm RR fire. US losses during this attack were seven KIA and 135 WIA. Four aircraft were destroyed and 56 damaged.

PAGE 42 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) During May the movement of major enemy forces in the III CTZ apparently was in reaction to friendly operations in War Zone C. On 17 May a CIDG search-and-destroy operation near Loc Ninh contacted an estimated VC battalion, tentatively identified as belonging to the 272d Regt. Intelligence indicated that the VC were preparing to attack the Loc Ninh sub-sector and the Special Forces Camp. In late May VC sabotage was especially intense on LOC's in Binh Duong and Bien Hoa Provinces.

(C) In June the VC continued to threaten the Binh Long area of northern III CTZ. On the nights of 4, 8, and 9 June, the Loc Ninh airfield and Special Forces Camp received 81-mm fire. On 14 June the 272d VC Regt again was reported in War Zone C. However, enemy units in Binh Long Province avoided contact with friendly forces until 30 June. At that time the US B/1/4th Cav was on a clearing operation on Route 13 south of Loc Ninh when contact was made with three battalions of the 271st VC Regt. The enemy sustained 300 KIA before breaking contact. On 29 June a patrol of the US 1/27 Inf was overrun by a VC force of unknown size about 12 km SW of Chu Chi, during Operation SANTA FE. On the same date during Operation YORKTOWN in southern Long Khanh Province, the US A/2/503d Inf engaged elements of the 274th VC Regt. From fortified positions the VC force vigorously defended against the US troops, using small arms, 12.7-mm machine guns, and mortars. It appeared that when Operation YORKTOWN threatened VC base areas, the enemy opposition intensified.

(C) During July the enemy was generally reactive and avoided friendly operations in the III CTZ. The exception was an ambush on 9 July of units of the US 1st Inf Div in Binh Long Province by the 272d Regt; VC losses during this engagement were 238 killed. After breaking contact, the 272d Regt withdrew to the northwest toward War Zone C and Cambodia. Captives stated that NVA personnel were being used as replacements in the 271st and 272d Regts. The Trai Bi Special Forces camp had been harassed since 22 June. On 23 July the camp was attacked by a force of unknown size, supported by 81-mm mortars and 75-mm howitzers. In Long Khanh and northern Phuoc Tuy Provinces, the enemy evaded large contacts with US forces. The enemy continued to inflict casualties on friendly forces by the use of mines and booby traps, and by firing mortars at friendly bases. The enemy attacked only the smaller isolated friendly units, where he could exploit his numerical superiority.

(C) During August enemy divisions continued to avoid combat while pressing harassing attacks and reconnaissance probes. The enemy continued to harass Trai Bi Special Forces Camp with occasional heavy probes pressed by units of unknown size. The introduction of the US 196th Lt Inf Bde into Tay Ninh Province probably deterred any major attack on the camp. The VC 9th Div remained out of action after the 9 July engagement with the US 1st Inf Div in Binh Long Province.

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(C) In September enemy-initiated incidents continued to be directed against the RF/PF and lightly-defended installations. The VC 5th and 9th Divs were relatively inactive. The Trai Bi Special Forces Camp in Tay Ninh Province continued to be the objective of probing attacks. Friendly units overran training facilities and munitions factories in the RSSZ without, however, making significant contact with enemy forces. Enemy documents captured during this operation gave the first indication that a company-sized unit subordinate to the MR 2 headquarters was deployed in the RSSZ, with a mission probably related to the VC effort to interdict shipping between Vung Tau and Saigon.

(C) The October level of enemy-initiated incidents was comparable to that of September. The VC 274th Regt reportedly had moved west between inter-provincial Route 2 and Highway 15 in Phuoc Tuy Province. The VC 9th Div remained inactive. However, in late October units of the US 1st Inf Div contacted a unit in southern Binh Long Province which was probably the 3d Bn, 272d Regt, of the 9th VC Div. Shipping on the Long Tao River continued to be a high-priority VC target, as demonstrated by the mining and sinking of VNN craft on 2 and 4 October, and mortar fire on a USN LCM on 7 October.

(C) In November elements of the 70th Security Regt, the NVA 101st Regt, and all three regiments of the 9th VC Div were identified in combat in Tay Ninh Province during Operation ATTLEBORO. This operation, which terminated on 25 November, resulted in substantial enemy losses including 1,106 KIA and 44 captured. Following the major contact in eastern Tay Ninh, friendly forces moved into northern Tay Ninh and pressed a reconnaissance in force to the Cambodian border, but failed to make significant contact. The strength of the 9th VC Div was reduced to approximately 5,900. On 21 November units of the 274th Regt of the 5th VC Div ambushed units of the US 11th ACR along Highway 1, near Xuan Loc in the southern III CTZ. In the brief firefight 28 VC were killed and 1 captured. This was the first confirmed contact with the 5th VC Div since 18 August.

(C) In the north of the III CTZ, the winter-spring campaign plans of the 9th VC Div had been spoiled temporarily by the November Operation ATTLEBORO. The division's three regiments, the VC 271st, 272d, and 273d, plus the NVA 101st Regt, evaded further contact with US forces and spent December regrouping, resupplying, planning, and training. By late December agent reports indicated that the 9th Div had replaced at least a portion of the ATTLEBORO losses. The 9th Div remained in a defensive posture in Tay Ninh and northern Binh Duong Province. On 2 December units of the 275th VC Regt ambushed the US 11th ACR on Route 1 south of Gia Ray in southern Long Khanh Province. Elements of the 274th Regt were identified in an attack on two ARVN training companies on 9 December near Ba Ria in Phuoc Tuy Province.

(C) During December the most significant enemy-initiated attack in the CMB was the attack on Tan Son Nhut Air Base. During the early

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morning hours of 4 December two platoons of the 6th VC Bn, 165A Regt attacked, causing light damage to the key US facility. The VC suffered 31 killed and four captured. The attack was probably part of the VC winter-spring campaign plan which mentioned Tan Son Nhut Air Base and Nha Be as potential targets. Additional objectives of the plan were to interdict shipping on the Long Tao River and movement over other LOC's. Operation FAIRFAX/RANG DONG, a combined US/ARVN search-and-destroy operation in Gia Dinh Province, was successful in keeping the VC off-balance and in spoiling plans for activity in the CMD. The VC were unsuccessful in attempts to destroy two key bridges in the Saigon area, but reports indicated that the enemy continued to reconnoiter key facilities in continuation of the winter-spring campaign plans.

#### Operations in IV Corps Tactical Zone

(C) The number of VC-initiated incidents in the IV CTZ decreased in January to 803 from 899 in the previous month. The VC continued to attempt to gain control of National Highway 4 by pressing harassing attacks and by terrorism. The enemy had the capability for battalion-size attacks; however, most of the 45 attacks during January were in company-size or smaller.

(C) There was a slight decrease in the number of enemy-initiated incidents during February, but there was little change in VC tactics. Local VC guerillas continued to carry out most of the attacks, which were generally directed against GVN outposts. There was some increase in the sabotage of Highway 4, and a number of attacks on outposts and ~~vill~~ villages in Dinh Tuong Province. This activity was consistent with the reported VC objective of severing this important land route between Saigon and the Delta. Attacks continued to be in company-size or smaller; however, the continued capability for larger attacks was clear on 7 February when the enemy attacked with a reinforced battalion.

(C) Small-scale attacks against outpost continued during March, and the level of VC incidents remained about the same as for February. There were reports of increased conscription, stepped-up training activity, and efforts to form new units. In addition there were indications that the VC were increasing their effort to exploit the economy of the Delta. The VC reportedly raised the tax rate and increased the number of personnel detailed to collect taxes. A number of new organizations reportedly were formed to improve the control and distribution of goods. These measures appeared to be related to the NVA/VC buildup, particularly in the III CTZ, which placed greater support demands on the VC in IV CTZ. One of the results of the VC effort to exact more men and rice from IV CTZ was a definite increase in the number of returnees and refugees in the zone.

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rounds of 75-mm RR fire. Later in the month a number of rounds of 75-mm were fired at Soc Trang airfield. On 17 July a New Life hamlet in Vinh Long Province was attacked and overrun. A review of friendly operations during the first six months of 1966 revealed that seven of the 21 VC battalions in the IV CTZ--306th, 261st, 501st, 716th, Taydo U Minh 2d and U Minh 10th--had suffered losses of 25 percent or more in various combat actions. Other unidentified battalions also suffered heavy losses. While these combat losses were probably replaced during the year, there were other indications in mid-year that the level of training of VC main force units in IV CTZ had declined.

(C) During August VC-initiated activity dropped sharply to 459. In addition, there was evidence of increased reluctance on the part of the VC in IV CTZ to stand and fight with any sizable force. ARVN forces reacted by increasing the number of operations and the overall result was an increase in VC casualties and an improved kill ratio. There was more VC activity along the main rivers, including an unsuccessful attempt to mine the clam-shell dredge operating at the Dong Tam construction site.

(C) The number of VC-initiated incidents declined to 451 in September. A factor in the low level of VC activity was the heavy flooding which occurred in the IV CTZ. To counterbalance the lower level of activity the VC evidently attempted to increase the intensity of those actions that were undertaken. There were more daylight attacks during the month, and there was a larger number of attacks against towns, including mortar attacks on provincial capitals. The immediate objective of the latter type of harassment was to disrupt the GVN elections.

(C) The number of enemy-initiated incidents increased during October to 657. The VC concentrated a large number of incidents in Kien Hoa Province, a development that was consistent with reports that the enemy had planned to start the autumn-winter campaign in that province. Captured documents revealed that the VC regional and provincial committees were concerned about a decline in the quality of the VC cadre, and problems in recruiting, training, and financing military operations. Agent reports in September reported that VC planning was limited in scope to small-scale activities such as attacking outposts, harassing with mortar fire, mining roads, recruiting troops, and training sappers. These objectives contrasted with the considerably more ambitious objectives of the VC in IV CTZ, as reported earlier in the year. These earlier objectives included large-scale attacks and even considerations of seizing Saigon.

(C) In November the continuation of the VC autumn-winter campaign was evident in a rise in the number of VC-initiated incidents to 693. Agent reports continued to state the objectives of the VC

PAGE 47 OF 272 PAGES

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campaign in terms similar to those relatively-limited objectives noted in October. The main concern of the enemy was to improve military capabilities and expand control over the population. The enemy went to notable extremes in attempting to gain control over the people. For example, on 7 November VC units of the 41st Div entered the Long Vinh New Life Hamlet and forcibly carried away the total population of 107 people. On 24 November the same VC company attacked Dinh Cu New Life Hamlet and again carried off over 100 people. The majority of these people were recent refugees from nearby VC-controlled territory. The people were subsequently given indoctrination classes by the VC. Mass kidnapping of people from GVN-sponsored hamlets had not been previously practiced in the IV CTZ, but mass indoctrination of the people was not new. The VC had 21 battalions deployed in the IV CTZ. Deployment was decentralized in order to carry out widely scattered small-scale attacks.

(C) During December the VC autumn-winter campaign continued and the level of activity continued high at 721 enemy-initiated incidents. Significantly, the enemy increased the use of high-trajectory RR fire to shell critical friendly targets, and directed more attacks against Rural Construction cadre and their escorting units. In Dinh Tuong Province the VC attacked and harassed the Dong Tam construction site in an effort to delay completion of this operations base. On 11 December a drag-line at the site was destroyed while guards were lured away by small arms fire. Elsewhere the headquarters of the 9th ARVN Div was harassed by small arms, mortar, and RR fire. Thus at the end of the year the VC in IV CTZ were continuing their tactics of random harassments and small-scale attacks against targets that appeared to promise numerous small, quick victories.

#### ENEMY SUPPORT OPERATIONS

##### Enemy Logistics

(S) As 1966 ended the enemy's logistics system was supplying approximately 128,635 combat and combat support personnel with sufficient food, equipment, arms, ammunition, and other supplies to continue the war of attrition. The enemy had established an efficient logistics network in RVN, and had disposed his maneuver battalions to take full advantage of LOC's, base areas, and sanctuaries. Clothing, equipment, and ammunition were supplied for the most part from out-of-country resources, while most of his food was secured within RVN and Cambodia. 44

(S) In November of 1965 MACV had estimated that with a major truck effort NVN had the year-round capability of moving 195 tons of supplies and material per day from NVN through Laos into RVN. (Sirec

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that estimate, however, the enemy had completed a major road construction effort.) In the opinion of MACJ2, it was important not to underestimate either the determination or the logistic capabilities of the enemy. Gen Vo Nguyen Giap had written:

On the main Dien Bien Phu front, our people had to ensure the supply of food and munitions to a big Army, operating 500 to 700 kilometers from the rear, and in very difficult conditions. The roads were bad, the means of transport insufficient and the supply lines relentlessly attacked by the enemy. There was in addition, the menace of heavy rains that could create more obstacles than bombing.

Truck convoys valiantly crossed streams, mountains, and forests. Drivers spent scores of sleepless nights, in defiance of difficulties and dangers, to bring food and ammunition to the front, to permit the army to annihilate the enemy. Thousands of bicycles from the towns also carried food and munitions to the front. Hundreds of sampans of all sizes, hundreds of thousands of bamboo rafts crossed rapids and cascades to supply the front. Convoys of packhorses from the Meo highlands or the provinces headed for the front. Day and night, hundreds of thousands of porters and young volunteers crossed passes and forded rivers in spite of enemy planes and delayed action bombs.<sup>45</sup>

(S) As a result of the enemy's increased efforts, MACV estimated in early 1966 that the enemy had a year-round capability of moving a daily average of at least 308 tons through Laos, Cambodia, and by sea infiltration into RVN. MACV estimated that the enemy could move at least an additional 150 tons per day on the LOC's leading to and through the DMZ. Thus the total estimated year-round logistic infiltration capability of the enemy was approximately 458 tons per day. MACJ2 studied these enemy logistic capabilities in the context of two variables, i.e., the estimated number of troops that the enemy might attempt to employ in the RVN, and the increased intensity of combat which had been forced upon the enemy by the 1966 increases in the scale of friendly operations. MACJ2 concluded that at the higher levels of intensity of combat the total enemy requirement would be approximately 260 tons of supplies per day. Further, even in the enemy deployed the maximum projected force in RVN and maintained the higher tempo of combat, the logistic requirement would total approximately 317 tons per day. Since the enemy was capable of infiltrating 458 tons of supplies per day, MACJ2 estimated that even at the maximum estimated strength the enemy would still have an excess logistic capability of approximately 140 tons per day.<sup>46</sup>

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(C) An analysis of two notebooks belonging to two different high-ranking rear service staff officers in the 610th Div disclosed details of the supply system of that division, which were similar to those of other large enemy units. The rear service staff of the division was responsible for providing the troops with the necessary supplies for combat, including food, clothing, ammunition, medical supplies, and financial support. To accomplish this mission the rear service staff used such special units as the division transport battalions and regimental transport companies. The rear service staff had four sections—quartermaster, ordnance, medical and finance. Since motor transport generally was not available to the enemy in RVN, the rear service staff relied on foot transport provided by the division transport battalion of approximately 400 men and the regimental transport companies of approximately 70 men. Laborers were levied from the division area of activity, the 610th Div planning for a labor force of 1,200 personnel. The transport battalion normally was used in its entirety, while the regimental transport company was committed according to tactical requirements and the labor force available. The rice and ammunition depots belonged either to the region, the sub-rear service, the division, or the district. In emergencies, rice could be borrowed from the local people or from the depot and repaid later by the region. The organization of depot and service support units varied, since local commanders were allowed a great deal of flexibility and had the authority to organize their rear service units in accordance with a particular mission. Depots were not scattered, but were located in a central area where the division units were most likely to conduct operations, in rugged terrain which denied the RVNAF easy access. They were as close as possible to populated areas for easy access to transport labor and for tactical considerations. The 610th Div storage area was positioned in southern Quang Ngai Province, a location which permitted the division the flexibility of operating for a period in either Quang Ngai or Binh Dinh Province and then falling back to rest areas which had adequate logistic support. Thus when an enemy unit moved out for an operation, it also moved closer to its source of supplies. There were two methods of storage and issue. In one method, one-third of the stock was moved to forward depots, and the remainder was dispersed among the villagers for safe keeping. Thus each village and hamlet was in effect a VC depot. In the other method an initial issue of a 30-day rice supply was made to the regiment and replenished when half of it was consumed. Rear service staffs maintained a 30-day supply for all units in their areas. Each soldier carried a seven-day emergency rice ration in his personal pack. Units drew rice from villages or depots along their axis of advance and regiments were assigned specific areas from which foodstuffs could be purchased.<sup>47</sup>

PAGE 50 OF 872 PAGES

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### Enemy Weapons

(S) The enemy continued in 1966 to use a large variety of makes and models of small arms and crew-served weapons. The trend in weaponry in VC main force units was to 7.62-mm rifles, submachine guns, assault rifles, and machine guns of communist-block manufacture. The VC apparently had an adequate supply of crew-served weapons; the most common were 57-mm and 75-mm RR, cal.50 and 12.7-mm machine guns, rocket launchers, and flamethrowers. The enemy continued his efforts to standardize the weapons in main force battalions, but MACV believed he would rely heavily on captured weapons for his local force units. The issue status of the new family of 7.62-mm weapons showed that 41 out of 60 NVA main force battalions and 28 of 52 VC main force battalions had the weapons, which consisted of the Soviet-designed and Chinese-manufactured AK-47 assault rifle, the SKS carbine, and the RPD light machine gun. The term "family" was used since all three weapons fire the short 7.62-mm M1943 cartridge. Weapons of this type first had been captured in the Mekong Delta in December 1964, and since had appeared in increasing numbers throughout RVN. VC munitions factories could not manufacture 7.62-mm small arms or ammunition and there was no evidence that expended shells were being reloaded. Therefore, since captured US 7.62-mm ammunition was not compatible with the communist weapons, the cartridges had to be supplied from outside RVN.<sup>48</sup>

(S) The variety of weapons available to VC and NVA soldiers provided them with a potential firepower comparable to that of any infantryman in the world. A unit armed with the 7.62-mm weapons and the K-50 submachine gun had more firepower than an opposing unit equipped with such semi-automatic weapons as the US M1 and M14. Weapons and ammunition used by the NVA/VC were acquired in various ways. Some were captured from RVN or Allied forces, some were manufactured locally, and French weapons from the Indochina War were still employed. Increasingly large numbers of weapons and amounts of ammunition were brought into the RVN from NVN and other communist areas. Most of this material was produced in China and moved via NVN into the RVN. Some of the larger weapons may have been shipped directly into the RVN. A number of the weapons captured from the VC were the same types that NVN had provided Kong Le and the Pathet Lao in Laos. Large quantities of "homemade" mines and grenades were used by VC and NVA units; many of them were standardized and were quite effective. This use of local resources greatly reduced the burden on the supply lines reaching back to NVN and Communist China.<sup>49</sup>

(S) The enemy relied increasingly on mortars, particularly for harassment actions such as those associated with the elections in September 1966. The employment of 60, 81, and 82-mm mortars was standard practice. The 120-mm mortar was identified first in early 1966 during

PAGE 51 OF 872 PAGES

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an attack against the Khe Sanh Special Forces camp. Light howitzers were also in the NVA/VC inventory, but only a few were believed to be available. The enemy normally used from one to ten mortars for supporting attacks and probes. The actual number of weapons varied with the size of the attack force, and the number of rounds fired varied from a few to more than 100. At least four 81 or 82-mm mortars were used during battalion and larger unit actions, and occasionally these were supplemented by four to six 60-mm mortars. The VC used their mortars effectively for harassing fire against static friendly positions such as airfields and parked aircraft. There were few confirmed uses of 70-mm or 75-mm howitzers in RVN. Captured documents alluded to the use of howitzers, but probably more frequently than was actually the case. The number of mortars and howitzers estimated to have been in the hands of enemy forces is shown in the following table:<sup>50</sup>

<u>WEAPON</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>ORIGIN</u>
60-mm mortar	676	US, CHICOM
81-mm and 82-mm mortar	791	US, CHICOM
120-mm mortar	46	Soviet
70-mm howitzer	5	Japan
75-mm howitzer	6	US
105-mm howitzer	8	US

(C) The 324B Div, which infiltrated across the DMZ in June and July, was equipped with Soviet and CHICOM equipment. During Operation HASTINGS a number of new items of equipment made their first appearance in RVN. These included a Soviet KTM clinometer, for use with the Soviet 82-mm mortar model 1937; a CHICOM B600 field telephone; a CHICOM model 55-625 mine detector; a Soviet 82-mm recoilless gun; and a Soviet-manufactured protective suit. In addition, a Soviet 7.62 RF-46 light machine gun, the first of its kind captured anywhere, was taken during Operation HASTINGS.<sup>51</sup>

(C) There was some evidence of the existence of AA weapons in RVN. In mid-February air bursts were sighted at 12,000 feet in two northern provinces in RVN, similar in description and altitude to those made by 37-mm antiaircraft projectiles. On 21 February a USMC F4B flying at 16,000 feet was fired on by an air-burst weapon which continued to track the aircraft accurately after the pilot took evasive action. This was an indication of the existence of a radar-controlled AA weapon at least 57-mm in size. A Goryunov 7.62 MOD 1943 heavy machine gun was captured in Ba Long Valley. There was additional scattered evidence

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that the NVN/VC were using AA weapons in RVN. In July US Marines captured two boxes of 20-mm AA ammunition near the DMZ, and troops of the US 1st Inf Div discovered three 20-mm AA weapons ten miles north-east of Phu Cuong in Binh Duong Province. According to COMUSMACV, this was the first known discovery of the 20-mm weapons. The German pre-World War II 20-mm AA Gun M38 (Flak 38) was known to be in the hands of the enemy as an anti-aircraft weapon. Ground fire reports from the IV CTZ in November and December indicated the possibility that the enemy was using a 37-mm AA weapon in that area. It was also reported that COSVN Headquarters in Tay Ninh Province had a 20-mm AA capability.<sup>52</sup>

### Enemy Intelligence

(C) Four large enemy organizations directed intelligence operations against the GVN and Free World forces in the RVN. Two of these major intelligence organizations originated in and were directed by Hanoi. These were the NVN Central Research Bureau and the NVN Ministry of Public Security. The other two major intelligence organizations operating in the RVN were the VC infrastructure and the combined NVA and VC main force staff.

(C) The enemy intelligence organizations paralleled the organization of the GVN. Under the central government was the static regional structure of corps tactical zones, provinces, districts, villages, and hamlets. There were also the mobile military units, including divisions, regiments, and battalions. This GVN pattern was reflected in the enemy intelligence structure; however, enemy political boundaries did not coincide with those of GVN, and regions were substituted for the CTZ's. The NVN Central Research Bureau and the NVN Ministry of Public Security operated in the area of the COSVN. The VC infrastructure was static and operational sub-areas were fairly well defined. In contrast, main force military units were mobile and their intelligence operations were not necessarily bound to any political area. This resulted in an apparent overlapping of enemy intelligence operations. The NVN agencies, however, directed more effort against strategic, long-range targets; the product of their operations was of greater value to Hanoi. There were indications that there was good liaison between the VC infrastructure and main force units. The VC infrastructure provided that aspect of intelligence requirements which depended on a detailed knowledge of and access to local areas. Main force units availed themselves of the intelligence capabilities of the VC infrastructure which augmented their own mobile organic intelligence capability.

(C) COSVN, the highest headquarters of the VC in RVN, controlled all VC intelligence operations in RVN. The Current Affairs Committee

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of COSVN was the highest continuously-functioning decision-making body and, as such, decided all questions of policy which arose between meetings of the full COSVN Committee. Committees similar to the Current Affairs Committee existed at all political echelons of COSVN, including the Military Region (MR), province, district, and village. This committee controlled daily activities at all echelons, including both the military and civilian intelligence operations. Some key special sections or committees which reported to the Current Affairs Committee were the Security Section, the Military Proselyting Section, the Civilian Proselyting Section, and the Military Affairs Committee.<sup>53</sup>

### Viet Cong Tax Collection

(S) During 1966 the VC continued their political and economic activities in much the same manner as in past years. In the economic field the VC plan called for an increase of 40 percent in the level of taxes. This increase actually may have been achieved in enemy-controlled areas, but friendly operations in the rice-rich areas prevented the enemy from exacting the amounts of rice which had been taken as coercive taxes in previous years. The success of the VC tax-collection effort in urban areas was not clear, but MACV believed that a "pay off" to the VC was expected if businesses were to continue to operate. (It should be noted that non-VC gangsters were also engaged in extorting "protection" from the same businesses as the VC.)<sup>54</sup>

(3) One example of VC tax collection practices, which was of immediate concern to MACV, was the regular VC exaction of taxes from the vehicular traffic along National Route 20 between Saigon and Dalat. Most reports indicated that the VC used stationary collection points which were manned for several hours each day. On occasion VC tax-collection teams traveled along the road stopping all vehicles. The monthly tax rates reported were 1,000 piasters for automobiles, 2,000 piasters for buses, and 10,000 piasters for trucks. Although 10,000 piasters was frequently mentioned as the amount exacted for trucks, there were also reports of trucks being taxed according to the value of their cargo, at rates usually ranging from 25 to 30 percent. MACV estimated that the VC collected between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000 piasters daily on National Route 20. The number of VC operating a tax-collection point varied from a squad to a unit of 200 men. A member of the US Mission reported that one VC tax-collection point on Route 20 was operated by women. COMUSMACV designated the elimination of VC tax collection along National Route 20 as an important objective, and the 1967 Combined Campaign Plan placed emphasis on reducing VC transportation taxation throughout RVN.<sup>55</sup>

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## VC EFFORTS TO DISRUPT GVN ELECTIONS

(U) The scope and vehemence of the anti-election campaign revealed how clearly the communists considered the September Constituent Assembly elections to be a major political challenge. The intensity of the enemy counteraction in 1966 contrasted with the relatively minor interest shown by GNVN and the VC in the 1965 provincial and municipal elections, when neither the VC nor Hanoi took a firm position and there was no campaign of propaganda, harassment, or terrorism. The national election of September 1966 was a very different matter and was of vital concern to the VC, because VC aspirations were based ultimately on the success of their struggle to weaken and eventually to subvert the GVN. Any demonstration of the growth of a viable popular political base in the RVN constituted in itself a fundamental threat to VC strategy and expectations.

(C) Reports from throughout the country indicated well in advance that the VC planned to attempt to disrupt the September elections. Specific and detailed plans were drawn up to accomplish this end, and VC orders and instructions were widely disseminated. The NVN/VC plan called for the following anti-election activities:

- 1) intense propaganda by radio broadcast and leaflets;
- 2) organized demonstrations;
- 3) exacerbation of religious and regional differences;
- 4) intimidation of candidates and voters;
- 5) attacking or blocking of the routes to the polling places;

and

6) general terrorism, to include threats to murder voters and assassinate candidates, and throwing grenades at polling places. The VC propaganda campaign against the elections began in mid-April, some five months before the elections, but faded out with only a few cursory broadcasts. On 16 June Radio Hanoi broadcast the first reference to a boycott. Given the party-line from NVN, the VC picked up the pace of anti-election broadcasts, and by mid-June the anti-election propaganda campaign over the VC Liberation Radio was in full swing. An NLF policy statement on 25 July urged the people of the RVN to have nothing to do with the elections. During the first half of August the VC and Hanoi radio transmitted some ten broadcasts urging either boycott of the elections or violent overthrow of the GVN. In this propaganda effort Liberation Radio and Radio Hanoi devoted a major portion of air time to anti-election propaganda.

PAGE 5 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) The 25 July VC Liberation Radio broadcast of the statement made by the NLF Presidium is an example of the anti-election propaganda effort. A pertinent part of this statement follows:

The US imperialists and their henchmen are playing cunning, deceitful tricks such as democratic construction, social revolution, stabilization, and so forth. They have decided to organize the so called elections of the Constitutional Assembly on 11 September. By means of this deceitful trick, the dirty Vietnamese traitors Thieu and Ky, who lead the Saigon puppet authorities are striving, in obedience to their US masters' orders, to dab democratic paint on their rotten, treacherous regime in order to cheat public opinion at home and abroad. The NLF Presidium solemnly declares: the so-called Constitutional Assembly elections, or whatever type of National Assembly elections that may be staged by the United States and its puppets, are political deceitful tricks and buffooneries of false democracy, false freedom, and false independence; the NLF Presidium calls on all our compatriots, especially those in cities and areas still controlled temporarily by the enemy, to thoroughly boycott the election trick of the United States and Thieu-Ky henchmen clique, to smash this deceitful buffoonery, to strengthen their solidarity, and to firmly carry on the struggle against the US aggressors and the Thieu-Ky treacherous clique in order to win back national sovereignty and all the rights of the people for livelihood and democracy.<sup>56</sup>

(C) A second broadcast by the VC Liberation Radio quoted a 15 August communique by the "military command of liberation armed forces in Saigon-Gia Dinh area." A significant passage from this communique reads:

The so-called candidates must withdraw their names immediately from the list of candidates. They should not, repeat should not give any reason to justify their candidacy as lackeys of the US-Thieu-Ky clique. Government personnel, including chiefs of city wards and sectors, civil servants, policemen, and personnel of other agencies must stop immediately all activities advertising the election and should not repeat not coerce the masses to vote. Those who deliberately assist the US-Thieu-Ky clique by running for the election, campaigning for the election, and coercing the masses to go and vote will do so at risk of their lives.<sup>57</sup>

PAGE 56 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) The pattern of other types of VC anti-election activity varied somewhat in the different CTZ's. These variations reflected such differences as ethnic composition, religious groupings, and political makeup. There was no evidence of any cooperation between the VC and the anti-GVN Buddhist movement, but the VC probably attempted to penetrate and use the Buddhist struggle movement as an anti-government device. In I CTZ, particularly, the VC encouraged anti-GVN Buddhist extremists in anti-election activities. The VC also initiated terrorist and military attacks on candidates and polling places before election day. An extensive leaflet and word-of-mouth campaign was carried out. In August a pre-election carnival sponsored by the GVN in Hue was disrupted by the detonation of a VC mine. In II CTZ the VC appeared to concentrate on propagandizing and intimidating the Montagnards and playing upon religious and local prejudices to divide the populace. In Binh Thuan Province the VC Provincial Committee held a political indoctrination course of instruction in methods of disrupting the elections. The VC cadre of Binh Thuan Province were instructed to carry out general anti-election activities, including small arms firing at the polling places. In IV CTZ the VC effort was not so clearly directed at any particular ethnic group. The propaganda campaign used slogans appealing to patriotism and urging boycott of the elections. Three-man VC teams were active in Chau Doc Province of the Delta attempting to confuse and intimidate the people. In Kien Hoa Province police apprehended a VC unit which apparently was planning to sabotage the election in various towns of the Delta province. In other areas villagers were threatened with decapitation if they voted. In III CTZ the VC anti-election campaign reflected the importance of the capital city to the elections, and in this zone the VC were most active. In Long An Province the VC cadre were ordered to hold propaganda gatherings and to harass the people who intended to vote. Guerrilla groups were to gather near polling places and to restrict the people from traveling to the polls. Villagers in Long Khanh and Binh Tuy Provinces were told that those who voted would be murdered, and that voting booths would be blown up and shot at during the elections. In one village not far from Saigon, VC cadre workers visited every house and warned the people not to vote at the risk of their lives. As the day of the election approached, VC terrorism increased markedly throughout the country, but particularly in the III CTZ. The VC blew up a school and a district headquarters compound early in September. Two polling places near Saigon were blown up and there were numerous instances in which the VC threw grenades at groups of people listening to election speeches.<sup>58</sup>

(C) The GVN made preparations on its own to protect the election from VC interference, and to secure a valid political expression. The ARVN and the National Police implemented plans to provide maximum security for candidates and voters, by providing protection for the polling places and by providing body guards for individual candidates. As the election

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approached there was little agreement among GVN officials as to the probable percent of voters who would turn out, and how many voters would be deterred by the VC anti-election campaign. In a pre-election appraisal the US Embassy considered that a turn-out of one half of the registered voters would represent an important achievement in the political life of the Republic of Vietnam.

(C) The VC campaign of terror and intimidation against the election reached a peak on election eve and continued throughout election day. GVN officials estimated that during the period from 12 hours immediately preceding the election until the close of the polls on election day there were 166 acts of terrorism perpetrated by the VC. During this period 17 RVNAF personnel, 11 civilians, and two national policemen lost their lives and 167 others were injured in incidents directly related to the elections. The VC terror campaign continued throughout election day. Ten district towns and three province capitals were fired on by the VC and several major highways and many secondary roads were blocked and bridges blown.<sup>59</sup>

(C) Despite the extensive VC and NVN effort, the people of the RVN turned out to vote in great numbers. Even at places that had been harassed only a few hours before the opening of the polls, the voter turn-out was not affected significantly by the VC anti-election campaign. The relatively large majority of 72 percent of the people who participated in the election made it a clear demonstration of the growing political unity and sense of responsibility of the people of RVN.<sup>60</sup>

#### THE ENEMY SITUATION AT YEAR'S END

(S) At the end of the year COMUSMACV sent a summary report to CINCPAC on the enemy situation, including his objectives, tactics, and strategy. COMUSMACV felt that the enemy could at any time launch division-strength attacks at selected targets in the I, II and III CTZ's, while in the IV CTZ the enemy was capable of launching regimental-size attacks. These attacks would also be supported by local forces and guerrillas. Concurrently the enemy could continue harassing attacks throughout the RVN. On the political front, the enemy was expected to continue efforts to destroy the effectiveness of hamlet, village, district, provincial, and national government by elimination, intimidation, and subversion of GVN officials. The enemy would continue efforts to discredit and erode GVN political authority at all levels by conducting propaganda attacks against elected and appointed GVN officials and against GVN programs. COMUSMACV expected that the enemy would intensify efforts to blockade the GVN by denying the government the required access to its own resources, and would conduct overt and covert operations

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throughout RVN against vital economic targets and attempt to interrupt the flow of commodities to the markets by interdiction and harassment of LOC's. COMUSMACV also expected that the enemy would attempt to undermine popular confidence in currency by propaganda and possibly by counterfeiting.

(S) COMUSMACV reported that the enemy had increased his strength by some 42,000 during 1966, leading to the conclusion that, despite known losses, the enemy had been able to achieve a counter-buildup proportional to the growth of US/FWMA forces. The sources of this increase were in-country conscription and infiltration of personnel from NVN through Laos, Cambodia, and the DMZ.

(S) COMUSMACV believed that the enemy's doctrine of "strategic mobility" had been the subject of debate in NVN during 1966. Politburo member Nguyen Chi Thanh held that the proper application was to initiate mobile warfare with simultaneous attacks throughout RVN. However, the views of Defense Minister Vo Nguyen Giap had prevailed. Gen Giap favored a "defensive/offensive" version of strategic mobility, which had the following objectives:

- 1) to develop strong, multi-division forces in dispersed, secure regions that were accessible to supplies;
- 2) to entice US/FWMA forces to move into prepared enemy positions so that entrenched communist forces could inflict heavy casualties upon them; and
- 3) to intensify country-wide guerrilla and harassment pressure, to tie down friendly forces, to destroy small units, to undermine morale, and to extend enemy control.

The enemy dispositions, logistic efforts, and level of combat indicated continued adherence to this doctrine of strategic mobility implemented by Giap's tactic of the "defensive/offensive." Friendly intelligence did not indicate a change in enemy strategy, tactics, or weapons during 1967, although this possibility remained under continuous scrutiny. COMUSMACV had no evidence of an enemy intent to fragment his main forces and revert exclusively to guerrilla-type operations.

(S) COMUSMACV reported that during 1966 the enemy had been hurt in many areas. In his principal concentrations near sanctuaries at the DMZ, in the Chu Pong region, and in the Tay Ninh and Binh Long areas, the enemy had suffered heavy losses and had been contained by friendly preemptive operations. At the end of the year the enemy was avoiding major contact, fighting defensively when forced to do so, and attempting to rebuild and reinforce for winter-spring operations.

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COMUSMACV believed it would be premature to assume that an apparent decrease in activity in December 1966, just prior to holiday stand-downs, was indicative of a future trend. Further, it would be erroneous to conclude that VC main force and NVA formations were no longer dangerous, or that their unit integrity had been destroyed, or that their logistic capability had fallen below that needed to sustain the war of conquest by attrition.

(S) The level of battalion-sized combat actions the enemy had maintained throughout 1966 was about 1 day in 30. This level was consistent with his strategy of conserving his forces while attriting US/PVMA forces, and was within his logistic support capabilities. If forced to a higher level of combat activity such as 1 day in 15, the enemy would encounter difficulty. It was probable that during 1967 the enemy would attempt to infiltrate men and supplies into RVN by sea, through Laos and Cambodia, and across the DMZ in order to accomplish the following: to counter-balance the US/PVMAF buildup; to maintain a strong military threat; to attrit friendly forces and destroy friendly determination by inflicting casualties and prolonging the conflict; to maintain and expand the insurgency base; and to continue his protracted war for control of the people of RVN.<sup>61</sup>

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PAGE 61 OF 872 PAGES

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CHAPTER III

THE INCREASING TEMPO

THE TROOP BUILDUP

(C) The continued buildup of US/FWMAF in RVN was a direct response to the threat of increased VC/NVA forces and the determination of the USG to meet this threat. During 1965, the employment of large US combat forces was the basis of experience and know-how for future operations and tactics. The support of this continued buildup was a reflection of the US determination to fulfill its commitments to RVN and to provide the atmosphere in which a free nation could choose its own government under its own rules. (See Chapter I.)

(S) Because it is impossible to separate the political, military, and economic considerations of the US presence in the RVN, portions of this chapter may seem unrelated to the total US effort. Such is not the case. In the period covered by this History, every aspect of the military effort was considered at the US Mission Council level before any major recommendation was forwarded to Washington. No deployment of US/FWMA forces was made without full consideration of the impact on the economy, the long range goals of the GVN, the local personalities involved, and the varied political and geographical differences that exist throughout RVN.

(9) It is probably safe to say that 1966 marked the year of realization - realization by the US that there was no magic solution to the VC/NVA threat as long as they avoided the conference table; realization by the VC/NVA that the US/FWMAF were not going to be defeated or dislodged; realization that there existed a strong sentiment among the Vietnamese people to have a truly democratic government; realization by the NVN and the CHICOM governments that they were not being supported fully by other communist nations.

US Army Buildup and Deployment

(TS) As of 1 January 1966 there were 116,755 USA personnel and 22 USA maneuver battalions in RVN. The major maneuver units were the 1st Inf Div (nine battalions), 1st Cav Div (AM) (eight battalions), 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div (three battalions), and 173d Abn Bde (two battalions).

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In addition to these 22 USA maneuver battalions there were 13 1/3 USMC and ten Free World (nine ROK, one Australian) battalions for a total of 45 1/3. Other US units in-country as 1966 began were 22 1/3 engineer battalions, 24 field artillery battalions, four air defense artillery battalions, and 46 helicopter companies/squadrons.

(TS) US forces programmed for RVN during 1965 had been referred to as Phase I forces. Forces programmed for 1966 were referred to initially as Phase II forces, but an increase in enemy infiltration of troops and equipment caused an upward revision of the US force-level required and the revised plan was called Phase IIA (add-on). Initial planning for Phase IIA began in November 1965 and was the basis for a conference held in Saigon on 28 November, attended by SECDEF, COMUSMACV, senior tactical commanders, and the MACV principal staff officers. Following the conference, refinements in requirements were made and the resultant recommendations were presented at a CINCPAC conference held in Honolulu 17 January - 6 February 1966. In accordance with guidance received from the JCS, COMUSMACV's requirements were prepared in the form of three alternative programs. This CINCPAC conference was directed by JCS to prepare the proposed forces structure and deployment schedules in the same forms. These programs, called Case I, Case II, and Case III, differed in the number and composition of units, the sources of these units, and in their arrival dates in RVN.<sup>1</sup>

(TS) The greatest limiting factor imposed by JCS on the three alternative plans was the source of the new units. Resources for Case I included the current CONUS force structure, including activations, plus feasible draw-down from overseas areas. Case III resources would be drawn only from the current CONUS force structure, including activations. Cases I and II programmed 37 USA maneuver battalions, 6 2/3 USMC battalions, and 13 FW battalions for a total of 56 2/3. Added to the 45 1/3 already in-country on 1 Jan 1965, the total force by the end of 1966 would be 102 maneuver battalions, the number requested by COMUSMACV. Case III would add 19 USA, 6 2/3 USMC, and 13 FW battalions for a total of 38 1/3. Added to those forces in-country, the total maneuver battalions under Case III would be 84.

(TS) None of the three cases fully met COMUSMACV's requirements, primarily because of non-availability of units within the desired time frame. As a result there were shortcomings in each of the programs, but Case I seemed to offer the best chances of achieving the objectives desired by both COMUSMACV and CINCPAC, since it programmed the largest amount of forces in the shortest period of time. This plan called for the introduction of the 25th Inf Div (which had begun arriving in RVN in late December 1965), the 4th Inf Div, the 9th Inf Div, the 199th Inf Bde, the 11th Armd Cav Regt, two air cavalry squadrons, two tank battalions (belonging to the 25th and 4th Inf Divs), an air mobile infantry battalion, four air defense artillery battalions, ten helicopter companies,

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a field force headquarters, and support troops. An additional airborne battalion for the 173d Abn Bde, to bring its strength to three battalions, was included in the request for the field force headquarters and troops. Case I was satisfactory in terms of maneuver battalions (102) and the required artillery support, but it was deficient in required helicopter support, since only 64.3 percent of the desired lift capability was provided. The plan also provided only 88 percent of the requirement for combat service support. In comparing the effectiveness of the forces under each case, the maneuver battalions were considered 100 percent effective if all the required support was available. Any shortages in logistics, combat support, or combat service support rendered the battalion less than 100 percent effective. The evaluation was made by applying these reduction factors, and in this case the 102 maneuver battalions were reduced to the equivalent of 96 fully-supported battalions.

(TS) Case II provided the same maneuver forces as did Case I, but since it did not utilize selected reserve units and individuals, and could not plan for extension of tours, many specialized units were not available. This plan provided almost 18,000 fewer support troops than did Case I. As a result, only 52 percent of the required helicopter support and 68 percent of the required combat service support was available. When reduction factors were applied, the 102 maneuver battalions were reduced to 88. This plan had the shortcomings of inadequate mobility; limited offensive capability, resulting in a theoretical inability to produce enemy casualties faster than the enemy could produce replacements; high rate of equipment loss and deadline resulting from maintenance deficiencies; the acceptance of a high risk, in the event of escalation, because of inadequate support for sustained operations under such conditions; insufficient forces for the desired level of sustained offensive operations to offset VC/NVA buildup; and insufficient logistics support forces to provide the desired level of support for US forces in RVN. The adverse effects caused by the shortage of logistics units were cumulative and projected into CY 67.

(TS) Case III provided a total of only 84 maneuver battalions. Deleted from this plan were the 9th Inf Div, a brigade from the 4th Inf Div, the 199th Inf Bde, an infantry airmobile battalion, the extra battalion for the 173d Abn Bde, and the tank battalion from the 9th Inf Div, for a total shortage of 18 maneuver battalions. Generally the same deficiencies found in Case II applied to Case III, with the additional deficiencies of inadequate artillery support, no ground forces for Delta operations, and insufficient force and mobility to guarantee 2 defense of all provinces and districts presently under GVN control.

(TS) These three proposals were forwarded to JCS on 12 February 1966. On 1 March JCS recommended to SECDEF that CINCPAC's total force requirement for CY 66 be approved on a time schedule which would extend

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PAGE 67 OF 872 PAGES

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into the first half of CY 67. On 10 March SECDEF directed the various Services and JCS to plan, for an interim period, to deploy forces to RVN in accordance with the Case I deployment capabilities and schedules. On 31 March the JCS document, revised on 4 April, was published outlining the units and deployment dates for CY 66 force requirements for the RVN and PACOM areas. The plan published by JCS did not differ basically from the one proposed by COMUSMACV and subsequently approved by CINCPAC. There were no changes in the total number of maneuver battalions and only a slight change in their closure dates. There were changes, however, in the number of support personnel furnished, and there was a general slippage of closure dates for these support units, some of them drastic.<sup>3</sup>

(TS) The decision by SECDEF to adhere to the forces listed in Case I, and to deploy these forces as closely as possible in consonance with the Case I deployment schedule, had a worldwide impact on US military preparedness. The JCS-approved plan stretched out the deployment of forces to 16 months rather than the ten months which remained in the year in which the plan was made. Under this plan, all major forces would close RVN by mid-1967 rather than by the end of December 1966. This program required an extensive drawdown of personnel and equipment from overseas areas, particularly Europe. The drawdown of a minimum of 55,300 personnel from USAREUR would result in the loss of more than 21 battalion-equivalents of combat effectiveness, and the recovery period would extend over a period of 18 months. This planned slippage in deployment dates would also preserve critical worldwide skills and allow more time for buildup of a training base. The training base in CONUS required to sustain the present overseas deployments required a base of 9 1/3 divisions. As of 1 March 1966, there were only 5 1/3 divisions in CONUS, none of them deployable. The stretch-out in deployment dates gave this base more time to adapt and expand. The four-division deficit could not be overcome, under current personnel programs, until 1968 for personnel and not until 1969 for equipment.<sup>4</sup>

(TS) In further justification of their modification of the original CY 66 Case I deployment plan, JCS stated that the impact of extending into 1967 the deployment of forces required by COMUSMACV in CY 66, although militarily undesirable, was a more acceptable risk than the greater degradation of the US worldwide military posture which would result if deployment were completed in CY 66 to meet Case I requirements with active forces. Disadvantages were due primarily to slippages in closure dates. However, these undesirable features were offset partially by providing combat and support forces in better balance, creating a more effective force. In the meantime, US forces in RVN were not expected to be in danger of being overrun, although some loss of momentum to the war effort would result. Compared to the original Case I deployment plan, the JCS-approved plan had far less impact on the strategic reserve,

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the CONUS training and rotation base, the European military posture, and other worldwide commitments.<sup>5</sup>

(TS) In response to this proposal, CINCUSARPAC was concerned that there would be no division for PACOM reserve in Hawaii for almost two years, during which time an airborne division would assume this role in CONUS. He pointed out the advantages of terrain and training in Hawaii, and the advantage of having a division deployed to a forward area. In a similar response, COMUSMACV stated that he was not in a position to assess the worldwide impact of the new plan, but that he would accept every maneuver battalion that could be supported. He warned that if the alternative deployment schedule were implemented, the result would be a reduction in the force ratio, since the VC/NVA buildup would continue while our own would have been delayed. Although he did not consider the command in jeopardy, he asked that the impact of the loss of momentum of the war effort be carefully weighed against the advantages which accrued from an extension of the deployment schedule. He also stated that extraordinary measures, to include civilian contracts, were being undertaken to overcome support deficiencies and upgrade the in-country capability to receive and support additional combat forces.<sup>6</sup>

(TS) While the planning of force requirements for CY 66 and 67 was in a state of flux, actual deployment of major combat units was in progress. On 9 December 1965 COMUSMACV had asked that a brigade from the 25th Inf Div in Hawaii be airlifted directly to Pleiku in early January 1966 and that another brigade be deployed by sea to the Saigon area by 20 January. These accelerated deployments were requested in order to counter the enemy threat in the highlands, and to give the 1st Cav Div (AM) more flexibility in operations. The brigade in the Saigon area would counter the growing enemy threat in the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh area. COMUSMACV requested air deployment to provide the most rapid movement direct to the critical areas, to avoid added congestion at RVN ports, and to avoid the requirement to divert sizable forces to the task of securing land routes from the port areas to Pleiku for the in-country movement of the brigade. JCS approved this request on 11 December, and the 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div began arriving in Pleiku late in December; the 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div arrived by ship during the period 18-31 January and deployed to the base camp at Chu Chi in Hau Nghia Province.<sup>7</sup>

(TS) On 23 January COMUSMACV asked that the deployment of the remainder of the 25th Inf Div be accelerated. He specifically desired to have the cavalry squadron and engineer battalion by 15 March; the support command, division artillery, signal battalion, medical battalion, and division headquarters by 30 March; and the 1st Bde by 30 April. CINCPAC forwarded this request to JCS on 30 January, and on 4 February DA authorized CINCUSARPAC to issue the movement directive to the division. The 1st Bde was scheduled to arrive on 30 April, while deployment of the

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division command group was at the discretion of the division commander. The 1st Bde arrived on 29 April, having been preceded by the command group by six days. The accelerated deployment brought the 25th Inf Div in-country some five months ahead of the original schedule.

(S) Original plans for the deployment of the 1st Bn, 69th Armor of the 25th Inf Div called for the entire battalion to be deployed to Qui Nhon for movement overland to Fleiku. On 17 February COMUSMACV requested that one company be deployed to Qui Nhon for movement to Fleiku to support operations with the 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div and that the battalion (-) be deployed to Vung Tau for movement to Cu Chi, the division headquarters. This change was requested because of increased VC activity in Hau Nghia Province in early 1966, and good trafficability in the area for armor during the dry season, which would extend into May. This request was approved on 20 February and the battalion was deployed as scheduled on 15 March.

(TS) Late in April COMUSMACV became alarmed at the NVA concentration which threatened the CIDG camps and population centers in the RVN highlands. This threat was expected to become more serious after the onset of the SW monsoon season (mid-May to early September), when tactical air and airmobile forces would be grounded for extended periods of time. In view of this, COMUSMACV informed CINCPAC of his decision to redeploy the 1st Bn, 69th Armor (-) from Cu Chi to Fleiku. He stated that the complete tank battalion would provide CG I FFORCEV a strong strike capability which could be used to reinforce or relieve areas under attack in the highlands. He further stated that although this move would reduce significantly the offensive capability in III CTZ, it could be accepted during the monsoon season when trafficability would be limited. He also requested that an additional tank battalion be deployed to RVN as soon as possible, preferably equipped with the Sheridan tank because of its swim capability. CG 25th Inf Div objected strongly to the withdrawal of his tank element, but COMUSMACV replied that the decision had already been made. The battalion was originally scheduled to arrive in Fleiku on 15 May, but this was slipped to 22 May due to the unit's participation in Operation BIRMINGHAM in Tay Ninh Province.

(S) As the monsoon season approached, COMUSMACV urged reconsideration of his concept for employment of armor in RVN. Restating his request for the early deployment of a tank battalion, he asked that the tank battalion from the 4th Inf Div go to Cu Chi to replace the battalion (-) which had deployed to Fleiku. CINCPAC concurred, but no accelerated deployment schedule was mentioned at this time. COMUSMACV's concept of the use of armor in RVN dated from 1965, when the 11th Armd Cav Regt (ACR) had been requested for route security for National Route 1, with base at Xuan Loc, as part of the CY 66 buildup. Since he desired to use this regiment on missions other than route security, he became concerned over the TOE of the regiment, maintaining it was too heavy for RVN's

PAGE 70 OF 822 PAGES

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heavy rains, difficult terrain, and limited-capacity bridges. Late in December 1965 an equipment modification proposal was sent to DA suggesting the substitution of M41A3 tanks for medium tanks, of M113's for tanks in the armored cavalry platoons, of armored cars for certain M113's, of the M578 track recovery vehicle (VTR) for the M88 track recovery vehicle, and the deletion of the armored vehicle-launched bridges (AVLB) and launchers. DA replied that since COMUSMACV had requested that the ACR be deployed at the earliest practicable date, no major change could be made in its equipment because of the time required for modification and the concomitant training required on the modified equipment. DA also stated that deployment with its TOE equipment would enable the 11th ACR to perform tasks other than route security. <sup>11</sup>

(TS) CINCUSARPAC echoed the same thinking, stating that it would be desirable to deploy the 11th ACR in July 1966 in its present equipment configuration, a course of action that would increase COMUSMACV's combat power soonest and provide a strong capability for route security, convoy protection, and screening operations. Its present configuration permitted a high degree of flexibility in organizing light task forces for operations where medium tanks would be restricted. In regard to the specific equipment modifications proposed by COMUSMACV, CINCUSARPAC non-concurred on substitution of light tanks for medium tanks because of the support problem involved. There was no objection to substitution of M113's for tanks in the armored cavalry platoons, but the loss of direct firepower was pointed out, as was the fact that the present armored car was an unsatisfactory substitute for the M113; the introduction of this new vehicle would complicate support problems. In regard to the M578 versus the M88, the M88 was superior in turning radius, vertical and ditch clearance, fording characteristics, and winching, towing, and traction capabilities, CINCUSARPAC also recommended that the AVLB be retained because of its sixty-foot stream-spanning capability. <sup>12</sup>

(TS) COMUSMACV then stated a preference for a mechanized brigade in lieu of the formerly programmed ACR. The M48A3 tank, he felt, was too heavy for both roads and bridges in RVN, and the 132 M48A3 tanks in the ACR would be the equivalent of over two tank battalions, for which he had no requirement. He considered that mechanized infantry units, by reason of equipment and training, were better suited than the ACR then programmed for the mission of LOC security. CG USCONARC then recommended the inactivation of the 11th ACR and conversion of the 199th Inf Bde (Sep) to a mechanized brigade, but DA, in its non-concurrence, stated that reexamination of the deployment of a mechanized brigade in lieu of the 11th ACR had resulted in the recommendation to modify the 11th ACR and deploy it to meet an August 1966 in-country close date. This recommendation was based on the fact that an ACR had extensive organic signal communications, was organized and trained to conduct decentralized reconnaissance and security operations over large areas, was structured to provide easy transition to follow-on vehicles such as the armored reconnaissance airborne assault vehicle, and had a good organic fire

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support capability—an artillery battery and four carriers in each squadron. The proposed DA modifications of the ACR included substitution of M113's for M114's in the armored cavalry platoons; replacement of the M48A3 tanks with M113's in the armored cavalry troops, on a two for three basis; retention and deployment of the M48A3 tanks in the tank troops of the armored cavalry squadrons (total of 51 in ACR); and retention and deployment of the M88 VTR and the AVLB. Analysis of the 11th ACR (as modified) favored its selection over a mechanized brigade based on comparative numbers of combat vehicles, automatic weapons, and long-range communications density, and its greater flexibility in intelligence gathering. Also, substitution of a mechanized brigade would delay the closure date in-country, and it could not be supported from programmed assets.<sup>13</sup>

(C) The warning order for deployment to RVN was sent to the 11th ACR on 11 March 1966. The 2d Sq arrived on 8 September, the 3d Sq arrived on 12 September, and the entire unit had closed by the end of the month.<sup>14</sup>

(S) Another action related to the employment of armor in RVN began on 3 May 1966 when CG USARV requested 200 additional APC's. DA at once inquired as to the number of additional maintenance personnel that would be required. On 11 May CINCUSARPAC requested that DA suspend action on USARV's request for additional APC's, pending a complete analysis of theater assets. On 23 May ACFOR informed CofSA that 61 additional maintenance personnel would be required to provide organizational and direct support maintenance for the 200 APC's requested by USARV. On 24 May CINCUSARPAC was notified of the organizations being considered as a means for providing the requested APC's (with necessary maintenance personnel) and his views and recommendations were requested. USARPAC indicated that mechanization of the infantry companies could be accomplished in RVN when the companies (TOE 55-47T) were deployed in CY 67. The USARV proposal envisaged mechanizing selected infantry companies simply by providing APC's plus "mechanics" only, with the infantry companies having to provide drivers. On 23 June USARPAC requested that the highest priority be given to the shipment of 79 M113's to replace combat losses and to replenish exhausted maintenance float and depot stocks.<sup>15</sup>

(S) In late June COMUSMACV summarized his future requirements for armor to CINCPAC. He recommended a cavalry squadron and a tank battalion for the IV CTZ, and a cavalry squadron for both the II and III CTZ's. For these units he recommended a total of 213 XM-551 Armored Reconnaissance/Airborne Assault Vehicles (ARAAV).<sup>16</sup> Consideration was given to retaining the M48A3 tanks in the highland area. COMUSMACV also recommended expediting development of the Beehive or canister round for the 152-mm gun, in view of the high usage of this type ammunition in RVN.<sup>17</sup>

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(S) While armor was important in the 1966 COMUSMACV requirements, aviation still played the key role in mobility. COMUSMACV was concerned that his air mobility ratio was not keeping up with the growing troop strength because of a shortage of aviators, fixed wing aircraft, and helicopters. In January 1966 DA had informed COMUSMACV that all aviation resources had been exhausted and that nearly 500 RVN returnees were being recycled back to RVN (176 with less than two years between tours) to provide aviators for currently-planned CY 66 deployments. COMUSMACV took steps to reduce the impact of this aviator shortage by cutting aviator authorizations to the minimum essential, and by immediate reassignment of Army aviators in the grades of major and below to cockpit slots. 18

(S) DA summed up the seriousness of the pilot shortage in a status report on 14 June:

Order of Magnitude of Shortage. By end FY 66, the Army will have a requirement for approximately 14,300 aviators vs a projected strength of approximately 9,700. Requests for additional aviation support in Phases III and IIE for RVN, with the aviation requirements in the desired Corps Contingency Force, may increase aviator force basis requirements for FY 67 from a current projection of 16,800 to approximately 21,514. Against this requirement, a strength of 12,800 at end FY 67 is currently projected. (The additional requirement includes consideration of reduced requirements resulting from the CV-2/7 transfer.)

Procurement. Actions to procure additional aviators through voluntary recall have failed to produce substantial results to date. Since 1 November 1965, including 34 applications on hand at that time, 68 of 127 applicants have been accepted and action is pending on 21. (Normal annual direct accessions approximate 110.) As of 2 June 1966 individual letters had been mailed to 1,773 aviators who were not on active duty inviting them to apply for voluntary recall to active duty. To date, 60 applications have been received and are being processed.

Training. On 29 March 1966, SECDEF approved an Army request to increase flight training to provide an active Army output of 410 aviators per month beginning in Apr 67. The current rate of 120 per month will increase to 200 per month in May 66, to 310 per month in Sep 66, and to the maximum rate of 410 per month in Apr 67. The Army staff is currently evaluating the requirement for further increases in new aviator production.

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Other Actions. The following is a summary of actions taken to date to increase the availability of aviators for SE Asia deployment:

- Reduction of manning levels world-wide to the following percentages of authorized aviator strength: VN to 90 percent; all overseas commands, less USAREUR and Korea, to 25 percent.

- Reduction of time between VN tours to a minimum of one year for aviator personnel in grades of WO through Major.

- Assignment of Majors to cockpit seat positions, as required; temporary suspension of career course attendance by Army aviators; and, continued suspension of "ground duty" tours for Captains and Majors.

On 6 May 66, SECDEF approved an Army request to withdraw aviators from Europe and Korea to minimum strengths of 250 and 34, respectively. Aviator strength in USAREUR is to be reconstituted to approximately 833 by 31 Dec 66 and in Korea to 172, as assets permit.<sup>19</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV was informed by DA that even with planned large increases in aviator training and a reduction of the interval between tours in RVN to one year, his requirements for aviators could not be met fully until late 1967. As a result of this chronic shortage, COMUSMACV was forced to shuffle aviator assets throughout RVN during the first half of 1966, and the picture for the last half of the year looked no brighter. In August there were 137 aviators in RVN on second tours, half of whom were volunteers. DA had begun to select for a second tour aviators who had returned from RVN in 1963.<sup>20</sup>

(S) Relating to the chronic shortages of aviators was the ever increasing requirement for air mobility. The successes of the 1st Cav Div (AM) in late 1965 and early 1966 had led DA to send a message to CINCUSARPAC, stating that the highly successful operations of this unit appeared to be due in large part to its organic capability to find and fix the enemy by the use of the air cavalry squadron. DA then asked that in order to assist the DA staff in anticipating future requirements, and to provide maximum procurement lead time, any requirement for an air cavalry squadron for the 1st, 25th, and 9th Inf Div's, and an additional assault helicopter battalion for the 1st Cav Div (AM) be evaluated, stating that three additional air cavalry squadrons and one assault helicopter battalion could be provided by the end of CY 68. COMUSMACV concurred in planning for three new units. CINCUSARPAC, in

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a message to DA, wholeheartedly supported the addition of these units, stating that they would extend the area of surveillance and the area of influences of the division commander, permitting him to exploit his superior mobility and firepower.<sup>21</sup>

(TS) In planning for the stationing of the incoming 4th Inf Div, a plan was presented to COMUSMACV which would leave the 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div at Fleiku and transfer it to the 4th Inf Div, with that unit routing one of its brigades to Cu Chi when it arrived in RVN. One brigade of the 25th Inf Div had always been scheduled for the Fleiku area, with the understanding that it would rejoin its parent unit upon arrival of the 4th Inf Div in Fleiku. Although there were admittedly historical and psychological reasons against such a transfer, it was pointed out that there would be logistical savings by avoiding a double move, and by August 1966 the 3d Bde would have become familiar with the terrain and specialized combat techniques peculiar to the highlands. It was estimated that two months were required for a unit to adapt to its surroundings; thus, if no transfer took place, a total of four brigade months would be lost. In his reply, COMUSMACV felt that human factors outweighed logistical gains and operational advantages; therefore, the units would not be exchanged, but their heavy equipment would. However, in a later meeting with the CofSA, COMUSMACV broached the brigade exchange idea; CofSA had no objection to leaving the 3d Bde at Fleiku, either making it a part of the 4th Inf Div or establishing it as a separate brigade. Another independent brigade yet to be deployed could be made compatible with the 25th Inf Div and honors and colors could be worked out. However, this idea seemed nipped in the bud by a reply from DCSOPS in May, indicating that there was no intention of redesignating the 2d Bde, 4th Inf Div as a brigade of the 25th Inf Div, regardless of its area of deployment in RVN. The message further stated that such an action would discard all the efforts of unit commanders to build unit esprit.<sup>22</sup>

(C) Operation ROBIN, deployment of the 4th Inf Div, began with the arrival of the advance parties of the 2d Bde at Fleiku on 21 July. Phase I opened with the arrival on 29 July of the 4th Engr Bn at Qui Nhon; personnel of the battalion were debarked on 30 and 31 July and airlifted to Fleiku. The remainder of the division closed in the next three months with the last units of the 3d Bde arriving at Dau Tieng on 13 October.

(TS) In order to insure that the forces in-country and those scheduled for RVN were properly rounded out, and to provide the maximum lead time possible to avoid or minimize the deficiencies

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found in the CY 65 and CY 66 force buildup, COMUSMACV began planning early in 1966 for CY 67 requirements. After refinement by the MACV staff, these requirements were sent to CINCPAC on 11 May in preparation for a CINCPAC conference on 2-10 June. These requirements were in the form of a round-out force, called Phase IIE, and a Corps contingency plan; the Corps contingency plan was kept separate from the Phase IIE forces. USA Phase IIE forces requested by COMUSMACV totaled 59,210 personnel and included 11 maneuver battalions, eight engineer battalions, 16 2/3 artillery battalions, and one helicopter company. The major combat unit in this force was a separate infantry brigade (mechanized) scheduled to deploy to Phan Thiet in March 1967.<sup>22a</sup>

(S) Early in 1966, it was recognized that a rotational hump would result from the large buildup in 1965. DA and USARPV coordinated efforts to minimize this impact. A joint DA/USARPAC team visited USARPV during the period 7-9 May 1966 to review actions required by the DA plan. DA actions in establishing requirements for early and late arrivals were concurred in by USARPV, and the DA/USARPAC team agreed with actions being taken by USARPV. In order to eliminate the necessity for USARPV to transport large numbers of 1st Cav Div (AM) replacements/rotatees between Pleiku and Tan Son Nhut during the summer rotational period, a program was developed to move personnel directly between Travis AFB and Pleiku, utilizing MAC special mission flights (C141) during June, July, and August. Approximately 9,000 1st Cav Div (AM) replacements were moved to Pleiku by these special flights during that three-month period. The flights also were used to return 1st Cav Div (AM) rotatees to Travis AFB.<sup>23</sup>

(TS) In the round-out force plan submitted by COMUSMACV in June 1966, he envisioned that the forces to be introduced into RVN from February to September 1967 would place emphasis on the following tasks: Intensify the progress of Revolutionary Development to attain the goals established in the February (1966) Honolulu Conference; extend the battlefield to increase ground operations in the highlands and along border areas; increase reliance on ground LOC's to support ground operations, which would require the opening, restoration, and maintenance of critical LOC's; and cross-border operations, as approved, to strike the enemy in his sanctuaries.<sup>24</sup>

(TS) In addition to the CY 67 force requirements known as Phase IIE, COMUSMACV also recognized the need for a large force which could be employed readily in RVN or elsewhere in SEASIA should a need for it arise. Originally conceived as a corps-size force based in RVN, this concept was changed on 6 May in a decision briefing for COMUSMACV, when it became apparent that permanent basing of the force in RVN would necessitate a construction effort which would seriously jeopardize other critical construction projects underway and planned, and further compound the balance-of-payments problem. The plan as modified and presented for CINCPAC study, prior to the Honolulu Conference held on 2-10 June, envisioned a force based initially outside RVN which could be called in rapidly should the need arise. The letter of transmittal to CINCPAC called the

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"Corps Contingency Force" a package to be made ready for deployment to an area as dictated by the developing situation. The area of deployment could be any place in RVN or, if authorized, in Laos or Cambodia. The force might operate under current strategy against a strong enemy, or it might be used in a shift of strategy, if for example an opportunity developed to shorten the war by new operations in RVN, Laos, or Cambodia. More specifically, the force might be used to intensify the program of Revolutionary Development to attain the goals established in the February 1966 Honolulu Conference; to extend the battlefield by increased ground operations in II and III CTZ's, and in I CTZ with elements of the force; to conduct large-scale operations in Laos or Cambodia against enemy bases, facilities, and infiltration routes; to assist in the defense of the central highlands, northern I CTZ, or other areas which the enemy might threaten to seize and control. The USA elements of this force package consisted of two infantry divisions (19 maneuver battalions), one airmobile division (nine battalions), one ACR (three battalions), 14 engineer battalions, 26 artillery battalions, and nine helicopter companies for a total of 122,885 personnel. Logistically the force could be supported in II and III CTZ. If deployed in I CTZ, a deep-water port would be required in the vicinity of Hue. With the exception of the port and improvement in lines of communication, the Corps would require minimal construction requirements, since it was intended to operate in an expeditionary role without permanent bases and contours.<sup>25</sup>

(U) Programmed as part of the CY 66 buildup was a Corps-level headquarters to control the rapidly growing US units in the III CTZ area. This headquarters became operational on 15 March at Long Binh, Bien Hoa Province. Known as II Field Force Vietnam (II FFORCEV), it assumed control of the 1st Inf Div, the 25th Inf Div (-), the 173d Abn Bde, the 23d Arty Gp, and the 10th AV Gp (-). On the same date, Field Force Vietnam, under Maj Gen S. R. Larsen, was redesignated I FFORCEV at Nha Trang. Maj Gen J. O. Seaman assumed command of II FFORCEV and Maj Gen W. E. DePuy, former MACJ3, assumed command of Gen Seaman's 1st Inf Div.

(TS) On 10 August COMUSMACV sent a message to CINCPAC and JCS on the subject of CY 66-67 force requirements. Because it summarizes the basic views of COMUSMACV and provides the rationale behind his requirements, it is quoted at length.

Continuous study of the situation indicates that past and current developments reinforce my appraisal of the war on which the CY 66-67 force requirements were based. There are no indications that the enemy has reduced his resolve. He has increased his rate of infiltration, formed division size units, introduced new weapons into his ranks, maintained lines of communications leading into South Vietnam, increased his use of Cambodia as a safe haven, and recently moved a combat division

PAGE 77 OF 872 PAGES

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through the DMZ. These and other facts support earlier predictions and suggest that the enemy intends to continue a protracted war of attrition. We must not underestimate the enemy nor his determination.

The war can continue to escalate. Infiltration of enemy troops and supplies from NVN can increase and there is no assurance that this will not occur.

If, contrary to current indications, Hanoi decides not to escalate further, some modification of the forces which I have requested probably could be made. Under such circumstances, I conceive of a carefully balanced force that is designed to fight an extended war of attrition and sustainable without national mobilization.

I recognize the possibility that the enemy may not continue to follow the pattern of infiltration as projected. Accordingly, my staff is currently conducting a number of studies with the objective of placing this command and the RVN in a posture that will permit us to retain the initiative regardless of the course the enemy chooses to pursue. These include:

- a. A study which considers possible courses of action by the enemy on our force posture and counteractions to maintain our superiority.
- b. An analysis of our requirements to determine a balanced US force that can be employed and sustained fully and effectively in combat on an indefinite basis without national mobilization.
- c. A study to determine the evolutionary steps to be taken in designing an ultimate GVN security structure.
- d. A study to determine the optimum RVNAF force structure which can be attained and supported in consideration of recent experience and our estimate of the manpower pool.<sup>25</sup>

(TS) An unplanned addition to the MACV force structure, during 1966, was the 196th Lt Inf Bde. On 14 June SECDEF notified CINCPAC that this brigade, which was to have been deployed to the Dominican Republic on 15 July, would not be required in that area, and that the unit could be offered as a substitution for the 199th Inf Bde, or in addition to the current program. The reply to SECDEF stated that the unit could be accepted as soon as it was available, and that it should be in addition to the 199th Inf Bde. On 22 June COMUSMACV noted that the brigade did not contain certain elements of its TOE, but said that MACV would accept the brigade without these elements and requested it deploy to RVN with a closure date of 25 August or sooner. The movement of the unit was expedited, and the 196th Lt Inf Bde closed at its Tay Ninh base camp on 16 August.<sup>27</sup>

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(TS) The decisions on stationing major units were of great concern to COMUSMACV in July because of the expanded NVA use of the critical avenues of approach from Cambodia through the Pleiku-Darlac-Phu Bon provinces to the coastal plains. Early plans had called for the stationing of the 196th Lt Inf Bde at Tuy Hoa; however, a major threat in the Tay Ninh area changed these plans and a mission was given to the 195th Lt Inf Bde to open and secure Route 22 from Go Dau Ha to Tay Ninh City and to prepare for large-scale operations in War Zone C. Further, it was hoped that this deployment would allow pressure to be placed on the Michelin Plantation and would allow the 25th Inf Div to emphasize pacification in Hau Nghia province.<sup>28</sup>

(S) The enemy threat in the DMZ area and the western portion of I CTZ in early October led COMUSMACV to decide to divert a 175-mm self-propelled artillery battalion and a 105-mm SP artillery battalion to I CTZ for increased fire support. CG's I FFORCEV and II FFORCEV were directed to prepare additional contingency plans to support III MAF if necessary.<sup>29</sup>

(TS) On 21 October, in a message to CINCPAC, CINCUSARPAC strongly echoed the rationale behind COMUSMACV's evaluation on the need for programmed deployments to be accomplished as promptly as the Services had the capability. It was recognized that these deployments were essential to permit accomplishment of required military missions and the support of Revolutionary Development (RD). COMUSMACV's statement that it was fruitless to secure new areas when forces were not available to maintain security once established, and the absolute necessity of coordinated RD support along with other US Mission efforts, was highlighted in the same message.<sup>30</sup>

(S) By the middle of October the decision on the location of the 9th Inf Div was becoming critical. With the threat in the north, COMUSMACV considered the possibility of diverting this division to I CTZ in its entirety. Alternate plans called for deploying the division (-), and studies were ordered on the logistical impact. The staff was directed to provide studies on the various alternatives in time to allow diversion of the division to any of the CTZ's.<sup>31</sup>

(S) During this same period, requests were forwarded to JCS to adjust the CY 67 requirements for a greater number of self-propelled air defense artillery automatic weapons battalions. COMUSMACV desired to attach an AW (SP) battalion, reinforced with a caliber-50 battery, to each of the seven divisions in RVN; to provide an AW (SP) battalion, reinforced, to support each of three separate brigades; and to make available four caliber-50 batteries to support the 1st Bde, 101st Airborne Div. COMUSMACV reasoned that these highly mobile and versatile weapons would provide a great increase in ground firepower for a relatively small increase in manpower. They were particularly effective in the conduct of reconnaissance by fire of suspected ambush

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sites and provided instant high-volume fire in the event of ambush; they could be positioned to defend such critical points as bridges, defiles and passes; and as base-defense weapons, they could be employed in a quick-reaction-force role to counterattack enemy forces. COMUSMACV noted that the availability of this weapon would permit a reduction of security forces currently tied down to the protection of artillery positions, supply dumps, and remote airfields.<sup>32</sup>

(TS) On 9 December SECDEF sent a memorandum to JCS on SEASTIA deployments:

I have reviewed JCSM 739-66 dated December 2, 1966 and approve the recommendation in para-7A regarding deletions and additions to program NBR 4 Forces except that I defer approval of the new Army units shown in Enclosure I pending a detailed justification for each by deployment adjustment request.

The approval includes the recommended revisions for Thailand. With regard to other PACOM countries, however, I consider that Program NBR 4 is adequate with respect to other areas except as noted in the enclosure. Any additional requests for deployments to out-of-country areas should be fully justified as to their relation to the conflict in SEA.

The trade-off of four Army engineer battalions and one Navy construction battalion is included in the above approval. However, these trade-offs should not be cause for an increase of contractor construction in lieu of programmed troop construction effort.

The enclosure mentioned in the quote above deferred certain units, without prejudice, pending a detailed justification for each deployment. The units included an augmentation to a PSYOP battalion and many smaller units for a total of 2,803 spaces.<sup>33</sup>

(TS) Early in December MACV 1967 force requirements were adjusted to meet the limitations imposed by SECDEF Program 4. One of the major adjustments was 442 spaces added to the field advisory elements, which allowed an increase of advisory effort at the sector and subsector levels. COMUSMACV determined that the addition of these special advisory skills at this level would have a country-wide impact in the nation-building program. Especially emphasized were engineer advisors in districts with numerous self-help programs, and security advisors where pacification was underway. In the structuring of his force COMUSMACV requested the greatest possible latitude in changing the unit mix as the tactical situation dictated. He asked that procedures be established to provide a system whereby he could make known his total requirements, to include

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those supportable by trade-offs with the SECDEF ceiling, and those not supportable. Further, CCMUSMACV asked that procedures be developed which would authorize him to influence the type and mix of combat-ready forces to be held in the US to meet possible contingencies.

(S) As the year ended, the 9th Inf Div was closing in RVN, and plans had been made to station elements of the division in IV CTZ. The USA strength had reached 250,000 in-country, and plans were being made to level this force during 1967 to approximately 300,000. At the end of the year there were 59 USA maneuver battalions in RVN, with eight more planned. Aviation assets continued to be a major problem. At the end of the year there were 56 aviation companies in RVN, not counting the six CV-2 companies which were transferred to the USAF on 31 December. Two other aviation companies were enroute, and additional aviation assets were planned for 1967. This included six medium helicopter companies, 16 light ambulance BA detachments, three Mohawk companies, and supporting maintenance units.<sup>35</sup>

#### Free World Military Assistance Force Deployments

(C) Free World (FW) contributions to RVN increased significantly in 1966. Much of the assistance resulted from negotiations and urgings of the United States Government (USG) in 1965 which did not bear fruit until 1966. Most nations preferred to provide civic action and medical assistance as opposed to active military participation. Considerations of possible CHICOM reaction in the Formosa Straits, of renewed Soviet pressure on Berlin, and adverse world public opinion on German military participation, affected the decisions of the Republic of China (ROC) and the German Federal Republic (GFR), respectively, in the type of assistance they would give. India and Canada, because of their membership on the International Control Commission (ICC), likewise were limited in the assistance they could provide. Proposed assistance from some nations, notably the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Republic of the Philippines (RP) met with considerable opposition within the national legislative bodies. Some of this opposition was caused by the unstable political situation in RVN from March through June, and some from attempts to secure additional concessions from USG. The USG worked behind the scenes with defense ministries and heads of various states, assisting and urging as necessary, to secure favorable legislative reactions to the assistance program. In almost all cases, the US paid for the equipment, transportation, and in-country support of the personnel of the FW assistance groups.

(S) On 25 March the President signed into law a DOD Supplemental Appropriations Bill. The bill transferred responsibility for Military Assistance Program (MAP) funding from DOD to the various services in

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RVN, allowing Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF) to be supported by corresponding US Services, instead of through the normal MAP Channels. "This change in budgeting and funding had little or no impact on support procedures in-country. A major share of this support of FWMAF in RVN subsequently was placed on US services. This was done for ease of planning and to provide some relief to the RVNAF logistics system, which was hard pressed to accomplish the support mission of its own forces."

Additional FWMAF Support for RVN

(S) On 8 April JCS inquired of CINCPAC as to the possibility of increased FWMA to RVN. The basis of this inquiry was a JCS study to determine what additional support would be useful and which would be reasonably available from FW nations. It was hoped that FW forces might be able to make contributions which would fill gaps caused by the US Services' shortfalls in certain type units planned for RVN during the Honolulu Conference in January and February, and the concept was in complete agreement with the President's call for more flags in RVN. Several problem areas were identified as requiring consideration prior to requesting additional FWMAF, chief among them being a unit's capability to contribute to favorable progress and to provide the most immediate and noticeable effect on the war effort. The units should be operationally, logistically, and administratively supportable by the US, RVN, or the FW country offering the assistance, either singly or in combination. Other problem areas concerned command and control, security, areas of operation, logistics support, linguistic barriers, and special situations engendered by nationality, religious customs and acceptability in RVN, and ability to beddown air units.<sup>35</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV provided CINCPAC a list of units which he felt FWMAF realistically could provide. These units were: Army--the maximum number of infantry battalions which could be supported, AAA battalions, FA battalions, 10 Engineer construction companies, four Engineer Light equipment companies, three Engineer port construction companies, three Engineer dump truck companies, three Engineer asphalt platoons, and miscellaneous engineer support detachments, medical evacuation units, petroleum depot units, transportation units and tugboat crews; Air Force--F-100, F-104, F-5, and B-57 squadrons, possible FW-manning of the F-5 squadron at Bien Hoa, light FW observation units for use in the FAC role, qualified personnel to act as FAC's, ALO's and duty officers in command centers, DASC's, and TACC's and transport squadrons or flights. It was recognized, however, that the introduction of additional air force units would require the construction of added facilities which would be a limiting factor. Navy forces which could be provided included additional surface patrol craft for MARKET TIME operations, additional destroyer-type craft for naval gunfire missions, additional patrol aircraft, additional survey ships to meet the heavy demands of hydrographic

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surveys, and logistics lift craft. In looking at the Asian nations which would be able or willing to contribute, CINCPAC noted that Thailand and Malaysia were committed fully in their own particular areas. ROK had provided all that could be expected, and further increases would not produce especially significant returns from the US investment involved. Japan and ROC were both capable of supplying more assistance in all categories, but political conditions and questions of escalation of the war by Red China were the deciding factors in limiting their support.<sup>37</sup>

(S) In August 1965 the US Mission in Saigon had advanced a concept of adding more flags to RVN by inviting military observer teams from selected African countries to advise and assist in counterinsurgency warfare. This concept did not get off the ground and was put in abeyance indefinitely by the Mission in April 1966. Efforts did continue, however, to get other military observers to RVN. Both Greek and Dutch military officers showed interest in the concept, although the Greek government was considered to be less than receptive to the idea. The US Ambassador in Athens suggested that if one or two other NATO nations were to take the first step, then the Greek government might follow suit. The Government of the Netherlands appeared to have a favorable attitude on the subject, and the US Ambassador there suggested that a joint RVN/US invitation be proffered to the Dutch Minister of Defense inviting Dutch military observers to Vietnam. In late September, an observation group from the Japanese Self-Defense Force visited RVN and toured various installations in-country. This visit was sponsored by the Japanese Embassy, although MACV provided in-country transportation, as in other instances.<sup>38</sup>

(S) At the Mission Council meeting on 1 August COMUSMACV discussed the large-scale infiltration of the NVA 324B Div through the DMZ, and concepts which he had developed to counter it. One concept was the formation of a multinational force (KANZUS—Korean, Australian, New Zealand, and US forces) to operate in the area south of the DMZ. Envisioned was a brigade-size unit supporting the 1st ARVN Div, to be commanded by a USMC general officer who would exercise operational control of the ARVN forces as well. Control would be exercised under the guise of "operational coordination" to avoid offending ARVN sensitivities. The chief value of this organization was the fact that it would be an international force with which to confront the invasion from the North. COMUSMACV also suggested that the ICC could place observers with the force. The Mission Council responded to the concept very favorably, and felt that if such a force could be developed under truly international auspices, or possibly even under the ICC, then the US position in the eventuality of negotiations might be improved.<sup>39</sup>

(S) The force was to be comprised of two USMC battalions and one ROK infantry battalion, while the headquarters would provide spaces for incorporating token national contributions from Australia and New Zealand as well as others that might become available. Since KANZUS was expected

PAGE 84 OF 822 PAGES

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to cooperate closely with the ICC, positions held by elements of the force would be accessible to visits from the control body, which would be encouraged to exercise its prerogative. JCS was requested to study the proposal and, if in agreement, to initiate an approach to the governments concerned to obtain their views and agreement. The Ambassador pursued the same end with an identical message to SECSTATE. All US Ambassadors to the nations concerned concurred in the project and were favorably impressed with the imaginative thinking behind the proposal.<sup>40</sup>

(S) On 21 August COMUSMACV requested timely State-Defense approval and guidance for the KANZUS project, because the stationing of any sizeable force in northern Quang Tri Province would have to be accomplished by 1 October; otherwise, the onset of the northeast monsoon would seriously hamper construction of base camps, establishment and stocking of supply points, upgrading of lines of communication (LOC), and other actions critical for adequate logistical and administrative support. Additionally, only minimum time was available for the assembly and shake-down of components of the force.<sup>41</sup>

(S) Some exception was taken to the name KANZUS as being necessarily restrictive to the nations participating, and might preclude other nations from participating. It was proposed that a name be devised that would signify broad participation in this international force. The ground rules for operations in the area of the DMZ also had to be considered, and it was recommended that the force have the authority to maneuver in the RVN portion of the DMZ to prevent enemy use of the area as a safe haven. A satisfactory legal arrangement would have to be made with the ICC prior to establishing the force, because of the possibility that at some future time it might be desirable for US and other FW forces to operate without restriction in the RVN portion of the DMZ.<sup>42</sup>

(TS) By the end of September, it appeared that the timing of KANZUS was not consistent with the enemy threat in northern I CTZ, which was now on the order of three divisions. To counter the multiple-division threat, which, basing itself on adjacent ground sanctuaries, could be sustained indefinitely, a force of greater strength and capability than KANZUS was required. A MACV study concluded that the concept was valid and recommended that it be supported, but recommended also that the employment of KANZUS be delayed until after the monsoon season.<sup>43</sup>

(S) In early October, COMUSMACV was asked to comment on the military aspects of employing the British Gurkha Bde in RVN. The Gurkhas, professional soldiers from Nepal, had been a part of the British Army since 1815 and were considered excellent soldiers; they had won an enviable reputation in every campaign in which they had participated. Since World War II, the Gurkhas had been employed in the Malaysia-Borneo area, and all but 500 of the 14,500 Gurkha active duty were currently

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in that area. Talking with the US Army Attache in London, the Adjutant General of the British Army had confirmed speculation that the Gurkhas would be phased out of British service. Unable or unwilling to indicate a time period for the action, the Adjutant General did say that such phase-out would undoubtedly commence soon, perhaps within a year, and could be completed within three years. The British Army was interested in securing appropriate employment for the Gurkha Bde until such time as it might be released from the British Army, and the question was raised as to the desirability of its employment in RVN. The Gurkha Bde consisted of eight infantry battalions, one engineer battalion, one signal battalion, and other support elements. Formed on the British system, Gurkha units were similarly trained and, above platoon level, were led by British officers. There were several critical factors to be considered in utilizing Gurkha units in RVN. Besides American antipathy toward mercenaries, a possible Gurkha reluctance to serve under non-British leadership had to be considered; further, Gurkha employment in RVN could provide the communists with valuable propaganda opportunities. 44

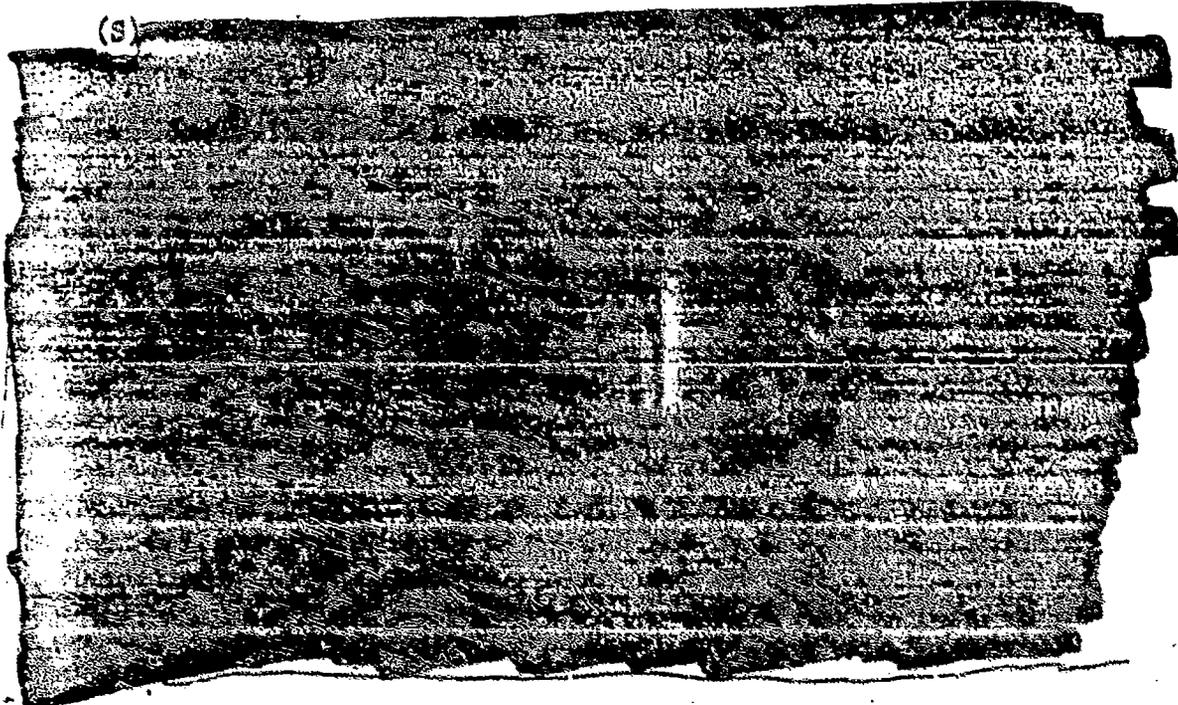
(S) COMUSMACV's concept of employment of the Gurkha Bde, if its use were accepted, was to employ it in operations similar to those it had conducted in Malaya. The principal advantage of employing the brigade would be the addition to MACV of highly-trained and disciplined troops who were skilled and experienced in counter-guerrilla operations in all types of terrain; the brigade would contribute significantly to the military effort. If satisfactory arrangements for leadership and sponsorship of the brigade could be made there were no overriding military disadvantages to the use of the Gurkha Bde in RVN. The principle disadvantage would seem to accrue to the sponsor, if disposition of the force became a problem upon cessation of hostilities.

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(S) Such questions became at least temporarily academic when the United Kingdom decided not to phase out the Gurkha Bde before 1969, when the UK defense policy and overall troop requirements beyond 1970 would be reviewed. 45

Republic of Korea Forces

(S) At the end of 1965, US efforts were well underway to increase the number of ROK units in the RVN. On 8 January 1966, SECSTATE instructed the US Ambassador in Seoul to begin prompt negotiations to obtain a ROK regiment for deployment to RVN by April, and a ROK division for deployment by July, along with the necessary combat support and combat service support elements. 46



(S) On 29 January President Park approved the request by RVN for an additional ROK regiment and division, contingent upon approval by the ROK National Assembly. In response to this announcement the US agreed to equip as necessary and finance all additional costs of the extra forces deployed to RVN; assume the costs of overseas allowances to these forces at the scale agreed to between COMUSKOREA and the ROK Minister of National Defense; provide death and disability gratuities resulting from casualties in RVN at double the rates agreed to by the joint US/ROK military committee; and equip, provide training for, and finance completely the replacements for the forces deployed to RVN. Entailed was the activation of one ready reserve division and organization of another as a replacement. It was also agreed to provide: communications facilities for exclusive ROK use which would permit the ROK to communicate with its forces in RVN, four C-54 aircraft to the ROKAF for support of ROK forces in RVN, and substantial items of equipment over the next few years for modernization of the ROKA. It was further agreed to improve military barracks and related facilities in the ROK with proceeds from MAP excess sales to equip the ROK arsenal so it could increase ammunition production, and to contribute to improving the ROKA anti-infiltration capability along the 38th Parallel. In the realm of economic assistance, it was agreed to release additional mon to the Korean budget equal to the increased costs of deploying and mobilizing the extra forces; to suspend the MAP transfer program for as long as there were at least two ROK divisions in RVN; to procure in Korea, in competition only with US suppliers, as much as the ROK could provide in goods purchased by USAID; to the extent permitted by CVN to



allow Korean contractors to participate in construction projects undertaken by the USG in RVN; to increase US technical assistance to the ROK in export promotion; to provide additional loans in support of Korean economic development in excess of the \$150 million agreed to in May 1965; and to provide \$15 million in program loans in 1966 to be used for support of exports to RVN and for other developmental needs. After several weeks of debate and behind-the-scenes political maneuvering, the ROK National Assembly on 20 March passed the bill authorizing the ROKG to send additional troops to RVN.<sup>48</sup>

(TS) A tentative ROK force structure was developed by the ROK JGS and presented to Chief KMAG on 19 March. The major elements of this structure provided for one infantry division and one regiment, HQ augmentation to the ROK Forces Vietnam (ROKFBV), 51 logistic HQ units, one engineer battalion, one evacuation hospital and associated medical units, ordnance DS and ammunition units, QM service, signal units, and transportation units, totaling 23,488 personnel.<sup>49</sup>

(TS) Simultaneously with the Korean negotiations, US planners at the February Honolulu Conference prepared an additional troop list for ROK forces on a unilateral basis, to round out a "theater slice" for ROK forces in RVN, consisting of approximately 10,376 personnel organized into an engineer construction group, transportation boat, barge, truck and terminal units, medical clearing company and evacuation hospital, signal support company, artillery group of 105-mm and 155-mm howitzer battalions, DS, GS and OAS Ordnance units, and QM service company.



Consequently, COMUSMACV had developed a force structure for the additional ROK forces being deployed to RVN, increasing it from the 22,398 proposed at the Seoul deployment conference to 30,030.

A combined ROKFBV/MACV team delivered the proposed force structure to Seoul on 14 March, where the structure was scaled down to 23,488 by the ROKG, the same figure advanced by the ROK JGS and the final force structure approved by the ROK National Assembly. The increases in the overall ROK force structure resulting from the deployment of additional units to RVN totaled 38,000 spaces.<sup>50</sup>

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(S) The political crisis in RVN in March, April, and May caused concern among the ROK leadership and raised serious questions as to the advisability of sending additional ROK troops. Some influential government officials and the press suggested that it might be wise to defer dispatch of additional troops until after the GVN elections. It was pointed out to the ROKG that such an action, or even contemplation of such an action, would be good news to the enemy. The ROKG reaffirmed its commitments to the GVN on 25 May, when the Korean Minister of National Defense stated that the ROK had sent troops "to stop the infiltration of the Viet Cong and to help establish a democratic government there." He added that political developments in RVN would not have a bearing on ROK military activities or on its reinforcement program.<sup>51</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV and COMROKRV agreed to a command and control relationship between ROK and US forces whereby a ROK field HQ would be established at Nha Trang, with about 200 operations and training personnel coming from the Saigon contingent; this location would ease operational liaison between the ROK and I FFORCEV HQ. COMROKRV would exercise command over his forces and would have an adequate staff for this function, while CG I FFORCEV would continue to exercise de facto operational control, consulting with COMROKRV on operational matters as a matter of routine. (There was no formal agreement pertaining to operational control and COMUSMACV felt that there was no need of one in view of COMROKRV's demonstrated cooperation in the matter.) The initial deployment of the ROK's 26th RCT began on 16 April 1966. The RCT debarked at Qui Nhon and moved into the Capital ROK Inf Div TAOR as planned.<sup>52</sup>

(C) Logistic support initially was supplied by RVNAF. In early March ammunition shortage in ROK units in the field became a source of concern to ROK commanders. To relieve the problem, COMUSMACV recommended that 1st Log Cnd provide Class V support to ROKRV. In early May ARVN was relieved of logistical support which USARV assumed. (Details of this are covered in Chapter IV.)

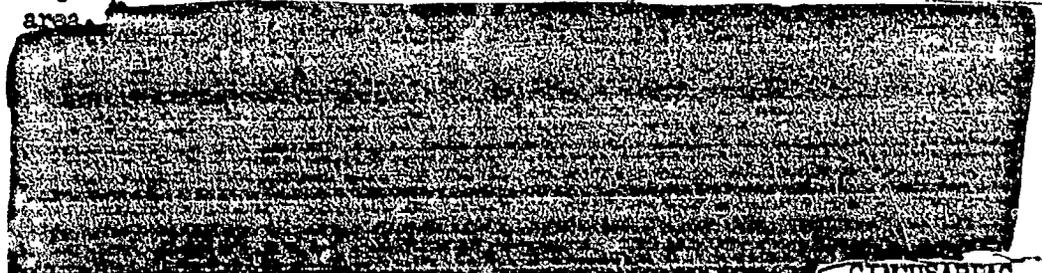
(S) A sudden VC/NVA buildup in late March and April in I CTZ caused COMUSMACV to begin planning for an early ROK Marine Bde deployment to reinforce III MAF. Political instability in the northern provinces of I CTZ, security requirements for Tuy Hoa and Cam Ranh Bay, and possible contingency requirements in reaction to operations in the Chu Pong area of the central highlands delayed this deployment. Plans for a 48-hour deployment were developed to meet any possible requirement in I or II Corps. Subsequently, September was established for movement of the ROK Marine Bde to I CTZ, which coincided with the arrival of the first contingent from the ROK White Horse Div. COMUSMACV still wanted the contingency plans for 48-hour deployment of the brigade kept current.<sup>53</sup>

(TS) In the CT 67 Force Requirements COMUSMACV requested sufficient ROK Marine forces to roundout the ROK 2d Marine Bde to a full division. In the event a ROK marine division could not be provided, COMUSMACV

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requested a USMC division of six infantry battalions for the I CTZ area.



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CINCSARFAC concurred with COMUSMACV's request for six additional combat battalions, but thought that these battalions should come from pre-deployment of two brigades from the Corps Contingency Force, considering that this source allowed for earlier reconstitution of the USMC element of the PACOM reserve, which would further enhance the PACOM amphibious assault capability for contingencies elsewhere in CINCPAC's area of responsibility. The predeployment also had the obvious advantage of training and acclimatization of a significant portion of the Corps Contingency Forces.<sup>54</sup>

(TS) On 21 July COMUSMACV notified CINCPAC that the requirement to roundout III MAF with six additional battalions as programmed for May 1967 was still valid, and added that comments by COMUSKOREA were understood. COMUSMACV stated that any arrangements to provide the six infantry battalions required in I CTZ was acceptable. The prime reason for COMUSMACV's request for Marines, ROK or US, was that these units would have a common supply, organization, training, doctrine, and command relationship with III MAF.<sup>55</sup> Imposition of other Service units would be disruptive to a degree

(S) In mid-January 1966 COMUSMACV was asked to evaluate the ROK forces then in RVN. COMUSMACV indicated that for the first two or three months after their arrival in RVN, ROK senior commanders had controlled closely the offensive operations of their forces in order to indoctrinate the troops to combat in their new environment. This had given the impression that the ROK's lacked aggressiveness and were reluctant to take casualties. However, in Operation FLYING TIGER in early January, the Koreans accounted for 192 VC killed as against only 11 ROK's killed, which, coupled with their success in Operation JEFFERSON, appeared to constitute a valid indication of their combat effectiveness. (Operations FLYING TIGER/JEFFERSON are discussed in Chapter V.) In their relations with the Vietnamese, the ROK's had an initial period of difficulty arising from the less well-equipped ARVN and RF/FF troops, language barriers, and the oriental "face" problem. The ARVN attitude quickly changed, however, and their appraisal of the ROK forces was believed to be essentially the same as the US appraisal. The Koreans seemed to have made very good impression on the Vietnamese public in areas where they were stationed, probably because of the common village origin of the ROK soldier and the

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Vietnamese peasant, the common rice economy of the two countries, and their similarities in religion and culture.<sup>56</sup>

(U) On 15 August 1966 a ROK CA/PSYOP company was introduced into the RVN. The company was deployed with a strength of 30 officers and 104 enlisted men. Since the company did not have its mission-essential equipment on hand, arrangements were made for the personnel to receive on-the-job training with elements of the US Army PSYOP companies for a period of approximately 30 days. The TO&E for the ROK CA/PSYOP company was approved on 21 July 1966 and forwarded to USAFV for procurement of equipment. When it became apparent that considerable time would be required to obtain all of the equipment authorized by the TO&E, action was initiated to expedite delivery of mission-essential equipment. By the end of 1966 only a few items of equipment had arrived. Subsequent to their training program elements of the ROK CA/PSYOP company were deployed as follows: Co Hqs - ROKFV Hq, Nha Trang; 1st Flt - Capitol ROK Div; 2d Flt - 9th ROK Div; 3d Flt - 2d ROK Marine Bde; and one Loudspeaker Section; Movie Team and CA Public Information Team - ROK Construction Support Group, Di An.<sup>56A</sup>

(S) The ROK Civic Action/RD program in RVN was alternately labelled by some press reports as more productive than those of other FUMA forces, or as orientally brutal and severe. Actually, ROK forces used essentially the same concepts that MACV and JGS had developed for military operations in support of RD. The main difference lay in the fact that the ROK units operated in established TAOR's and considered their primary mission to be pacification, while US and other FUMA forces were oriented more toward search-and-destroy operations throughout the country and were not so concerned with securing a large, fixed TAOR. To this extent, ROK forces might be more effective in support of RD, but only in a limited area of operations. There was no evidence of brutal or severe conduct. Cordon and search operations conducted to weed out the VC, draft dodgers, and deserters, were executed similarly to US operations, stressing PSYOPS and civic action. ROK units used the medium of "brotherhood" to associate themselves closely with the population of specific hamlets; support of schools, building roads, and other projects were used to advance civic action. The oriental philosophy of the ROK forces may have enabled them to gain greater respect and rapport with the people than did US forces. The essential criticism of ROK forces' activities was that their operations often were unilateral and sometimes not in consonance with <sup>57</sup> the plans of province officials, although this situation was improving.

(S) A matter of some concern to the Koreans was the procurement of a C-ration for their troops in RVN. During his stopover visit to RVN while travelling to the Manila Conference, the ROK President discussed the subject with COMUSMACV in order to obtain his support. COMUSMACV said that he would try to arrange it, but that there were many



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battalion to a two-battalion task force with a headquarters, special air service squadron, armor, artillery, engineer, signal, supply and transport, field ambulance, and ordnance and shop units. It was proposed that the Australian Caribou flight then in-country, along with eight UH-1B helicopters, be given the primary mission of supporting the task force, which would total about 4,500.<sup>60</sup>

(TS) At a briefing on the deployment of the Australian Task Force (ATF) on 12 March, COMUSMACV tentatively decided to employ it at Ba Ria under the control of CG II FFORCEV, which would place a large FW force in the area of Route 15, a priority LOC, and would keep the ATF well away from the Cambodian border. Because Australia maintained diplomatic relations with Cambodia, GOA had requested and had received US assurance that Australian units would not be used in operations on the Cambodian border. Additional artillery support, when required, would be provided by CG II FFORCEV. COMUSMACV could not approve the request that Australian Caribou units revert to the ATF command, although he said that reinforcing aircraft would be provided as required, because the Caribou unit had a capacity in excess of that required by the ATF. The eight UH-1B helicopters would come under command of the task force.<sup>61</sup>

(S) An Australian joint-Services planning team, headed by the CGS Australian Army, met with COMUSMACV and his staff during March to develop new military working arrangements and to plan for the movement and employment of the task force. The military working arrangement, outlining command relationships, tasks, restrictions, and broad logistical support to be provided by the Australian Army, was signed by the CGS and COMUSMACV on 17 March, superseding the previous military working arrangement of 5 May 1965. The command relationships established provided that command of all Australian Forces, Army and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), would be exercised by CG, Australian Forces in Vietnam (AFV); Hq AFV would be under the operational control of COMUSMACV, the ATF would be placed under the operational control of CG II FFORCEV, and the RAAF Transport Flight and Iroquois Flight would be placed in direct support of the ATF. Any lift capability in excess of ATF requirements would be committed to II FFORCEV tasks. This agreement called for employment of the ATF in Phuoc Tuy Province with a mission of operating in the province, along Highway 15, and in the eastern portion of the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ). On 26 March, a financial working arrangement was signed by both countries, providing for reimbursement to USG by Australia for support provided in RVN. The terms of this agreement were substantially the same as those of the 1965 financial working arrangement.<sup>62</sup>

(U) The advance party for the 1st ATF departed Australia on 12 April, with the main body following in several increments. After a shake-down training period in RVN, operational control of the task force passed from commander of AFV to CG II FFORCEV on 5 June. Upon arrival of the 1st ATF, the 1st Bn Royal Australian Regt departed RVN on 1 July, after one year of combat service in RVN.

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(S) On 21 April it was proposed that an Australian squadron of 12 Caribou aircraft be deployed to RVN to make up some of the anticipated shortages of sorties resulting from US deployment plans. COMUSMACV planned to employ the unit in support of ground operations by ARVN, ROK, and US troops as well as the ATF; operational control of the squadron would be given the 7th AF and, if politically acceptable, COMUSMACV planned to use it against targets in Laos. On 6 May CINCPAC approached JCS on the subject, listing the advantages of obtaining the Australian squadron and recommending prompt negotiations to obtain it. SECSTATE concurred and requested the Canberra Embassy to confirm that the squadron was available for deployment.<sup>64</sup>

(S) In August, COMAFV summarized discussions he had had with the Australian Prime Minister and Minister of the Army earlier in the month, stating that "we should not expect to see any new troops until after the November elections."

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(S) Following the Australian elections, the Chairman CofS Committee was asked to recommend added forces which could be provided to RVN on short notice; he was provided little guidance and his recommendations were prepared with minimum information of the ability of RVNAF and US bases to accommodate additional units. Even so, a tri-Service contribution of 1,000 Army troops, an RAAF squadron of light B-57 Canberra bombers, and a guided missile destroyer of the Adams class, was recommended. It appeared that the Army might furnish support troops rather than another combat battalion, while the RAAF contingency of 450 men would include elements of an airfield construction squadron to help in erecting housing and similar tasks. The three Services ministers were in accord with the concept, and the permanent head of the Defense Department supported the idea that Australia should be the first nation, other than the US, to respond to RVN's appeal with a tri-Service contingent.

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New Zealand Assistance to RVN

(S) In January COMUSMACV discussed the possibility of increased aid with the New Zealand Ambassador, expressing the hope that the Government of New Zealand (GNZ) could provide a battalion of infantry for

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a three-battalion Australian/New Zealand brigade. The Ambassador was sympathetic to the proposal, but said that there were political considerations governing the increase which were beyond his cognizance. In late February, a representative from the GNZ Ministry of External Affairs met with COMUSMACV and indicated interest in rounding out the four-gun 105-mm howitzer battery to six guns. Subsequent political consideration prompted the GNZ to limit its aid mainly to non-military spheres; 1966 was an election year in New Zealand and political factors were influential in governmental decisions. However, on 26 March GNZ announced its decision to increase its aid commitment to RVN. Despite election-year pressures, the artillery battery then serving in RVN was to be brought up to strength by the addition of two 105-mm howitzers and 27 men, and the surgical team at Qui Nhon would be increased from seven to 13 personnel.<sup>67</sup>

(S) During his visit the CGS New Zealand Army had told COMUSMACV that he believed New Zealand might respond to requests for further military assistance after the November elections. Several possibilities were mentioned, including an infantry battalion of four companies and a Special Air Service (SAS) Company--both of which were in Malaysia, but which could be redeployed to RVN--an APC platoon and a truck company. Civilian and other military personnel in the GNZ Defense Ministry did not necessarily share these views, CGS admitted, so little prospect was held out for their implementation, at least not until after November.<sup>68</sup>

#### Philippine Assistance to RVN

(S) During the first half of 1966 the Philippine President pressed for a passage of a bill by the Philippine Congress authorizing the funding and dispatch of a 2,000 man-engineer battalion to RVN. The bill passed the House of Representatives easily, but found tougher opposition in the Philippine Senate. After considerable debate, delay, and extra sessions, the Senate passed the bill on 5 June. To assist in passage of the bill, judicious use of MAP aid had been applied in areas suggested by President Marcos, including delivery of four Swift boats for anti-smuggling operations, M-14 rifles and machine guns for one constabulary battalion combat team, and equipment for three engineer battalions. This aid was in addition to previous US commitments for one destroyer escort and several patrol craft; under consideration were one F-5 squadron and helicopter units. The US also agreed to the provision of death gratuities and per-diem allowances for the members of the Philippine Civic Action Group (PHILCAG), to be administered along the same general lines as the payment of these items to ROK troops.<sup>69</sup>

(S) The original planning for the PHILCAG called for deployment of the unit approximately 120 days after passage of the bill, based on a 60-day period for transport of PHILCAG equipment to the Philippines,

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15 days for deprocessing and movement to a training area, 45 days of training with the equipment, and 15 days for processing and transport of the unit to Vietnam.

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It was pointed out that the deployment period could be reduced considerably if the training equipment could be made available in less than the 45 days as then scheduled. An alternate proposal was to deploy the advance party 30-45 days following the passage of the bill. The security forces, support, medical, and civic action personnel could be deployed approximately 60 days following a decision, and could then make preparations for the engineers. COMUSMACV noted that if an inadequately-trained PHILCAG were attacked and sustained significant casualties, far-reaching implications could affect both the GP and the USG. An alternative proposal was that the unit conduct individual and unit training in the Philippines, using existing equipment, and after arrival in RVN, train with the new equipment. COMUSMACV felt that this alternative had merit, if it was absolutely necessary to deploy PHILCAG earlier than planned, but suggested that the training time required would be 90 days.

(U) The first element of the PHILCAG advance planning group arrived in RVN on 16 August, taking over the operations of the highly successful PHILCON unit at Tay Ninh, which in a three-year period had treated over 100,000 people and operated on 16,314 surgical cases. The PHILCON team members departed for Manila on 5 September.<sup>71</sup>

(S) In considering employment of the PHILCAG, it was determined that the compartmentation of Long An Province precluded maximum use of the group, while the Hau Nghia terrain afforded the best possibility for its maximum use. The Philippine military attache supported the Hau Nghia location as well, and COMUSMACV approved the Hau Nghia area for location of the PHILCAG. On 1 June, however, COMUSMACV directed that a staff study be conducted to determine the feasibility of relocating the PHILCAG to Tay Ninh Province in lieu of Bao Trai, Hau Nghia Province, because the US 25th Inf Div operations around Bao Trai negated the need for the PHILCAG there. Additionally, there was a certain historical affinity between Cambodia and the Philippines, and this would place the PHILCAG near the Cambodian border. The GVN Minister of Defense felt that there was a security hazard in stationing a unit so close to War Zone C, but added that it would be a great advantage if the group could be used to provide support for the 100,000 Cao Dai in Tay Ninh Province who had remained loyal to GVN.<sup>72</sup>

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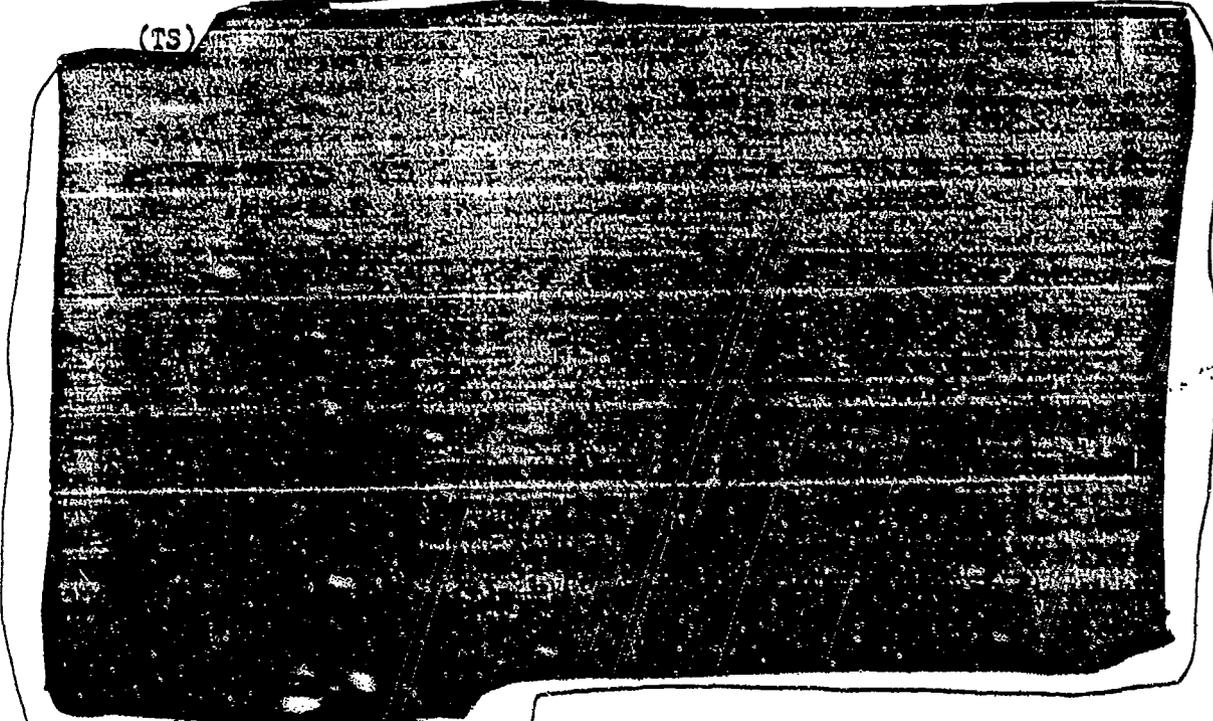
(S) The GP initially was opposed to the change in locations for the PHILCAG and sent CG, Philippine Forces in Vietnam (PFV) to survey the location. He was given detailed briefings by the Province Chiefs of both Hau Nghia and Tay Ninh, a ground and air reconnaissance of each province, and briefings by the US 25th Inf Div and II FFORCEV relative to support and security for PHILCAG; among the reasons for selecting Tay Ninh rather than Hau Nghia, was that Tay Ninh had fewer VC incidents. CG PFV then supported the change in positioning for PHILCAG. It was agreed that PHILCAG, upon arrival, would provide its own local security, while US forces would provide area security until the PHILCAG security battalion became fully operational. PHILCAG would be included in all mutual security arrangements involving friendly forces in and close to Tay Ninh City, would be supported by 105-mm and 155-mm units firing from their base positions, and would receive contingency support in and around Tay Ninh City from 175-mm guns. Additionally, COMUSMACV agreed to equip PHILCAG with six 105-mm howitzers for one field artillery battery, plus eight 4.2-inch mortars and 17 APC's. Chief JGS also agreed to provide the PHILCAG with three M-41 tanks. PHILCAG security battalion riflemen were to be issued M-16 rifles when sufficient quantities of the rifles became available. The security situation in Tay Ninh was further improved when the US 196th Lt Inf Bde was located in Tay Ninh.<sup>73</sup>

(S) In December, at the request of the Philippine President, COMUSMACV visited Manila. While there, COMUSMACV praised the excellent performance of PHILCAG in RVN, and said that if the Philippines should ever want to increase its contribution, the idea of establishing a helicopter squadron for civic action work might be considered. Another concept COMUSMACV mentioned was Philippine assistance in training a Vietnamese constabulary; Philippine advisors could go to RVN, and some Vietnamese cadres could be seconded to the Philippine Constabulary for training in the Philippines. No definite arrangements had been made as 1966 ended.<sup>74</sup>

Republic of China (ROC) Contributions

(TS) Nationalist Chinese contributions to the war effort were guided by extremely sensitive considerations involving reaction by Peking, and the possibility of CHICOM reaction in the Formosa Straits or elsewhere caused the US Government to play down the role of Chinese assistance and to keep Chinese aid directed primarily in the civic action field. At the beginning of 1966 there were 15 political warfare officers, 86 agricultural experts, several technicians working on the Thu Duc 33,000-ky power plant, two C-46 aircraft with crews flying in support of USAID, and 20 Chinese Nationalist officers assigned to the MAGROCV. In addition to these efforts, 45 RVNAF political warfare officers visited ROC political warfare installations in Taipei from 8 to 17 February.<sup>75</sup>

(S) Because of the critical harbor congestion and the need for shallow-draft coastal shipping, the US in January requested the ROC to provide six LST's, originally given to the ROC under MAP, manned by Chinese crews in civilian clothing. The cost of ship maintenance and crew wages was paid by the US; [redacted] would be under MSTC control, and were not to be used in combat roles. ROC was able to provide only two ships. The entire transfer was accomplished in April in a low key without publicity.<sup>76</sup>



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Thai Assistance to RVN

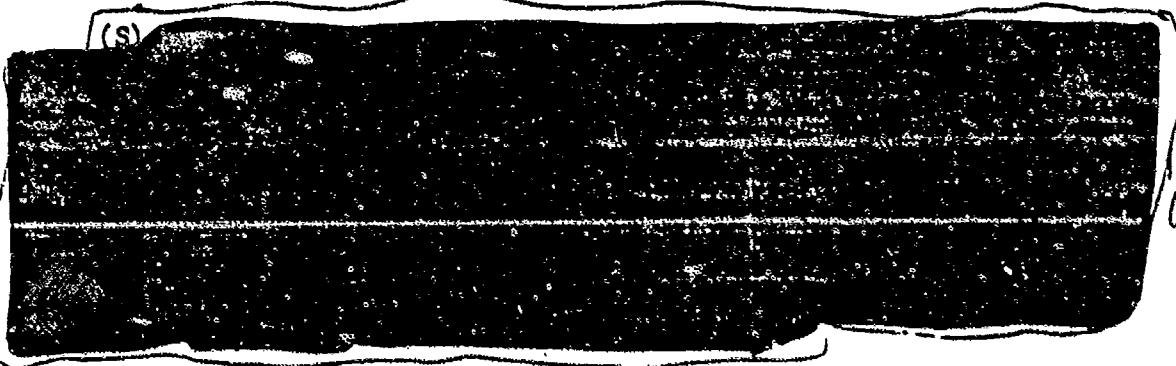
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(S) On 17 February the Royal Thai Military Assistance Group, Vietnam (RTMAGV) was activated and the Royal Thai Air Force Contingent (RTAFCONV) became a subordinate element of RTMAGV; RTMAGV/COMUSMACV military working arrangements were signed on 23 March. On 30 March COMRTMAGV requested COMUSMACV to furnish one T-33 jet trainer from MACV assets for RTAF Wing 1 for jet-transition training of VNAF pilots training in Thailand, which had been suspended in February because of a shortage of T-33's in Wing 1. On 22 April COMUSMACV replied that jet transition training for Vietnamese pilots was proceeding satisfactorily, that a T-33 could not be spared from MACV assets, and suggested that the aircraft be procured through MAP sources in Thailand. COMRTMAGV had also requested two C-123 aircraft with RTAF markings, to allow the RTAFCONV to act as an integral unit [redacted] COMUSMACV concurred, and requested CINCPCAF to provide the aircraft. CINCPCAF replied that C-123 aircraft were not available from CONUS and suggested the introduction

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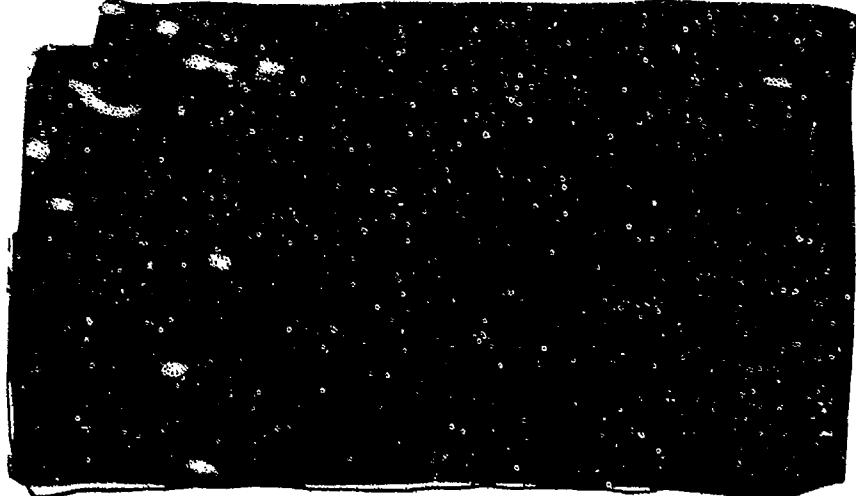
of Thai pilots to fly two RTAF-marked, USAF-owned-and-maintained C-123 aircraft; arrangements were made to have these personnel operational in RVN not later than 15 July, subject to RTAF crew members attaining minimum proficiency standards by that time. These crews, consisting of 21 personnel, became operational on 22 July and were attached to the 315th Air Commando Wing for C-123 operations, increasing the RTAFCONV strength to 27; five personnel remained with the VNAF, where they were assigned to fly C-47 aircraft.<sup>78</sup>

(S) Early in 1966 Thailand and the US began negotiations to transfer an LST from US assets to Thailand for Thai use in RVN. Initially Thailand desired that this LST operate in MARKET TIME, but COMUSMACV felt that the LST could be used more profitably under operational control of the VNN on the same basis as the Korean LST's. On 7 December the LST, accompanied by a PGM, departed Thailand, arriving in Saigon for duty on 10 December. Both vessels were manned by Thai crews and flew the Thai flag. The LST came under operational control of MSTG; the PGM, operating in MARKET TIME is under operational control of COMNAVFORV.<sup>79</sup>



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(FOUO) On the next to the last day of the year, four newspapers in Bangkok carried front page stories that RTG was considering the deployment to RVN of a battalion combat team of 700 to 800 men. In commenting on such a suggestion the Thai Deputy Prime Minister said:

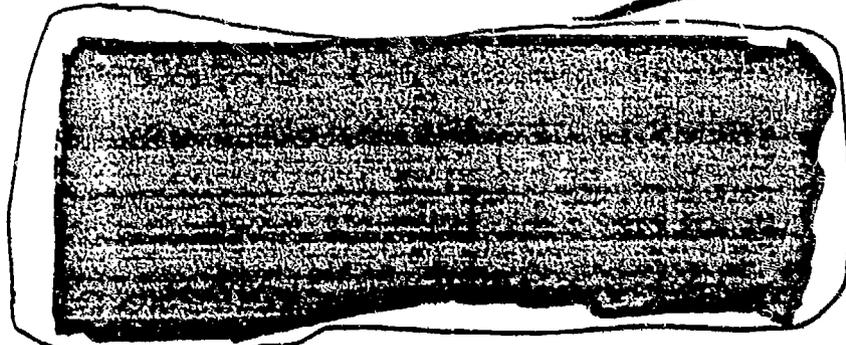


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As the year ended, all indications pointed to the early dispatch of Thai combat troops to RVN.<sup>81</sup>

Spanish Medical Assistance

(C) In December 1965 the Government of Spain announced that it would send medical assistance to RVN, agreeing that a 12 to 14-man Army medical team would be sent in early 1966. Negotiations over support arrangements were made. The major aspects of these arrangements were that a Spanish military medical team would, in coordination with USAID/PHD, assist the GVN Minister of Health; the Government of Spain would pay the team's salaries and allowances, plus fifty dollars monthly per member for subsistence; and that the US Government would pay all other costs.<sup>82</sup>

(C) It was decided to locate the Spanish team in Go Cong Province. During the negotiating period, USA engineers renovated a building and constructed quarters in a compound for the Spaniards. Recruiting of the members of the medical team was completed in May, but it was not until 2 August that Spain made a firm commitment to the team composition and its estimated time of arrival in RVN. The team consisted of four Army doctors, one quartermaster captain, and seven registered or practical nurses. Arriving on 9 September, it was stationed at Go Cong as planned.<sup>83</sup>

RVNAF Deployments and Strengths

(U) The RVN manpower situation began to deteriorate in the first part of 1966. Desertions increased, combat losses were heavy, and there was intense competition for skilled manpower among all segments of the RVN economy. The deterioration was a cause of anxiety for all elements of the US Mission Council and became a focal point for US efforts to increase Vietnamese effectiveness in the war.

(S) Early in June COMUSMACV directed MACV J5 to study courses of action leading to more dynamic progress in the counterinsurgency effort—short-term and long-term. The purpose of the study was to determine the major problems in RVN which, if overcome, would result in large-scale progress toward overall success. One such

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problem was the RVN manpower situation. Under the prevailing system, the rate of manpower consumption would exhaust primary manpower sources in mid-1968 and secondary military manpower sources by the end of 1969. Besides this, it was estimated that 232,000 youths had been able to evade conscription since the system had been inaugurated in September 1957. The system lacked overall central direction and resulted in imbalances in manpower availabilities to support the diverse and often conflicting GVN programs. The single organization charged with manpower planning, the Directorate of Mobilization, was a subordinate agency of the Ministry of Defense and organizationally was not in a position to exert national control over manpower resources. The study concluded that a requirement existed for orderly distribution of available manpower among users, and that a general mobilization would be preferable to a partial mobilization-although the latter would be better than the existing haphazard system. The study recommended the formation of a study group of interested agencies (Embassy, USAID, MACV) to analyze available data on manpower and material resources and to do the initial planning required, prior to establishing a joint US/GVN commission to analyze the existing governmental structure and to determine what additional governmental machinery would be required to accomplish general mobilization, because he felt the GVN was not strong enough to sustain itself on an issue of such magnitude, but felt that it was a good study and deserved further thought. He directed the MACV J1 to develop a step-by-step plan that could be timed with political developments to implement the recommendations. He further directed that a letter be prepared for the Ambassador on the subject. 84

(S) This letter, dated 15 June, recognized that the demands on military manpower were great and that there was also a heavy and increasing demand for quality manpower for the civil and governmental sectors of RVN. COMUSMACV felt that to correct the military manpower problem through uncorrelated actions would have a serious effect on the remaining sectors. It was obvious that GVN had failed to organize itself to meet the heavy demands placed on its manpower. COMUSMACV could see no solutions to the manpower dilemma except through a determination of total manpower assets, total manpower requirements, and a balancing of the two. Recognizing the serious implications of total mobilization, he recommended that a US committee to study mobilization be established under the direction of the Embassy, and include USAID and MACV representation. Based on the guidelines of the committee, a joint US/GVN commission would be established to integrate the preliminary aspects of the study into a combined program for mobilization which would be appropriate to GVN governmental and social structures. As visualized by COMUSMACV, the charter for this commission should enable it to call upon the services of US Government officials who had broad experience in national mobilization planning. 85

#### The RVNAF Buildup

(S) The authorized strength of RVNAF for FY 66 was 631,457 with the ARVN share 274,667, Regional Forces (RF) 134,922, and Special Forces

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(PF) 185,000, VNAF 14,760, VMC 6,540 and VNN 15,491. These authorized strength levels had been requested by COMUSMACV on 5 November 1965; although more forces were desirable, these levels were the maximum strength the available manpower base could support. It was estimated that accessions of 20,000 personnel per month would be required to attain and sustain these levels, and that their maintenance past 1969 would require recovery of significant manpower resources from VC-controlled areas or the extension of terms of service and recall of veterans. Early activations from the FY 67 force structure authorized by SECDEF in November 1965 increased the overall end-FY 66 force structure by 10,286 spaces. With this authorization ARVN activated units totaling 4,622 spaces. The RVNAF strength picture, however, continued to show a decline, with the manpower base in its current state unable to sustain further activations. COMUSMACV recommended to JCS a moratorium on activation of new RVNAF units. This would result in the end FY 66 force structure stabilizing at 633,645, and would consist of 277,363 ARVN, 15,833 VNN, 7,172 VMC, 15,292 VNAF, 141,731 RF and 176,254 PF. JCS concurred with the recommendation and the end FY 66 force structure was stabilized at that point.<sup>85</sup>

(S) The RVNAF strength picture was the subject of several discussions between COMUSMACV and Chief JCS in May and June. During these discussions, COMUSMACV noted that it might be necessary to suspend activations of unit called for in the FY 67 Force Structure. On 30 June COMUSMACV dispatched a letter to Chief JCS, stating that the objectives of the FY 67 Force Structure might not be attainable and should be reexamined to provide a more realistic alignment of forces as a means of increasing combat effectiveness. This letter cited two reasons (desertions and unauthorized units) for the unsatisfactory strength situation, and stated that it was imperative that activation of additional units be suspended for the remainder of CY 1966. Units which were authorized for early activation to meet operational requirements were exempted from the suspension.<sup>87</sup>

(S) As a result of a briefing on RVNAF manpower, COMUSMACV directed a complete review of the RVNAF force structure. The study would form the basis for a recommended troop ceiling under which a solid, well-balanced RVNAF force structure could be developed. The requirements established were to review the RVNAF force structure by 15 July and then to conduct a combined MACV/RVNAF review, as a basis for developing RVNAF force structure proposals for CY 67. On 30 June COMUSMACV advised Chief JCS to organize an inspection team at the general officer level, to inspect the ARVN divisional strength situation with authority to make on-the-spot personnel redistribution. The team, which began inspections on 4 July, included COMUSMACV's personal representative.<sup>88</sup>

(S) On 21 September COMUSMACV was briefed on the force structure plans for RVNAF developed from this study. He directed the study group to consider other measures to increase the present-for-operations

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strength of the combat battalions, stressing the inactivation of unauthorized units in ARVN as well as inactivation of certain existing units. The force structure continued to be examined in light of this guidance. COMUSMACV then informed Chief JGS that a study of the existing RVNAF force structure had been completed and that new RVNAF force structure plans had been developed. A copy of the study was sent to Chief JGS for his consideration, with the FY 68 and FY 69 force structure to be provided at a later time for future planning. COMUSMACV recommended that the FY 67 RVNAF force-structure plan be accepted as a basis for future force-structure actions.<sup>89</sup>

#### The Desertion Problem

(C) During the preceding three years the most serious problem facing ARVN had been desertion, which assumed such proportions that it seriously limited ARVN's effectiveness. Reasons cited for desertion, which constituted 77 percent of ARVN's losses, were many and varied: overly restrictive leave policy, family separations, lack of command attention to personnel management and soldier welfare, general dissatisfaction with military life, apparent public apathy toward the war, increasingly heavy combat losses, misuse of certain type units, and tolerance of authorities toward desertion coupled with slipshod apprehension and punishment of offenders. Desertion was especially prevalent in III CTZ because of the proximity of Saigon, where a deserter could lose himself readily. The ARVN 5th Div lost 2,510 personnel through desertion in the first quarter of 1966.<sup>90</sup>

(C) Desertion rates tended to be confusing because the GVN classified as deserters those personnel with less than 90 days' service who were AWOL for more than 30 days, personnel with more than 90 days' service who were AWOL more than six (later 15) days, and personnel who were absent more than 15 days while enroute to a new duty station. The MACV SJA had proposed substantial changes to ARVN's approach to the desertion problem, recommending that a uniform period of 30 days' unauthorized absence be the criterion, after which an individual would be dropped as a deserter; personnel absent for less than 30 days would be punished by the commander and a punishment book used to record the action. RVNAF was generally unresponsive to such recommendations.<sup>91</sup>

(U) Orders published during 1965 had removed all effective disciplinary restraint to desertion by allowing deserters to escape prosecution by signing a pledge not to desert again, after which, rather than being jailed, they were returned to duty. Prior to promulgation of the orders, the RVNAF code of military justice provided strict penalties for desertion in wartime, ranging from six years imprisonment to death. The reduction in severity of punishment for desertion was explained partially by the overcrowded conditions of Vietnamese jails. Even so, desertion in 1965 from all components of RVNAF had risen to 113,000 from the 73,000

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registered in 1964, and seemed that 1966 would continue this trend. Finally taking notice of this situation, JGS published Decree Law 15/66 on 21 April, which established severe new penalties for deserters and their accomplices. Decree Law 22/66 announced on 15 July, amended Decree Law 15/66 by making it effective 1 August for personnel on duty on that date, and 1 October for personnel in a desertion status on 1 August. The 1 October date provided for a period of grace during which deserters who were apprehended, or who surrendered, could escape punishment under the new provisions. In some cases the new laws, besides restoring punishment for desertion, actually increased the severity of punishment. For the first conviction under Decree Law 15/66, the deserter was made a battlefield laborer for a minimum of five years, receiving no pay and forfeiting death or disability benefits. Battlefield laborers were utilized in such urgent battlefield duties as repairing roads and bridges, destroying knolls and forests, opening ways, transporting ammunition, digging individual ditches and trenches, burying the dead, setting up temporary camps, and performing hard labor where units were located. Repeat offenders were subjected to increased punishment: for a second offense, the penalty was five to 20 years' labor, and if a deserter escaped while undergoing punishment, the punishment was doubled for the first offense; for the second, the punishment was death. Civilians convicted of aiding and abetting deserters were sentenced to five years' punishment at hard labor.<sup>92</sup>

(FOUO) Emphasizing the gravity of the desertion problem and the importance he attached to Decree Law 15/66, COMUSMACV, in a letter to advisors, stated:

The present for operations strength of each unit must be raised. The minimum acceptable number to conduct a battalion operation is considered to be 450 men. The most important single improvement that can be made in the RVNAF to achieve this goal is a solution to the desertion problem; and to this end, advisory effort must be focused.<sup>92A</sup>

(S) The April law was greeted with cautious optimism by COMUSMACV. After a trip to the Van Kiep National Training Center in early July, the MACV J1 reported that as a consequence of RVNAF's new AWOL and desertion program, improvement was evident; there had been no AWOL's or desertions in the 2,000-man camp for the preceding seven days. Posters were displayed highlighting the consequences of AWOL and desertion, and letters were sent to families of all deserters. The positive effects of the new decree began showing as increasing ARVN unit effectiveness, and COMUSMACV congratulated Chief JGS for the forceful and enthusiastic manner in which the desertion problem was being attacked. On 8 August another desertion decree granted amnesty to individuals who had deserted from one force in order to join another

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force (from RF/PF to enlist in ARVN) and were serving honorably in the force to which they deserted.<sup>93</sup>

(S) In an effort to assist ARVN reduce its desertion rate and improve its combat effectiveness, COMUSMACV directed that certain US units adopt certain ARVN units. Close association was planned between the US 1st Inf Div and the 5th ARVN Div, and between the US 25th Inf Div and the 25th ARVN Div. The program was designed to provide US help in establishing adequate PX/Commissary services, help and technical assistance in erecting adequate dependent housing, and assistance in combined tactical operations.<sup>94</sup>

(U) In a memorandum to the Deputy Ambassador on 16 December, COMUSMACV, observing the strides made in desertion-control by RVNAF, noted the little-known cooperative effort between RVNAF and MACV to prevent the hiring of deserters by US civil and military agencies and contractors. In October MACV had published a directive which required US agencies to screen their employees for deserters and draft evaders, and which established the documentation an individual had to present before he was hired. Since the directive did not apply to other Mission agencies, however, loopholes still existed. To plug the holes, COMUSMACV suggested that the Embassy publish a directive similar to MACV's which would apply to the US agencies not covered by the MACV directive.<sup>95</sup>

#### ARVN Strength and Organization

(S) At the beginning of the year, ARVN forces consisted of 267,877 men organized into 149 combat maneuver battalions and support elements, and formed into 10 infantry divisions, six armored cavalry squadrons, one separate infantry regiment, five area logistical commands, an airborne brigade, two special forces groups, 20 ranger battalions, 26 artillery battalions, and miscellaneous combat, combat support and combat service support units. Scheduled ARVN increases for FY 67 in combat units were four infantry battalions and one infantry regiment, with activation dates of:

4th Bn, 15 Regt, 9 Div	18 July
4th Bn, 43d Regt, 10th Div	18 July
4th Bn, 42d Regt	18 July
1st Bn, 53d Regt, 23d Div	22 August
2d Bn, 53d Regt, 23d Div	12 September
3d Bn, 53d Regt, 23d Div	10 October
2d Bn, 52 Regt, 10th Div	7 November

To accommodate this increase 2,594 spaces were added to the revised FY 66 base structure.<sup>96</sup>

(S) As the target dates for activation of the units grew close, COMUSMACV became disturbed at the operational strength of ARVN units. During an informal discussion with Chief JGS, he expressed his concern over the declining strength of ARVN units and recommended a moratorium

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on activations until the strength status of existing units could be improved. He stated that the Marine battalion was an exception, but asked that all other action and planning be deferred until fall, when the situation would be reviewed again.<sup>97</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV's concern over the declining present-for-combat strength of ARVN units resulted from a study which showed that, as of 28 February, ARVN divisions averaged 90 percent of authorized strength and ARVN battalions averaged 85 percent of authorized strength, but that only 62 percent of authorized strengths were being mustered for operations. The reasons for the disparities between assigned, present for duty and present for operations strengths were that division and regimental commanders had organized a number of non-TOE units such as strike/reaction forces, reconnaissance and security units, and recruiting teams, while large numbers of deserters, long-term hospital patients, and soldiers killed in action were carried on unit rolls long after they should have been deleted. To correct this situation, COMUSMACV advised JGS to disband non-TOE units and return the personnel to infantry battalions, and recommended that increased attention be given to administrative procedures in all units to drop deserters, long-term hospital patients, and personnel killed in action on a more timely basis. COMUSMACV, on 24 March, asked his senior commanders to comment on the differences between authorized, assigned, present for duty, and present for operation strengths of ARVN divisions and battalions, and to report the numbers, types, and composition of unauthorized units in their CTZ's. The SA's were directed to monitor the actions of ARVN commanders and to exert their influence to build up the present for operations strength of infantry battalions to at least 450 personnel, which was considered the minimum force sufficient for ARVN units effectively to engage VC Main Force and NVA units.<sup>98</sup>

(S) In reviewing the ARVN strength problem, COMUSMACV particularly emphasized unauthorized units at division and regimental level. One type unit found in almost all regiments was the reconnaissance company. Apparently a need existed for such a unit, so COMUSMACV directed a study made to determine the feasibility and desirability of authorizing a regimental reconnaissance company. When field advisors were asked their opinions in the matter, all responses were favorable and indicated that such units had been employed effectively in the past and were considered necessary. The study was approved in principle and concept, and JGS was requested to develop the organization for a regimental reconnaissance company. As this unit could not be organized from FY 66 spaces, it was planned that the spaces would come from units already programmed for FY 67.<sup>99</sup>

(S) A moratorium was placed on activation of new units for the remainder of CY 66, in order to examine the RVNAF force structure. The moratorium did not mean that the ARVN force structure became static; on the contrary, COMUSMACV saw it as a dynamic thing. He

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avored continual appraisal of the ARVN force structure in order to identify non-productive units, and saw no reason to retain poorly-led, understrength units, especially when they could be traded off by re-programming within the authorized force structure.<sup>100</sup>

(S) Sometimes, however, ARVN was not very receptive to the suggestion of its US advisors. In November, recognizing the validity of the argument of CG II FFORCEV for another battalion in the 23d ARVN Div, COMUSMACV suggested that JGS activate an additional battalion in that division. In order to obtain spaces within the imposed ceiling, COMUSMACV suggested deactivating a marginally-effective or ineffective battalion of another division; personnel from the deactivated unit could be used to improve the strength posture of residual units of the division. Chief JGS, however, for reasons of his own, declined to authorize the 23d Div an additional battalion.<sup>101</sup>

(S) Because RVNAF had to be organized at the minimum level essential to perform its stated missions, each organization, unit, and detachment had to be productive and employed to the best possible advantage. To this end, COMUSMACV tasked the SA's of the four CTZ's and other components of RVNAF to survey the RVNAF units operating within their spheres of advisory cognizance. COMUSMACV wanted to know if the various RVNAF units were being used according to their organizational mission, contributed effectively to the overall mission, could be reduced in TOE strength, could be absorbed into other units, or should be deleted entirely. Replies from the field indicated instances of improper employment of a few units; in some instances caused by lack of proper equipment, as with RF mechanized platoons needing armored cars, and in others for other reasons, such as using reconnaissance companies as housekeeping units. In I CTZ, it was felt that the ranger battalions were not properly employed but still were contributing to the effort. In IV CTZ, the only significant misemployment was the continued use of provisional regimental reconnaissance companies. The survey located quite a few units which could be deleted entirely or which could be absorbed into other units. There were several inadequately-trained scout companies which, if they failed to respond to recommended organizational training, were recommended for deletion, conversion to RF/FF, or absorption into other units. In I CTZ, it was felt that armored cavalry squadrons could be absorbed into the divisions. Elsewhere, it was felt that assigned ARVN units were necessary, and contributed to the overall mission. As the year ended, analysis of the recommendations from the field had not been completed by the MACV staff.<sup>102</sup>

(C) On 1 April, an Adjutant General's Corps was established, providing a qualified, professional cadre of administrators and personnel managers for RVNAF. Personnel requirements based on AG-type positions could now be defined and translated into AG Corps authorizations, allowing for personnel to be procured and for training

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requirements to be determined. The AG Corps was the first corps to be established under the provisions of Decree Law 13, which prescribed the general regulations governing the personnel of the Regular Forces in RVNAF. Previously ARVN had consisted only of branches (Infantry, Armor, Rangers) supported by various agencies (Ordnance, Quartermaster, Medical) at JGS level.<sup>103</sup>

#### Regional and Popular Forces

(C) Regional Forces (RF) were voluntary forces organized within a province for use within that province, and consisted of rifle companies, river boat companies, and support units. Popular Forces (PF) were voluntary, locally-recruited forces, organized into squads and platoons, used primarily as security forces in villages and hamlets. RF strength for FY 65 and FY 66 had been set at 134,999, organized into 759 companies; the FY 67 force structure authorized 888 companies, an increase of 121 over FY 66, with a strength of 155,322. Of the programmed company increases, 40 were reserved for conversion of CIDG companies into RF companies. The 81 remaining companies were divided into two categories, based on the time frame for activation. The emphasis on Revolutionary Development (RD) at the Honolulu Conference meant that more RF companies would be needed to extend RVN influence into recently-cleared areas or into National Priority Areas (NPA's). In order to gain lead time, 31 companies were scheduled for activation prior to 1 July, 21 of which were programmed for NPA's and 10 for Corps PA's. The remaining 50 companies were scheduled for activation between 1 July 1966 and 30 Jun 1967.<sup>104</sup>

(U) The RF/PF command and control structure presented a dilemma. RF/PF forces constituted approximately 50 percent of the total RVNAF force structure, but, in comparison to their size they enjoyed a much smaller proportion of the emphasis in support and in operations. They were far down in priority for training, equipment, and leadership, which resulted in marginal or unsatisfactory ratings in almost every category of their activities. The basis of the problem was the chain of command. The RF/PF Central Headquarters, whose mission was to command and manage RF/PF units throughout the country in support of their missions, did not have operational control of RF/PF units, except for the seven RF/PF National Training Centers; the actual control of RF/PF was exercised by Corps and Divisions through sectors. One concept called for placing RF/PF under the operational control of the Ministry of RD, where some semblance of national control and direction could be exercised. This concept would have retained the responsibility for logistical support of RF/PF with ARVN.<sup>105</sup>

(C) On 7 September the GVN approved a concept of RF/PF reorganization by which the separate RF/PF headquarters at JGS, Corps, Division, Sector, and Subsector were integrated into the RVNAF headquarters at those echelons. Two advantages accrued from this arrangement:

PAGE 108 OF 872 PAGES

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fewer personnel were required for staff duty, thus releasing personnel for duty in the field, and the new arrangement would provide for more efficient logistical support of RF/PF units. The integration placed the responsibility for operations, administration, and support of RF/PF under the responsible tactical commanders throughout the RVNAF, providing for a more unified effort throughout the chain of command. The reorganization also placed RF/PF troops under the command of sector and subsector commanders; since these commanders were closely connected with RD, it was thought likely that RF/PF troops would be used for RD purposes. Further, a new position, known as the Chief of Central Agency and concurrently Deputy Chief of Staff for RF/PF at JGS/RVNAF, was formed and made responsible for recommending policy and guidelines for RF/PF. The reorganization was planned for accomplishment in two phases: Phase I, to begin on 15 September, was the integration of CTZ RF/PF commands into the corps headquarters, provincial RF/PF into sector and subsector, and formation of an office at division and special sector headquarters for RF/PF matters; Phase II, scheduled to begin on 15 October, was the integration of the Central RF/PF Command into the JGS. Implementing instructions were published by the JGS on 21 September. It was apparent that the time-phasing, as contained in the JGS plan, was unrealistic. Also, the receipt by the corps of the implementing plan after the scheduled starting date caused confusion and slippage to occur at the corps level. Phase II did begin on the scheduled date. By year's end, however, the integration of the RF/PF command structure still was generating problems which required resolution by both MACV and the JGS. 106

(S) Following the Manila Conference, with its proposal to withdraw US and FWMA forces from RVN within six months, as the other side withdrew, stopped infiltration, and the level of violence subsided, it was noticed that the conference communique made no provision for US military advisory personnel to remain in RVN after a withdrawal. In the circumstances, besides strengthening the civilian components of the Mission, it was considered prudent to consider immediate organization and training of a national constabulary under the guidance of MACV. One suggestion was to draw upon RF/PF as a manpower source, while another was to designate RF as a provincial police force, and PF as a village police force. COMUSMACV agreed that early organization, with MACV assistance, of a constabulary was necessary to provide a force which would not be subject to negotiations. It appeared to COMUSMACV, however, that direct military participation should be terminated as soon as possible. There were several advantages to be gained from building on the RF/PF base, since those forces, besides constituting an organized force, already had an assigned mission which would not be changed materially by conversion; they had a training base, and an advisory program. Other paramilitary forces could be readily integrated into the program as well. To organize a constabulary required planning and study, and it required that a concept of organization and operation be developed. To provide the planning and development required, an inter-agency study group was formed. The group

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completed its study on 19 December 1966 and recommended that a Rural Constabulary be formed, utilizing the Police Field Forces as a base and opening up all manpower resources, including RVNAF, to recruitment. At the end of the year this study had not yet been presented to the Mission Council. In addition to the study being conducted by the inter-agency group, COMUSMACV directed that a MACV task force be organized to study all possible alternatives. The MACV conducted study was to be based upon the research of constabularies formed in other nations, i.e., Iran, Greece, the Philippines, Malaysia and the US in Germany. The completion date for this study was to be 25 February 1967.<sup>107</sup>

(S) Although COMUSMACV agreed with the concept of converting RF/PF into a provincial/district constabulary, he disagreed that PF personnel could be used as a recruiting base for RD cadre, as had been suggested by an inter-agency study group. As COMUSMACV pointed out, the major hamlet security force was PF and it should not be used as a reservoir for RD cadre, regardless of the importance of RD. PF already suffered from poor leadership, and to siphon off what leadership it had would only make it even more ineffective. In the long run, such a program would be self-defeating.<sup>108</sup>

#### Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDG)

(C) At the beginning of 1966 only 28,430 CIDG personnel were enrolled in 200 companies, although a strength of 37,250 was authorized for both FY 66 and FY 67, which would have allowed an increase of 49 companies to a total of 249 companies.

(C) In 1965 a US study group had formulated a detailed plan for converting the majority of CIDG companies to RF companies by the end of 1965 and the remainder by the end of 1966. On 15 September 1965 the JCS had agreed in principle, but recommended that the conversion be voluntary, recognizing the desirability of incorporating all military and paramilitary organizations into the RVNAF, but recognizing also that the unique role of CIDG remained valid for the immediate future. The concept was that as the areas in which CIDG units were operating became more suited for RF operations, the CIDG units would be converted to RF. USASF and LLDB (RVNAF Special Forces) then would move to other locations and recruit and train other CIDG forces. COMUSMACV recommended slow and deliberate conversion, using two or three camps as pilot models.<sup>109</sup>

(C) The camps chosen for conversion were Plei Do Lim, in Pleiku Province; Buon Ea Yang, in Darlac Province; and An Phu, in Chau Doc Province. The target date for converting all three camps had been 1 July; however, An Phu was not converted until 1 August, and Plei Do Lim and Buon Ea Yang until 3 August. In the conversion, the LLDB

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team withdrew on the day of conversion, while the USASF team stayed temporarily, being replaced by a MACV team at a time mutually agreed upon. The TOE equipment of the camp was reduced to compatibility with the RF TOE, except that special equipment needed for defense was hand-receipted to the camp. Disadvantages of the conversion were reduced resupply capability, since the USASF was no longer supplying the camp; a decrease in pay to some unmarried personnel when converted; reluctance of civilian members of the CIDG to join the RVNAF; and increased pressure on RVNAF deserters who had joined the CIDG. The slippage in converting the three camps adversely affected the establishment of CIDG camps at Dak Seang, Duc Lap, and Bau Don, which had been scheduled by 12 August. Other problems were encountered in establishing the camps. Recruiting at Duc Lap was slow because of the CG II CTZ's requirement to have 50 percent Vietnamese in CIDG companies, in an area where the population was predominately Montagnard. Airfield and camp construction was difficult during the SW monsoon season. Additionally, a lead time of about 120 days was required to recruit and train the CIDG and to construct the camp and airstrip. A further complicating factor was the equipment transfer. Essential weapons and equipment had remained in the converted camps on a hand-receipt basis; this was an undesirable arrangement because of the priorities established for issue of material to USASF. In effect, the USASF were required to transfer their camp defense weapons and other essential equipment without receiving replacement, at least within an acceptable time frame. This was the basis for suspending the transfer of additional camps during CY 66. 110

National Police and Armed Combat Youth

(C) Two other paramilitary organizations were the National Police (NP) and the Armed Combat Youth (ACY). The NP was formed at province, district, or village level to maintain law and order and to provide public security and safety: it was supported and advised by USAID. Its missions were to conduct normal police functions, penetrate the VC infrastructure, develop informant networks, assist the military as required, and establish population and resources control. COMUSMACV was disappointed at the work being done toward population and resources control, noting that the VC were still harvesting rice and intimidating the people, and that few effective police check points had been established. The NP had changed from a CY to a FY basis on 31 December 1965, when its strength had reached the CY 65 ceiling of 52,250. Many NP were discharged servicemen and little difficulty was experienced in recruiting. NP losses through desertion were very small during 1966, and most of the desertions occurred during the political crisis in May and June.

(C) The ACY was found primarily at the hamlet level and was armed with an assortment of obsolete or non-standard weapons. Little or no support was given to the ACY by GVN, as the organization had been disestablished in 1964. The ACY refused to die, however, because hamlet

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chiefs had no available substitute for it. During the first eight months of 1966, ACY strength slowly declined, but this trend was reversed toward the end of the year.<sup>111</sup>

#### VNAF Equipage Changes

(S) The shortage of A-1 aircraft assets had become a matter of concern early in 1966. On 4 June JCS proposed a solution to the shortages in RVN, and CINCPAC promptly requested comments on the proposal, which primarily concerned the inventory of CINCPACFLT. On 7 June CINCPACFLT declared that the JCS proposal for the Navy to hold A-1 assets on hand would require him to operate some A-1 squadrons at less than programmed strength. However, he concluded that this appeared to be the only logical solution in view of the non-availability of additional assets. By mid-June CINCPAC addressed to JCS the problem of A-1 Aircraft shortages, emphasizing a general and growing problem in aircraft availability in SEASIA, of which the provision for A-1 attrition was only one aspect of the situation.<sup>112</sup>

(S) Replacement of VNAF A-1's with substitute aircraft and use of those VNAF A-1's to cover USN and USAF A-1 attrition appeared to be a logical approach, in view of non-availability of such attrition replacements from other sources. An early decision concerning replacement for dwindling A-1 and other aircraft assets was an urgent necessity. In order to replace VNAF A-1 assets, CINCPAC suggested expeditious procurement of F-5's and other selected aircraft.<sup>113</sup>

(S) For a number of years the armed services had been involved with development and evaluation of aircraft designed specifically to perform missions of the type the A-1 was currently performing in RVN. Additionally, capabilities being provided by A-1's were to be found to a degree in several other aircraft. The YAT-37 was considered capable of missions in a counterinsurgency environment such as those flown by A-1's. Also, a review of OV-10A design capabilities indicated an acceptable counterinsurgency attack capability and significant capabilities in several other functions, to include limited cargo transport, short takeoff and landing (STOL) characteristics, endurance, and good visibility as well in a FAC role. No previous requirement for OV-10A aircraft as a MAP replacement had been stated by CINCPAC due to high unit cost coupled with the former availability of excess A-1's.<sup>114</sup>

(S) In addition to A-1 replacement in RVN, MAP had aircraft problems in two other areas. One was the problem of replacement of T-28B's in Thailand during late FY 1967 and in Laos later in FY 1969—and the replacement of T-28A trainers throughout PACOM beginning in FY 1967. T-28's were not available, while T-28D resources were steadily dwindling. The OV-10A, at reasonable cost, would solve some of the MAP problems. Therefore, in addition to the YAT-37,

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CINCPAC recommended consideration of the OV-10A as a replacement aircraft for the VNAF A-1's and PACOM T-28's. 115

(S) The long-range implications and magnitude of such a conversion program highlighted the need for operational evaluation of the selected aircraft on an expedited basis in CONUS and RVN, as was done with the F-5. Concurrently, the projected shortage of USN A-1 aircraft by mid-September was such that the only available recourse appeared to be the operation of USN A-1 squadrons at less than programmed strength, pending new production of A-6A and A-7A aircraft which needed to be expedited. As an interim measure, CINCPAC suggested that A-1 aircraft becoming available through conversion of VNAF squadrons to other aircraft types, should be applied proportionately against USN shortages and shortages in the two USAF A-1 squadrons in SEASIA. Moreover, bearing in mind the urgent need to maintain the capability comparable to the A-1, CINCPAC concluded that earlier consideration should be given to procurement of replacement aircraft which would permit USAF A-1 squadrons in SEASIA an orderly transition as attrition depleted additional A-1 assets. 116

(S) Concurrence was given on 6 July by the AF Advisory Group and COMUSMACV to CINCPAC on the JCS recommendation that six VNAF A-1 squadrons be converted to two F-5 and four AT-37 jet aircraft. In addition to updating VNAF equipment and boosting VNAF morale and proficiency, such an action would release VNAF A-1 aircraft to US forces. It was also recommended that two USAF tactical fighter squadrons for the CY 1967 force requirements be equipped with AT-37's and designated as air commando squadrons. 117

VNN Buildup

(C) As US and FW forces built up in RVN, the program of buildup for the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) continued, if not at the same pace. The program called for an increase of ships and boats, an increase in personnel, and great emphasis on training and maintenance capability. At the beginning of 1966 the VNN was organized into three major forces, the Sea Force, River Force, and Coastal Force. A reorganization of VNN had been proposed in December 1965 and was implemented during 1966. The new organization provided for a Fleet Command composed as follows:

- Sea Patrol
  - Patrol Craft (PC)
  - Escort Patrol Craft (PCE)
  
- Inshore Patrol
  - Patrol Gunboats, Medium (FGM)

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River Patrol

Support Landing Ships, Large (LSSL)  
Infantry Landing Ships, Large (LSIL)

Logistic Lift Force

Tank Landing Ships (LST)  
Medium Landing Ships (LSM)  
Utility Landing Craft (LCU)  
Auxiliary Light Cargo Ship (AKL)  
Yard Oiler (YOG)

Minecraft Force

Coastal Minesweepers (MSC)  
Minesweeping Motorlaunches (MSML)

The coastal groups were put under operational control of the four coastal zone commanders whose area of responsibility coincided with the four Corps Tactical Zones (CTZ). The River Assault Groups (RAG's) were subordinate to the two Riverine Area Commands in III and IV CTZ. 118

(C) During 1966 the programmed increase of VNN ships and craft proceeded on schedule, except for the Yabuta junk program. The Yabuta junks had been designed in Japan as a composite of all the best features of all the types of junks in use in SEASIA. The design has been found to be sound, and the first 120 Yabutats were built on schedule by the VNN shipyard in Saigon. The second increment of 60 junks was scheduled to begin building in July 1966 at a rate of one per week; however, the skilled workmen who had built the first 120 were hired away from the shipyard by US contractors in Saigon who could and would pay higher wages than the VNN. The result was a production of nine junks between July and year's end. All material was on hand for the remaining 51 junks. Continued urging of US advisors to exempt shipyard workers from the draft to retain shipyard skills was unsuccessful. 119

(S) The ship and craft inventory of the VNN and planned changes through 1967 are shown on the following chart:

Sea Force:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Jan 66</u>	<u>Dec 66</u>	<u>Planned Increase 1967</u>
PC	3	1	0
PCE	5	5	1
PGM	12	16	5
MSC	3	3	-
LSIL	5	5	-
LSSL	7	6	-
LST	3	3	-
YOG	2	2	1

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Type	Jan 66	Dec 66	Planned Increase 1967
AKL	1	1	-
LSM	7	7	-
MSM	12	11	-

River Assault Groups:

Commandment	9	13	-
Monitor	9	13	-
LCM-6	40	60	-
LCVP	36	36	-
STCAN	36	36	-
LCM-8	6	6	-
RPC	29	28	-

The decrease in FC's during 1966 reflects the decommissioning of two FC's as obsolete and not economically feasible to renovate. The Coastal Forces were programmed to decrease in FY 67-69 to 268 junks as coastal groups are phased out. Concurrently, beginning in FY 68, 40 River Patrol Boats (PER's), 20 Fast Patrol Craft (PCF), and 20 Armored Support Patrol Boats (ASPB) are programmed with first deliveries expected in CY 68. Personnel strength rose slightly as programmed from 14,559 in December 1965 to 17,349 on 31 December 1966, with a strength of 16,076 personnel authorized by the end of June 1967. 120

(C) Although materials for buildings at the VNN bases had been approved, until a VNN plan for base construction was provided, these MAP assets would not be released to VNN. In the area of supply a major advisory effort throughout the year resulted in the VNN establishing supply depots at the five coastal surveillance centers in December, which would move the much-needed spare parts and consumable supplies out of the Saigon depot to locations where they could be used. 121

Buildup of VNMC

(C) The authorized strength of the VNMC on 1 January 1966 was 6,540 officers and enlisted men. The authorized strength increased during the year to 7,189 with the authorization for an additional infantry battalion, approved by COMUSMACV in 1965 with activation scheduled for 1 July 1966. Subsequent to the recruiting effort, which commenced 1 May, heavy casualties received by the VNMC battalions required the diversion of recruits already in training to the five battalions so that they could remain capable of combat deployment with more than 700 marines each, or more than 70 percent of the authorized strength. The decision of the Commandant VNMC resulted in a request to the JCS to delay activation. The matter was discussed with COMUSMACV by the Senior VNMC Advisor on 14 July; COMUSMACV agreed with the logic of the decision, as it coincided

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with his views of the overall personnel situation in RVNAF, i.e., he preferred to augment low-strength in-being units rather than activate new ones. Accordingly the activation date was changed to 1 November.<sup>122</sup>

(C) The VMMC, anxious to get the new battalion organized, trained, and operating, moved ahead by organizing the battalion staff and two rifle companies on 1 September. By the end of October the third rifle company had been formed and by 31 December the battalion's personnel strength had reached 855 officers and enlisted men. The new battalion lacked only a small number of NCO's, who would be assigned in the near future. Meanwhile the battalion continued its Phase II training, stressing small unit tactics. It was planned for the unit to be combat effective early in the new year.<sup>123</sup>

#### RVNAF Training

(U) At the end of the 1st quarter of 1966, it had become apparent that the offshore schooling program for RVNAF personnel needed to be studied and modified. The primary reason for this was the high number of offshore schooling cancellations during the first three months of 1966; of a total of 366 personnel scheduled for offshore schooling, 90 had been cancelled. The main reason for cancellations was the lack of language qualification, which accounted for 93 percent of the cancellations. These cancellations injected an element of turmoil into the system, which affected all agencies concerned, the institutions in CONUS, and the individuals selected for schooling; normally it was not possible for CINGPAC or DA to reallocate the spaces to other MAP-supported countries after the usual late notification of cancellation.<sup>124</sup>

(C) A study was made and a definite program developed by the MACV Training Directorate which aimed at reducing cancellation, and which sought to cure another problem as well, that of improper utilization of those personnel trained in specific skills in CONUS. In the areas of programming and selection, both US advisor and RVNAF channels of communication were used. Of primary importance was the identification of candidates; advisors and RVNAF commanders were required to submit to JGS and the Training Directorate justification for the schooling and the recommended job assignment following the student's completion of the school. Specific responsibilities, both RVNAF and US, were defined in a joint MACV/JGS directive. Increased efforts also were made to improve the ARVN English-language instruction and testing, which resulted in the development of a new English-language screening test designed to supplement the English-language comprehension level test. The supplementary test was to be given six months prior to attendance at the course. By the end of the calendar year well over 90 percent of the programmed spaces were being utilized.<sup>125</sup>

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(C) The problem of student utilization was also attacked in MACV Directive 551-4 of 30 May. In substance, this directive provided for immediate use of RVNAF personnel in positions requiring the knowledge gained by the offshore training, and established specific time frames for utilization--two years' utilization for those attending US service schools, and four years' utilization for those personnel attending US universities. The directive also required continuous monitoring of the utilization program to insure that the objectives were being met, and defined responsibilities for all RVNAF and MACV agencies concerned.<sup>126</sup>

#### National Training Centers

(C) On 30 June COMUSMACV visited the Van Kiep National Training Center. During the visit, he observed that there were nearly as many cadre as there were recruits, as the training center was at the low ebb in the recruit input cycle. This condition prompted COMUSMACV to convene a conference on 2 July concerning the status of training centers, which resulted in a study of the overall training center structure. The study, conducted by the Training Directorate, determined that the TOE of RVNAF training centers was based on CY 65 needs. In view of the planned force structure expansion for CY 66, JGS had prepared a TOE change to increase staff, faculty, and support of the training centers by adding 1,344 personnel; pending approval of the proposed TOE, JGS had assigned an augmentation to each center which roughly equated to their proposed TOE. The training centers experienced a cycle of periodic peak loads and reduced loads; during the peak months of July and August, the training centers received an input of 8,000 personnel per month. During the months of the peak load period the RVNAF training center capacity was exceeded by 20 percent. The study also found that the JGS-proposed TOE was based on the peak workload periods. Another problem area identified was that the division training centers took 20 percent of the recruits from the total input, furthering the non-utilization of national training center facilities during reduced load periods. The study of the peak load problem determined that, in order to make maximum use of the national training centers, the slack and peak periods would have to be eliminated by a smoothing of recruit input; if this was not possible, then the training centers would have to be staffed and supported for peak load periods.<sup>127</sup>

(C) A briefing was held by the training Directorate for COMUSMACV on 9 August, in which three recommendations for alleviating the training center problem were given to COMUSMACV: to inform the JGS of the FY 67 force structure plans as soon as possible, to give maximum planning lead-time; to persuade JGS to average the monthly input to training centers; and to eliminate recruit training at the division training centers and to change their missions to specialist training. The national training centers had better instructors and facilities as well as more experience, and were able to produce a better product. COMUSMACV approved the first two

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recommendations, but held the third in abeyance for further study; he felt that to take recruit training completely away from the divisions would create opposition among ARVN division commanders. As a result of this analysis of training center utilization, the JGS, CTA reacted to reduce the training base. Decision was made to utilize national training centers for training of Regional Forces as well as ARVN. Effective 1 January, no RF training was programmed to be conducted in five of the seven existing CTZ RF training centers. These five centers were scheduled to be phased out by 10 April 1967 and to be used for other military purposes, as appropriate.<sup>128</sup>

#### RVNAF Command Leadership Program

(S) One of the most crucial RVNAF problems, and one which greatly influenced all other problem areas, was leadership. A major effort had been made to improve the status of leadership, but unsatisfactory or marginal commanders were often retained instead of being eliminated. The rapid expansion of the force structure, with an inadequate base of experienced leaders in the face of concurrent aggression, allowed for no other alternative. Typical of the unsatisfactory leadership which saddled ARVN was the CG 25th Div. Still in command, although recommended for elimination more than once, this officer, regardless of how much he was propped up, always folded in situations requiring command and leadership ability. Falsely proud, he cast himself in the role of an advisor rather than a commander, recommending courses of action, but never commanding adoption of a course of action; he delegated authority, but did not follow up or support his subordinates. His division often conducted operations in areas known not to contain VC; it often broke contact early in the afternoon in order to secure base areas for the night; and it left deliberate gaps in combat formations to allow the enemy to escape.<sup>129</sup>

(S) The critical nature of the situation prompted COMUSMACV to dispatch an aide-memoire to Chief JGS, on the subject of leadership. He recommended better provisions and procedures for selection, training, and appointment of officers and NCO's; a strengthening of command responsibility to insure the highest degree of combat effectiveness through proper training and discipline, and provisions for the health, welfare, and morale of the soldier; a strengthening of the chain of command in order to guarantee firm disciplinary control throughout; and greater emphasis on officer career management, at the JGS level, in the areas of personnel records, efficiency reporting, and centralized personnel actions such as promotion, elimination, retirement, assignment, schooling, and transfer. The aide-memoire provided the impetus necessary to activate the RVNAF high command, and Chief JGS directed initiation of a command leadership program to strengthen RVNAF leadership. On 9 May the J1 JGS reviewed the main points of the aide-memoire and presented detailed views of the measures and actions necessary to implement

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each point. The JGS planned to convene a conference as a point of departure for the leadership program, and requested MACV's views on the matter, which were given on 9 June.<sup>130</sup>

(C) On 8 July a report was made to Chief JGS, in which major problem areas were identified as needing thorough study. The significant result of the conference was the appointment of the JGS command leadership committee. The committee met for the first time on 21 July, developed rules of operation, and appointed working committees to develop and present courses of action to the full committee for consideration. Recommendations approved by the full committee were passed on to the JGS or appropriate GVN agency for implementation. On 1 August the first recommendation was presented to the full committee, which was a proposed career development plan for infantry officers. Among other things this proposal specified rotating an officer's duty assignments between command and staff billets and assigning newly-commissioned officers to combat units, a program considered to be basically similar to the US program for career management for officers. The proposal was reviewed by JGS and was issued as a directive. All officers appeared to be enthusiastic about the new program, considering it a breakthrough in the area of RVNAF officer career management. Other significant actions resulting from the committee were: (1) the 1967 Officer Annual Promotion procedures, which incorporated annual efficiency reports into the selection criteria, and for the first time provided for full disclosure of the results of the promotion board's findings; (2) the 1967 NCO Annual Promotion procedures, which included promotion on merit and experience, centralized selection at JGS, discounting of unit NCO strength as a factor affecting selection, and provisions for full disclosure of the promotion board's findings; (3) initiation of a nationwide campaign for the improvement of RVNAF discipline and conduct; (4) revised selection criteria for C&GSC, which included central selection at JGS as opposed to allocation quotas to subordinate commands, and present position and promotion potential weighing significantly in the selection process; (5) publication of a Vietnamese-authored handbook for company commanders and squad and platoon leaders; and (6) initiation of complete revitalization of the RVNAF IG system, which is to be patterned along that of the USA, including personal complaint and redress procedures. COMUSMACV viewed the latter as being quite significant and promising. In a letter to Chief JGS, COMUSMACV commented on the importance of a viable IG system, and made advisor support available should JGS desire it. As the year ended, the committee was studying numerous other areas incident to leadership and overall RVNAF effectiveness. At the conclusion of a progress briefing on 9 December, COMUSMACV stated that this was the most important program relating to RVNAF improvement and cautioned that its momentum must not dissipate.<sup>131</sup>

(U) In addition to the RVNAF Command Leadership Program, other significant leadership-related programs produced highly favorable results during 1966. One of the historical criticisms of the RVNAF was its

PAGE 119 OF 872 PAGES

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commissioning and promotion system, with its heavy emphasis on education. As far back as 1960, when RVNAF was one-third its 1966 strength, a group of distinguished citizens had addressed the problem to President Diem:

. . . even in a group of the proud elite of youth such as the Vietnamese Army. . . the spirit of the "national revolutionary movement" . . . divides the men of one and the same unit, sows distrust between friends of the same rank, and uses as a criterion for promotion fidelity toward the party in blind submission to its leaders.

The purpose of the army, pillar of the defense of the country, is to stop foreign invasions and to eliminate rebel movements. It is at the service of the country only and should not lend itself to the exploitation of any faction or party. Its total reorganization is necessary. Clannishness and party obedience should be eliminated; its moral bases strengthened; a noble tradition of national pride created; and fighting spirit, professional conscience, and bravery should become criteria for promotion.

A more recent analysis by a US civilian writer was perhaps more to the point:

We should urge the South Vietnamese Army to make promotions and assignment on the basis of merit. The efficiency of the fighting forces would be greatly increased if the army adopted the simple expedient of promotions on the battlefield, raising enlisted men to officer rank regardless of education—rewarding proven ability, aggressiveness and dedication.<sup>131A</sup>

(U) COMUSMACV strongly favored sound programs whereby qualified and deserving personnel might be commissioned from the enlisted ranks. During 1966 there were three RVNAF programs directed towards this end. Foremost was the Special Officer Candidate Training Course open to qualified enlisted men with two years' service and in the grade of Corporal First Class or higher. Six classes were programmed. From the first five classes there were 1,484 graduates who were commissioned as Aspirants. The election of the Constituent Assembly on 11 September caused the completion of Class 6, with 255 students, to be extended from December 1966 to January 1967. A second program was the direct commissioning of 401 Master Sergeants First Class in the Regular Force and 100 in the Regional Force as Aspirants. The third program was awarding special battlefield commissions to 16 Master Sergeants First

PAGE 120 OF 872 PAGES

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Class in the Regular Force and four in the Regional Force. The 1966 total of the three programs amounted to 2,005 Aspirant commissions awarded to RVNAF servicemen from the ranks. All RVNAF servicemen may receive a special promotion based upon distinctive and valorous performance of duty in combat. During 1966, 196 officers, 648 NCO's, and 3,306 enlisted men in the Regular Force were advanced one grade through the award of battlefield promotions. Six officers, 42 NCO's and 224 enlisted men in the Regional Forces received similar promotions. 131B

#### RVNAF Deployments

(S) On 21 January 1966 a combined MACV/JGS planning directive was published calling for formation of an RVNAF/MACV planning group to consider and recommend deployments and redeployment of RVNAF during CY 66. It also directed the planning group to recommend a revision in the administrative and military structure in the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ). The guidance received by the group emphasized the unsatisfactory security conditions within the Capital Military Region (CMR), and stated that US forces would provide an outer protective belt for CMR and Gia Dinh Province, within which an improved security posture could be attained. The guidance also called for consideration of moving elements of the 25th ARVN Div to Long An Province to close security gaps along the southern and southwestern approaches to the CMR. The combined planning group concluded that the guidance could be implemented in two phases. Phase I was to be primarily a positioning phase for US forces to the north and west of Saigon in order to release ARVN units for Phase II. Phase II was to be redeployment of nine battalions of the 25th Div to Long An to increase friendly troop density to the south and southwest of Saigon. COMUSMACV and Chief JGS concurred in this action, and Chief JGS ordered CG III Corps to send not less than nine battalions to Long An Province. 132

(S) In consideration of the realignment of administrative and operational responsibilities in RSSZ, the principle of unity of command was the guiding factor. The planning group concluded that it was necessary to establish a RSSZ prefecture, to be responsible for public administration, revolutionary development, command of the RSSZ RF/PF units, and operational control of RVNAF units allocated to the RSSZ. The Prefect was recommended to come from the VNN and to have a MACV senior advisor (USN or USMC) as well as a USAID representative. The planning group felt that this arrangement would facilitate coordination between the Prefect and CTF 116.2 on the security of ship channels through the RSSZ. COMUSMACV disagreed with the establishment of a prefecture, at least for the near future, primarily because he felt that it would disrupt a functioning organization and that there would be a regression in the progress already made in that area. The matter died there. 133

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(S) With respect to relocating the General Reserve to obtain more security for the CMR, the group recommended repositioning of one airborne and two marine battalions in Gia Dinh, two airborne battalions in Bien Hoa, to enhance the security of key installations in these areas, and a Ranger battalion from IV Corps to CMR. In addition, seven RF companies were recommended for redeployment to assist in security. COMUSMACV concurred, but the problem of construction of dependent quarters and troop billets delayed action on this recommendation.<sup>134</sup>

(U) On 7 June, CMR was reorganized and designated as the Capital Military District (CMD). The old CMR had been an entirely military organization, with the mission of providing security and law and order for its components, which consisted of Gia Dinh Province, the prefecture of Saigon, and the Con Son Special Zone; the status of CMR headquarters had been equivalent to that of a Corps. The new CMD encompassed the same area as the CMR, and the only change was in the command responsibility. The CMD came under CG III Corps and assumed a status and authority equivalent to a division tactical area. The former CG of the CMR became CG III Corps, while the CMD was commanded by the former deputy commander of the CMR. The reason for the change was not entirely clear, but it appeared to have been made for political reasons. The change was unilateral GVN decision and US personnel were not informed until after its completion.<sup>135</sup>

#### USMC Buildup

(S) At the beginning of 1966 all Phase I USMC forces, except one tactical fighter squadron, were in-country. These forces consisted of the following major components of III MAF:

- Headquarters, III Marine Amphibious Force
- 3d Marine Division (Rein)
- 1st Marine Air Wing (Rein)
- Force Logistics Support Group
- 7th Marine Regiment (1st Mar Div)
- 11th Marine Regiment (-) (Arty) (1st Mar Div)
- 2 Battalions, 1st Marine Regiment (1st Mar Div)

These units, plus Force troops combat support and combat service support units, consisted of approximately 40,000 troops and constituted 12 infantry battalions and one tank battalion. The total Phase I-II requirement for USMC forces in RVN was approximately 67,000, consisting of the above listed elements, the remainder of the 1st Mar Div on Okinawa, and additional elements of the 1st Marine Air Wing still stationed in Okinawa and Japan. At the beginning of the year it was

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anticipated that all units scheduled for the III MAF, located in WESTPAC outside RVN, would deploy to I CTZ during calendar year 1966.<sup>136</sup>

(S) In December 1965 CINCPAC had forwarded to JCS a reprogrammed phased force requirement for 1966. Included in his reprogrammed requirements for USMC were Phase II and Phase II add-on forces and the one tactical fighter squadron which had not yet deployed as a part of Phase I. The largest tactical unit in the Phase II package was the 1st Mar Div (-) (Rein), which had been listed as an expedite item in COMUSMACV's Phase IIA requirements in November 1965. The regimental HQ plus one battalion of the 1st Mar Regt, a unit of the 1st Mar Div, had been recommended for deployment to RVN by COMUSMACV, to arrive in-country during January 1966. The recommendation was approved by SECDEF and JCS directed the deployment in December; the unit deployed from Okinawa and arrived at Chu Lai on 18 January. The 1st Mar Div (-) (Rein) began to deploy from Okinawa on 3 March and all major units were ashore at Chu Lai by 29 March, at which time the 1st Mar Div relieved the 3d Mar Div in the Chu Lai area and assumed operational control of all forces and activities in the Chu Lai TAOR.<sup>137</sup>

(S) A total of 6,214 Force troops scheduled to arrive at Da Nang and Chu Lai from January to June 1966, and 2,352 additional Force troop personnel were to arrive not later than June 1966; the availability of shipping was the determining factor in the deployment of the latter group. In addition, a total of 5,756 Phase II add-on troops was scheduled to deploy to RVN during the period January to October 1966. These forces included two more tactical fighter squadrons (TFS) and one medium helicopter squadron (HMM). The arrival of these air elements would bring the total of jet squadrons in RVN to ten and the number of helicopter squadrons to eight. The other requested forces included in the Phase IIA (R) package consisted of Redeye platoons, scout-sniper teams, 60-mm mortar sections, a detachment of the 1st Radio Bn, Force Service Regiment augmentation, elements of the communications battalion, a Marine Air Group HQ, and supporting squadrons and other miscellaneous units. The 1st Radio Bn and the 6th Communication Bn were in-country by 19 July; the scout-sniper platoon and the 50-mm mortar sections arrived in late August.<sup>138</sup>

(S) During the January-February 1966 CINCPAC conference in Honolulu, the Force requirements were reevaluated and minor changes were made to the 1966 total requirements as follows:

USMC Forces	29,309
1st Mar Div (-)	(8,985)
5th Mar Regt	(5,628)
Force Troops	(5,587)
Marine Avn Units	(1,001)
Force Troops	(2,352)
Phase II A (R)	(5,756)

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The deletion of 987 personnel from the original requirements was due to their non-availability during 1966. The closure dates were unchanged with the exception of BLT 3/5, previously scheduled to arrive during June; this unit was the last infantry battalion scheduled to enter RVN and complete the buildup of maneuver elements of the III MAF. However, because of the non-availability of a BLT to take its place as the 7th Fleet Special Landing Force (SLF), the decision was made by CINCPAC to retain the BLT with the 7th Fleet until July, when it would be relieved by a BLT of the newly-activated 26th Mar Regt from CONUS. 139

(S) CINCPAC desired the 1st Mar Div (-) (Rein) to be deployed as scheduled, but he did not support the introduction of the 5th Mar Regt of the division, as its deployment would be to the detriment of the ready Marine Amphibious Brigade in Okinawa and Japan. In order to satisfy the requirement for a contingency force, deployment of the regiment was dependent on the arrival in WESTPAC of an additional RLT to reconstitute the PACOM reserve, which would be exhausted if the 5th Mar Regt deployed as scheduled. Despite CINCPAC's desire to maintain the 5th Mar Regt as the CINCPAC amphibious reserve, JCS on 11 March directed that two BLT's of the 5th Mar Regt and one fighter attack squadron (Phase I carry over) be deployed to RVN. One BLT (2/5) arrived about 13 April, and one BLT (1/5) deployed to Chu Lai on 13 May. The deployment of the fighter squadron (VMFA 323) was delayed until 15 July because of the late completion of a parking apron at Da Nang airbase. 140

(S) During June CG III MAF recommended that two Light antiaircraft missile (LAAM) batteries, scheduled for deployment to RVN during October, not be deployed. This recommendation was based on a study of the air defense structure already in place, which indicated that a repositioning of the three batteries already in each battalion could provide adequate air defense. COMUSMACV approved the request on 24 June and appropriate changes to the CY 66 force requirements were recommended to CINCPAC. Related to the LAAM situation, COMUSMACV recommended on 12 July to CINCPAC that two Redeye platoons scheduled for deployment during October be cancelled, based on the already adequate air defense capability of the LAAM battalions. 141

(S) During late September the enemy's rapid buildup in the DMZ made it advisable to seek a contingency force to be responsive to COMUSMACV should the need arise. CINCPAC was requested to develop a contingency plan to provide one RLT (-) for employment in RVN. CINCPAC complied, and a second ARG/SLF, formed with shipping from SEVENTHFLT and USMC troops from Okinawa, arrived off the coast of I CTZ on 6 October, where it remained until the end of the month. Meanwhile the regularly scheduled ARG/SLF, though continuing training exercises in the Philippines, was prepared to respond within 96 hours for employment in I CTZ. At the end of October the second ARG/SLF was

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dissolved, and the regular ARG/SIF moved into position off the coast of I CTZ. 142

(S) In addition, because of the increasing enemy threat, COMUSMACV directed that certain USA units be withdrawn or diverted from other CTZ's and deployed on a priority basis to reinforce USMC, ARVN, and ROK forces in I CTZ. A battery of 175-mm guns (SP), withdrawn from III CTZ, was deployed to the Cam To area early in October. A battalion of 175-mm guns was diverted at sea and closed I CTZ on 16 October. A battalion of 105-mm howitzers, likewise at sea, was also diverted and closed I CTZ 27 October, for employment in the Dong Ha area. 143

(S) The regularly scheduled buildup continued, the most significant in-country arrival being two fighter attack squadrons, bringing the total to ten. Also arriving were elements of two USMC squadrons, MAG 13, and a 74-man detachment of ANGLICO. During November one armored amphibian tractor company, one ADA (AW) battalion, and the headquarters of a field artillery group arrived for employment in I CTZ. 144

(S) The projected/required in-country end-CY 66 strength for USMC forces was approximately 70,000 troops. This figure constituted 18 maneuver battalions, five engineer battalions, nine artillery battalions, two air defense battalions, ten tactical fighter squadrons, and eight helicopter squadrons. The unit figure was firm, but it was expected that the personnel figure would have some slippage into CY 1967. The units indicated were in-country by the end of the year, and the total USMC strength in RVN was 67,006. 145

#### USAF Buildup and Deployment

(S) Based on the buildup of US/FWMAF ground maneuver battalions and a thorough evaluation of projected sortie totals required to provide close support to these units, Phase I called for 23 USAF/USMC squadrons to be in place, under COMUSMACV operational control through component commanders, by 31 December 1965. Seven more tactical fighter squadrons were to be added in Phase II by mid-1966. It was recognized that jet air bases as well as squadron availability would not permit the buildup to progress into 1966 in strict accord with planned month-by-month schedules, but the projections of requirements versus availabilities were expected to intersect in June 1966. 146

(S) At the beginning of 1966, 19,000 officers and airmen were assigned and 679 USAF civilians were on duty with USMACV's air component, the 2d Air Div (PACAF), commanded by Lt Gen Joseph H. Moore, who also served as DEPCOMUSMACV for Air Operations. This total represented a threefold increase in USAF personnel resources during 1965. Total USAF tactical aircraft

PAGE 125 OF 872 PAGES

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resources supporting COMUSMACV had expanded during 1965 from 222 to 780 (599 in RVN, 181 in Thailand). In early January 1966, this inventory consisted of 780 fixed and rotary-wing aircraft under operational control of the 2d Air Div, assigned as follows: 388 to offensive missions, 60 to reconnaissance, 33 to special air warfare, 12 to air defense, 89 to airlift and 198 in support operations. These aircraft were deployed in 90 organizational units: 50 assigned, 33 attached, and 13 on temporary duty status with the 2d Air Div. In addition, other USAF organization units out-of-country provided mission support and airlift into RVN as required. B-52 daily bombing sorties out of Guam (SAC-3d AD), airlift out of Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines (MAC), and field tests of tactical air operational prototype weapons systems (TAC/AFSC) were continuing at a stepped-up pace.<sup>147</sup>

(S) In RVN, four 2d Air Div tactical fighter wing headquarters directed flight operations from jet-capable air bases; two were at Bien Hoa (one deactivated in February), one at Cam Ranh Bay, and one at Da Nang. Five combat support groups provided airlift in-country from Tan Son Nhut (TSN), Nha Trang, Pleiku, Binh Thuy, and Phan Rang. 2d Air Div's Tactical Air Control Group, located at TSN operated the Tactical Air Control Center (TACC) for USMACV. In Thailand, three 13th AF tactical fighter wings were located at airbases in Ubon, Takhli, and Korat. Two 13th AF combat support groups were at Udorn and Don Muang and an airbase squadron was stationed at Nakhona Phanom AB. Makeshift beddown arrangements at alternate airbases permitted the arrival in-country of some deferred Phase I squadrons. On 5 January 25 A-1E's of the 1st Air Commando Sq moved from Bien Hoa to Pleiku, permitting an F-100 squadron from CONUS to move into Bien Hoa on 1 February. This first step toward "making ramp space available for jets" relocated USAF conventional strike aircraft from Bien Hoa, leaving only VNAF A-1's and USAF F-100's. Shifting was completed when the 602d USAF Commando Ftr Sq (A-1E's) moved to Nha Trang early in February. In other makeshifts, the first F-4C Sq (391st) of the 366th Tac Ftr Wing, scheduled to be based at Phan Rang, was temporarily placed at Cam Ranh Bay on 31 January. An advance party of the wing moved into Phan Rang facilities; one additional F-4C squadron (319th) deployed into Da Nang. By 14 March, both squadrons plus a third F-4C (389th) squadron from CONUS moved into Phan Rang. This move completed the Phase I squadron deployments to RVN.<sup>148</sup>

(S) In early December 1965, following an assessment of logistical capabilities with SECDEF, COMUSMACV reviewed the limited tactical air base support program for RVN and concurred with CINCPAC's proposal to reduce from 30 to 23 the number of tactical fighter squadrons required by the end of Phase II. In so doing, however, COMUSMACV recommended that 17 USAF and six USMC jet strike squadron-equivalents be deployed in-country, with the provision that one aircraft carrier (CVA) continue on Dixie Station (South China Sea, offshore RVN) for

PAGE 126 OF 872 PAGES

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in-country strike support until sufficient land-based aircraft were in-country to meet RVN strike requirements.<sup>149</sup>

(TS) CY 66 2d Air Div requirements, developed early in January for integration with CINCPAC/COMUSMACV Phase II & IIA deployment schedules, were programmed at Honolulu in a joint-Service conference 17 January through 6 February 1966. Aircraft requirements were matched against best estimates of USAF capabilities to meet MACV needs and dates. The program, as developed, projected MACV's force requirements set forth by CINCPAC on 14 December 1965, and from JCS/Military Service actions on force availability and readiness to meet stated SEASIA requirements. TFS/CVA air support of in-country operations could not be firmed pending final phasing of maneuver battalions, and aircraft deployment availability was critically dependent upon RVN jet-capable airfield construction. Early in the conference COMUSMACV emphasized to CINCPAC the close and important relationship between airfields and ports available for RVN deployments. His reevaluation, based on projected CY 66 strike sortie rates, had confirmed the requirement for three additional jet air bases in RVN. Tuy Hoa constituted an agreed site, and it was desirable that construction economy and security be attained by satelliting the new Qui Nhon airfield in the port. It was also abundantly clear that a port facility was required at or near Hue in connection with the Phu Bai airfield to support USAF operations. Construction efforts were consequently reoriented toward Qui Nhon or Hue/Phu Bai to commence by mid-April. Concurrently, COMUSMACV studied the expansion of existing jet air bases to absorb 1966 programmed fighter squadrons. By 1 March, a new program would encompass all required new sites and the expansion of existing bases to accommodate tactical jet aircraft deployment to RVN.<sup>150</sup>

(TS) The conference closed on 6 February, having established US forces and logistic support required for RVN, to include monthly sortie rates for air operations in SEASIA by tactical strike aircraft and B-52 ARC LIGHT bomber forces. Strike sortie rates were keyed to available munitions estimated from February through December 1966. Tactical fighter sorties would maintain an average of 150 sorties per month per US/FWMA forces in-country maneuver battalion. A total of 7,800 sorties per month would support the RVNAF. Additionally, 3,000 sorties per month were marked for Laos and 7,100-7,500 were allocated for NVN. COMUSMACV could direct additional sorties from in-country assets when improved targeting in Laos indicated a higher priority.<sup>151</sup>

(TS) Based on these established sortie rates, the CY 66 deployment buildup of jet tactical fighter squadrons was programmed to total 28 in RVN (18 USAF, ten USMC) and 11 in Thailand. Phase II, IIA and IIA (revised) 1966 USAF deployments were scheduled as follows:

1) Four tactical fighter squadrons to Phan Rang AB, two in April, one in May, and the fourth in November.

PAGE 27 OF 872 PAGES

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2) Two tactical fighter squadrons to Bien Hoa AB, one in July and one in August.

3) Four tactical fighter squadrons to Qui Nhon AB, three beginning in July and the fourth in November.

Four reconnaissance aircraft would employ to TSN AB in July, followed by a tactical reconnaissance squadron in August. These Phase II unit deployments for 1966 required 5,785 additional USAF personnel.<sup>152</sup>

(S) During the conference at Honolulu, COMUSMACV had informed CINCPAC of his concern with aircraft deficiencies associated with airborne radiation detection and fixing (ARDF) of enemy positions. He desired a properly-tested operational system which could be deployed in the shortest possible time frame, regardless of the type of aircraft or the Service providing it. The ARDF program had demonstrated unequivocally a capability to provide rapid determination of enemy locations and movement, which was of paramount intelligence importance. It was imperative that the 41 previously-requested aircraft be expedited and highest priority be given to furnishing an additional 79 F6/U8 or equivalent aircraft and crews to meet the MACV requirement.<sup>153</sup>

(TS) The formation of a reconnaissance aircraft capability to be used in detecting and pinpointing enemy lower-power radio transmitters, as an aid in identifying enemy troop concentrations and HQ near the transmitters, was undertaken with the objective of full operational capability by December 1966. The first RC-47 for this project, code named PHILLIS ANN, arrived at TSN AB on 14 May.<sup>154</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV, appraising his visual surveillance needs, had requested 421 O-1 aircraft for RVN deployment in stepped-up FAC operations during CY 66. As of January, 291 O-1's were on hand (132 in the 2d Air Div and 159 in USARV) against a total requirement of 712. The search and spotting function of the forward air controller (FAC) was indispensable for control of tactical air strikes and artillery adjustment. Other O-1 missions included radio relay, convoy cover, liaison, and courier missions; it was an essential element of counterinsurgency operations. USARV was charged with primary responsibility for visual surveillance, but should continuing MACV assessment establish further need for reinforcing 2d Air Div FAC capabilities with USARV O-1 aircraft and pilots, COMUSMACV directed that a formula be developed, based on FAC flying hours required, to supplement 2d Air Div resources with USARV O-1's. Meanwhile information obtained from MACV and USARV concerning friendly ground forces scheduled into RVN during FY 67 revealed an increasing requirement for USAF O-1 visual reconnaissance aircraft to support these forces. The basic O-1 aircraft allocation was one per battalion, with a separate brigade receiving one additional aircraft. A few exceptions to this standard allocation were allowed due to additional operational factors applicable to particular units. Continuing delivery of modified O-1A

PAGE 128 OF 372 PAGES

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aircraft (designated O-1G) to RVN was expected to meet the authorized 245 US by December 1966.<sup>155</sup>

(S) USAF 1966 deployments in support of MACV faced facility problems not only in RVN but also in Thailand. Late in February, the Bangkok Embassy advised CINCPAC that RTAF units were being crowded by US expansion on limited Thai facilities. This delayed fixing of USAF TFS closure dates specified for Thailand at the Honolulu Conference. In June eight F-104 aircraft and crews from the 435th TFS arrived at Udorn, reintroducing this fighter into SEASIA after several months' absence. The remaining 12 F-104's deployed in July, and two squadrons of F-105's arrived in June at Takhli. Also arriving in Thailand during the month were eight A-26A aircraft designated Det 1, 603d Air Command Sq.<sup>156</sup>

(TS) Late in March JCS requested comments and recommendations on SEASIA tactical aircraft requirements for 1966. Reduction of the total squadrons by five, as proposed by SECDEF memorandum of 26 March, would substantially limit US capability in SEASIA to respond to unforeseen demands and surges in combat tempo. CINCPAC recommended maintenance of sortie capability in SEASIA above that explicitly identified in the Honolulu Conference; COMUSMACV concurred. In reclama to JCS, CINCPAC applied Case I rationale to the CY 66 capabilities program for Phase IIA (revised) deployment of forces to PACOM. Case I, which represented a capability to accept forces in the SEASIA theater, was a compromise based on hard beddown capability at RVN air bases, which in turn, was derived from MACV estimated construction progress and airfield availability. Projected in-country 1966 programmed monthly sortie requirements gradually increased from 17,190 in April to 22,490 in December. Consequently, on 4 April, JCS recommended to SECDEF a revised 1966 deployment program comprised of 20 RVN-based and 11 Thai-based squadrons predicated on USAF capability to meet CINCPAC/COMUSMACV stated needs (May-December 1966) for 11 tactical fighter squadrons.<sup>157</sup>

(TS) CINCPAC's request on 8 April for comment on the new JCS recommended deployment program brought immediate response from COMUSMACV who agreed that the JCS-recommended TFS program provided an adequate number of tactical strike sorties to cover the stated in-country requirements; any excess sorties could be used in out-of-country operations. CINCPACAF recommended COMUSMACV's proposed TFS deployments and beddown, adjusted to TFS closure dates as recommended to SECDEF on 4 April. By 30 April, 12 jet TFS were in place at five RVN bases and seven of eight jet TFS due in Thailand were in place. (One F-105 squadron from PACOM was deferred until early May). Two tactical reconnaissance squadrons (RF-4C's and RF-101's) and one F-102 FIS, plus an F-5 TFS at Bien Hoa and a B-57 TRS at Da Nang, completed the April unit inventory of USAF strike aircraft in support of MACV.<sup>158</sup>

(S) In response to JCS, COMUSMACV provided his views and recommendations on whether additional FWMAF air units should be sought for deployment to RVN. Analysis of USMACV's 1966 force round-out and 1967 force requirements, as of late April, indicated that some obvious shortfalls existed. Introduction of FWMAF air units would augment and enhance air operations, COMUSMACV felt, which in turn might permit release of some USAF resources in RVN for other commitments. Considered were MAP-equipped F-5, F-100, F-104 and B-57 squadrons; FW-manning of the USAF F-5A TFS based at Bien Hoa; light fixed-wing aircraft units in the FAC role; and qualified personnel to perform duty as FAC and ALO, or to help staff the DASC and the TACC. Squadron or flight-sized transport/airlift units could also be integrated into USAF's airlift system. 159

(TS) Tactical air support requirements were determined during a planning conference at Honolulu in May. Sorties required for support of in-country ground forces were computed at five sorties per day per USA/FWMAF battalions. Sortie support for US/FW Marine forces was increased by one third because of their larger maneuver battalions. Out-of-country sortie allocations were based on the continuing requirement of 5,000 sorties per month in Laos and 11,200 sorties per month in NVN. A marked increase was required in those air programs designed to reduce the flow of men and materials into RVN. The requirement existed to build up sortie capability as rapidly as possible in order to reach the desired level of 11,200 sorties per month in NVN. First priority of effort would be utilized to meet in-country air support requirements; sortie overages would be applied to Laos/NVN requirements. Air strike objectives in Laos were twofold: to disrupt and reduce logistics support moving from NVN through Laos into RVN, and to assist the Royal Laotian Government (RLG) in combating NVA insurgency in Laos. 160

(U) On 1 April 2d Air Div had been redesignated 7th Air Force, remaining as the USAF component of USMACV. On 1 July Lt Gen William W. Momyer succeeded Lt Gen Moore as Comdr 7th AF.

(S) Meanwhile, the availability of spray aircraft for defoliation operations presented problems as the defoliation program expanded from RVN into Laos. Early in June JCS offered options for delivery of eight C-123 aircraft, to which CINCPAC replied on 10 June, recommending diversion and modification to spray configuration of five of the eight C-123's on the CONUS west coast. 161

(S) Early in July COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC to take the opportunity in his forthcoming discussion with SECDEF to press for expedited fulfillment of several priority items, among which were the CY 67 requirements for three squadrons of CV-2 type aircraft, an improved medium assault transport, and five additional USAF TAC fighter squadrons. With respect to an improved medium assault transport, COMUSMACV advised that support of

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large scale in-country airlift operations entailing the use of an extensive variety of airfields placed a premium on early availability of such a transport. The C-130 would provide an excellent interim means of fulfilling this requirement. In an interim step to improve utilization of airlift resources in RVN, COMUSMACV on 29 July approved a proposal by the Comdr 7th AF to deploy a new air division HQ to RVN by 1 September. The airlift organization would have under its command a CV-2 wing, a C-123 wing, and a Movement Control Center, plus operational control of C-130 assets to be deployed to RVN from the 315th Air Div in Japan.<sup>162</sup>

(C) Requirements for aircraft for use in psychological warfare operations (PSYOP) increased each month throughout 1966, but the availability of PSYOP aircraft decreased due to shortage of aircraft, maintenance problems, and poor flying weather. To maintain full-time deployment of one PSYOP-configured C-47 aircraft to the flight detachments of the 5th Air Commando Sq in each CTZ, two additional C-47's were added to the squadron's inventory (total of 6) in August. CINCPAC approved COMUSMACV's request for six additional C-47's to support effectvely his projected PSYOP activities. In addition the Comdr, 7th AF requested 16 O-2A (subsequently designated O-2B) loudspeaker-equipped aircraft to increase the USAF in-country aerial PSYOP capability.<sup>163</sup>

(TS) CINCPAC advised JCS on 5 August that 35 KC-135 Thai-based tanker aircraft were required for the support of tactical air operations directly connected with the conduct of the air campaign in SEASIA. They were needed to provide for best operational deployment of tactical aircraft, to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of sorties, and to justify by cost effectiveness, as well as by operational considerations, the basing of these aircraft in Thailand.<sup>164</sup>

(S) By the end of the year the USAF strength level in Thailand had risen to 26,543. In late December the RTG acquiesced in the deployment of additional KC-135 aircraft to that country which would bring the total to 40 (35 tankers and five radio relay). HC-130H aircraft at Udorn were replaced with HC-130P camouflaged models, with three out of the scheduled four in place by year's end. As the year ended with RTG moving toward appreciable force commitments to FVMAF in RVN, Thai pilots were already committed to participate as air observers with operations in Laos.<sup>165</sup>

(TS) Supplementation of the air effort through increased FVMAF was underway by the end of the year. The one firm commitment by that time was the proffered, accepted, and approved move of eight Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Canberra (B-57) aircraft to RVN. COMUSMACV's views on the use of third-country pilots in RVN included the fact that the use of such pilots would be restricted primarily by unit equipment.<sup>166</sup>

PAGE 131 OF 872 PAGES

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(TS) Intensive planning had been accomplished by the end of the year for the transfer of USA CV-2's (C-7A) to USAF on 1 January 1967. A SECDEF decision supported the basing of the transferred aircraft at only USAF bases. COMUSMACV supported the additional requirement for three more C-7 squadrons to remain in CONUS in support of contingency plans, and for the development of a FW aircraft specifically designed for direct support of forward area assaults.<sup>167</sup>

(S) Other projected aircraft deployments at the end of the year involved continuing C-130 in-country airlift from externally based sources, MACV approval of relocation from TSN to Udorn of six EC-121 aircraft comprising the 552 AEW Detachment (BIG EYE), two EC-121M aircraft to Chu Lai, a three-plane VP squadron detachment to U. rapao to provide improved surveillance capability in direct support of SEASIA, and 18 O-28 and six PSYWAR C-47's to begin arriving in-country in mid-1967 for psychological operations. With the air commitment still growing at year's end, in-country USAF personnel strength totaled 52,397.<sup>168</sup>

#### USN/USCG Buildup and Deployment--the MDMAF

(C) The buildup of naval forces under the command of COMUSMACV during 1966 was in direct response to the increased emphasis placed on stopping infiltration of men and war material into RVN to support the VC and NVA, while maintaining the logistical base for those USN and USMC forces in-country.

(C) Operation MARKET TIME, consisting of SEVENTHFLT radar picket destroyer escorts (DER) and ocean minesweepers (MSO)/coastal minesweepers (MSC) and junks of the VNN coastal force, was designed to stop the infiltration by sea and along the coasts of RVN. Much of this traffic consisted of small junks and sampans operating in the shallow waters close inshore where the SEVENTHFLT ships could not go because of their draft. The November 1965 SECDEF visit to COMUSMACV had resulted in the provision of additional patrol craft and personnel for MARKET TIME. Fast Patrol Boats (PCF), known as the "Swift Boats," were to be augmented by 82-foot USCG cutters (WPB), manned by USCG crews, to provide the shallow-water capability required in MARKET TIME. The USS Krishna was shifted from Norfolk to Phu Quoc Island to provide a mother ship and floating repair base for these small craft. The PCF began arriving in-country in January and the WPB in February, until at year's end MARKET TIME forces were at their programmed strength of 84 PCF and 27 WPB. Supporting ships in addition to Krishna were one repair barge (YR) and one LST. Naval personnel manned the five Coastal Surveillance Centers which control MARKET TIME activity and the eight bases supporting the PCF and WPB.<sup>169</sup>

PAGE 132 OF 522 PAGES

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(S) Control of the inland waterways of RVN came into sharp focus during 1966 (See Annex H--Waterways Control.) The GAME WARDEN concept had been approved in December 1965 and in March 1966 the first River Patrol Boats (FBR), which were specially-designed fiberglass boats with shallow draft and high speed, arrived in-country. Ten Minesweeping Boats (MSB) had arrived in March to assist VNN forces in sweeping the approaches to Da Nang.

(S) Construction of the GAME WARDEN bases proceeded essentially on schedule, with some delay due to the paucity of LST shipping for the construction materials. At mid-year COMUSMACV reported to CINCPAC that USN force-building was proceeding as planned. Over half of the programmed FBR's were in-country, and Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Surveillance Units (MIUSU)--the Harbor Defense units--were operational at six bases. Although USA helicopter fire teams were currently supporting GAME WARDEN operations, USN pilots and crews were training in-country and would replace the USA crews. Maritime wreck removal and salvage capability had been augmented by the arrival of a USN Harbor Clearance team in April. Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCB) were employed in construction of USN and III MAF facilities. Naval Support Activity, Da Nang, was established to support III MAF and other forces operating in the I. CTZ, while Naval Support Activity, Saigon, supported forces in the remainder of RVN. Total naval forces increased during 1966 from 8,446 USN and 303 USCG to 23,260 USN and 448 USCG at year's end. 170

(TS) A significant undertaking to assist in the control of the Mekong Delta was the concept, planning, and initial base construction for the Mekong Delta Mobile Afloat Force (MDMAF). Termed by COMUSMACV "a fascinating concept," it entailed deployment of a USA division to the IV CTZ. The plan involved basing the division where it could operate in and around the coast line of the Mekong and Bassac Rivers, to be supported by USN-manned river assault groups and by sufficient converted LST's to house a brigade. CINCPAC was asked to provide the resources for the floating barracks. In mid-February 1966, COMUSMACV referred again to the "unique concept" and stated that it was planned to put one brigade in Tam Hiep, one in Ba Ria in Phuoc Tuy Province, and one afloat on the Bassac/Mekong Rivers. The floating brigade would be rotated with the brigade at Ba Ria. 171

(TS) The projected MDMAF forces would need material support. Requirements were drawn up, beginning in January, for barracks ships (AFB), LST's, large covered lighters (YFNB), and large harbor tugs (YTB) and modifications thereof, as well as supporting craft of the harbor repair craft (YR), light cargo vessel (ARL), and mine countermeasures support ship (MCS) types, together with the armament best suited for the area of operation. CINCPACFLT, in mid-February, strongly recommended that MDMAF have the asset of self-mobility, and discussed further refinements of material support, and added concepts on configuration of

PAGE 133 OF 822 PAGES

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craft. An added reason for mobility was seen in a message from COMUSMACV to CG 1st Inf Div and CG USARV: "Because of the lack of available land space in the Delta from which to operate US ground forces, plans are being developed for the employment of a US brigade from USN barracks ships operating in the major Delta rivers."<sup>172</sup>

(TS) CINCPAC gave guidance to COMUSMACV in a message of 19 February that, inter alia, requested COMUSMACV to develop and submit a detailed concept of operations and logistic support for the employment of the MDMAF. Such concept, it was stated, should include, but not be limited to: force composition and phasing; tasks to be executed; methods of execution; navigable areas; operating areas; afloat force locations; afloat force bases; provisions for air and naval gunfire support; helicopter support; command relationships. CINCPAC also asked for further amplification of the logistics concept of depot and port from which support would be provided; additional facilities requirements at the logistic support base; requirements for additional lighterage and other logistic resources to support operations. CINCPAC representatives would meet with the MACV staff to "assist in the development of the foregoing and to facilitate subsequent evaluation and review."<sup>173</sup>

(TS) The concept was finalized and forwarded to CINCPAC on 15 March. CINCPAC asked CINCPACFLT to review the MACV concept. CINCPACFLT concurred, generally, and gave specific comments: COMUSMACV's concept had provided for maintaining a brigade in the Delta for up to six months; CINCPACFLT thought it might be necessary to rotate the AFB's for maintenance and upkeep every two or three months. Moreover, although COMUSMACV had recommended that the USN commander be charged with the security of the mobile base, with the USA commander to participate by providing support, CINCPACFLT, on the other hand, considered that the USA brigade commander should be responsible for base security. The USN commander, CINCPACFLT suggested, would act in support, specifically providing supporting fires and protection against the waterborne threat.<sup>174</sup>

(C) There were many problems to iron out. COMNAVFORV mentioned some problem areas and/or requirements: effective junk search; defense against VC mines; protection of naval craft against VC gunfire; counterambush weapons; incomplete or inaccurate hydrographic charts; small craft noise-reduction, and the general problem of configuration of the river assault craft.<sup>175</sup>

(S) An 11 May message from COMUSMACV to CINCPAC discussed interim control measures. COMUSMACV alluded to the concern of CINCPAC for intensification of RVNAF operations and early initiation of US operations in the Mekong Delta, stating that it "reinforces my own conviction that enemy access to Delta resources must be terminated without delay." The

PAGE 134 OF 872 PAGES

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onset of the SW monsoon, he felt, would militate against large search-and-destroy operations because of poor trafficability, heavy rainfall, reduced visibility, and reduction in tactical air capabilities. His planning directive 3-66 on 21 April had emphasized wider-ranging operations in drier northern coastal areas, and close-in clearing-and-securing operations in the wet southern area. The plan did not envision any major US effort in the Delta in the current rainy season. COMUSMACV pointed out that there were no bases in the Delta and that base Beneficial Occupancy Dates (BOD) would parallel MDMAF dates. "Short duration operations from III CTZ" were examined and found to offer merit, as were Special Landing Force (SLF) operations, since "JACK STAY proved that we can get into mangrove swamps and realize considerable benefit." Furthermore, COMUSMACV was reviewing the possibility of using USA forces in III CTZ for amphibious operations, in conjunction with a Seventh Fleet amphibious lift, and was currently assisting the RVNAF JGS in developing plans to use VNN and VNMC units for these operations. Such combined operations, that is, helilifted US forces and RAG-borne ARVN forces, would bring larger forces to bear, would bolster ARVN confidence and morale, should surprise the enemy with forces he had never encountered, and would establish a US presence. Such operations in coastal areas, COMUSMACV analyzed, could also take advantage of amphibious capabilities with even more dramatic results.<sup>176</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV anticipated deploying forces, toward the end of 1966 and the beginning of 1967, from III CTZ to the Plain of Reeds and other Delta areas. He thought mechanized units could be used during the dry season. And "control of Delta resources has been a matter of continuing concern to me since it is obvious that the enemy is dependent upon that area for food and personnel and as a resupply route from the sea." There was one problem area: lack of US forces in the IV CTZ had been a source of pride to the RVNAF. However, the CG IV Corps realized the need for US assistance in selected portions of the Delta. Finally, COMUSMACV stated that he had plans for CG II FFORCEV to assume command of US tactical operations in the IV CTZ, coordinating with CG IV Corps through the US Senior Advisor, who was to be a brigadier general. Contingency plans for operations before and after deployment of the division would be developed.<sup>177</sup>

(S) On 29 May COMUSMACV was briefed on deployment of the 9th Inf Div to the IV CTZ, and approved the study as presented. He tasked the MACV J3 to discuss with CG II FFORCEV alternate locations for the 9th Inf Div base and one brigade, and reiterated his previous decisions that the 9th Inf Div would be placed under CG II FFORCEV to facilitate tactical operations along the III and IV CTZ boundary, that the CG 9th Inf Div, would not become SA IV CTZ, and that the introduction of the division force into the IV CTZ would be discussed with JGS, RVNAF.<sup>178</sup>

PAGE 135 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) On 10 June COMUSMACV discussed possible future contingency deployment of US forces to IV CTZ with Lt Gen Vien, Chief JGS, and Lt Gen Quang, CG IV CTZ. On 13 June the matter came up for discussion in the Mission Council meeting. COMUSMACV recalled that General Quang had made a public statement to the press, some weeks earlier, against the stationing of US troops in IV Corps. In the meantime, however, General Quang apparently had had a change of heart, since he now expressed a desire that a US brigade be stationed in IV CTZ. Asked if a final decision had been made, COMUSMACV indicated that a final decision would be taken in October. However, dredges had already been ordered to prepare the proposed site and the terrain would be ready by December. He further stated that the troops would be located about five kilometers from My Tho, which city would be "off limits" to US troops, and that travel through My Tho would be sharply restricted. And, since the base would be completely self-sufficient, it would constitute the barest minimum drain on resources of the local economy. When the Ambassador and the Political Counsellor expressed reservations, COMUSMACV agreed with them that it would be preferable to use ARVN troops, but to date they had been unable to do the job in the Delta, and important VC units were still operating there.<sup>179</sup>

(S) On 9 June COMUSMACV advanced the argument that the Delta might well be a source of stabilization of the Vietnamese economy. It had the capability of producing enough rice for the entire country, if it were kept within GVN control; this would leave the other areas of the country free to industrialize. The Delta was also the source of upwards of 50 percent of the country's manpower. It therefore followed that revolutionary development of the region had to be accelerated. Planned deployment of the US division along with other military actions would accomplish this.<sup>180</sup>

(TS) At the Honolulu Requirements Planning Conference in June, MDMAF was scheduled for CY 67 and CY 68 requirements:

The Mekong Delta Mobile Afloat Force will provide a means to introduce, employ and sustain substantial US combat power in that vital area. Introduction of the MDMAF at the earliest practicable date, whether it be an increment of that force or all of it, will provide a capability for more rapid achievement of US objectives in that area. The requirements for MDMAF set forth in this submission provide for the closure of the first component of that force by April 1967 and the second, final component by March 1968.<sup>181</sup>

(TS) On 5 July SECDEF approved activation of the MDMAF, to include two River Assault Groups (RAG's) for deployment. JCS now requested evaluation of the planned employment and potential effectiveness of the two additional RAG's proposed by CINCPAC. Evaluation had been going on;

PAGE 136 OF 822 PAGES

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COMUSMACV had pointed out the lack of real estate for stationing major elements of the 9th Inf Div, and noted that bases must be produced by the "time consuming process of dredging," while CINCPACFLT summed up by saying "the MDMAF concept provides for a mobile force not dependent on a fixed base."<sup>182</sup>

(TS) On 29 May COMUSMACV had approved a deployment concept, which he then summarized in an 11 July message to CINCPAC, as the basis for a reply to the earlier JCS request for an evaluation of the planned employment and potential effectiveness of two additional RAG's. Major points of the COMUSMACV evaluation were:

1) One bde of 9th Inf Div to be deployed to Mekong Delta at Base Whiskey in the vicinity of My Tho in early 1967. When barracks ships available, a reinforced bn from the bdes in III CTZ will be afloat.

2) Two RAG's approved by SECDEF for FY 67 would be stationed at Base Whiskey (later called Dong Tam, owing to impact of word "whiskey" on sensitivity of Vietnamese). Omission of ARL to provide mobile maintenance capability would preclude RAG permanently based with two AFB's in first increment of MDMAF. However, either RAG would be available on call to provide lift for the afloat battalion. Certain fire support units of a RAG would remain with the AFB's.

3) Units of the 9th Inf Div not stationed at My Tho (Dong Tam) base or aboard AFB's would be based in III CTZ north and east of the RSSZ area. This would permit extensive operations into the RSSZ and IV CTZ, using RAG craft. With arrival of a third RAG, which would include an ARL, one RAG could be permanently assigned to afloat forces. This would leave two RAG's assigned to Dong Tam for lifting bns of that bde, and bns of the other bdes staged through Dong Tam, or to lift a bn from Vung Tau-Cat Lo area for operations in RSSZ or lower Delta.

4) With arrival of the second increment, a requirement would exist for a minimum of two RAG's with the mobile afloat base and a minimum of one RAG supporting each of the other two bdes of the 9th Inf Div.

In view of the above, COMUSMACV strongly recommended to CINCPAC that two additional RAG's be included in the CY 67 Force Requirements, and that they be activated and deployed at the earliest practical date.<sup>183</sup>

PAGE 137 OF 822 PAGES

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(TS) CINCPAC then turned to JCS with further justification of the RAG's on 16 July saying: "projection of US combat operations into the Delta is an objective of major importance." CINCPAC mentioned the 3,000 km of navigable waterways, during the dry season; the absence of adequate roads; the lack of helicopters--"therefore tactical mobility in terms of ships and craft needed." Furthermore, the 9th Inf Div "will be the principal riverine ground combat force," and at least two additional battalions from 25th Inf Div and the Australian Task Force, both located in III CTZ, would require RAG support. One RAG, said CINCPAC, could lift and support one reinforced battalion. Four RAG's (two organic to MDMAF and two additional) could lift about half of the riverine ground force at any one time. In addition, RAG craft would be used in recon and patrolling missions, resupply operations, would reinforce GAME WARDEN and MARKET TIME operations when necessary, and would support riverine operations to open and secure important water communications routes.<sup>184</sup>

(S) By August, MDMAF was being firmed up. On 1 August COMUSMACV published Planning Directive 4-66--Operations in the Delta. In this, the concept for employment of riverine forces was given "regardless of whether based on land (Dong Tam or elsewhere) or on MDMAF." Constitution of a RAG was given as 26 armored troop carriers (ATC), 16 assault support patrol boats (ASPB), five monitors, two command communication boats (CCB), and one LCM-6 refueler. The USA element would be landed in the operational area and the USN forces would deploy to support the ground operations. ASPB's would screen the peripheral areas and be used as a blocking force. RAG monitors would supply artillery support. Some ATC's would commence resupply operations, while at least one of the ATC's would be designated as a forward aid station. The CCB's would have tactical command posts. Three phases were programmed:

- 1) Construction Phase (1 July 1966 - 31 January 1967). During this phase all actions required to prepare the ground and facilities for occupation of the base would be completed.
- 2) Preparation and Occupation Phase (1 July 1966 - 31 January 1967 estimated). During this phase all actions required to prepare the Army and Navy units to occupy and operate from Dong Tam and the actual occupation would be completed. Preparation would proceed concurrently with construction.
- 3) Improvement and Operations Phase (31 January 1967,--estimated--indefinite). This phase would begin when the Army and Navy units had occupied the base and were ready to begin combat operations. All actions

PAGE 138 OF 522 PAGES

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necessary to conduct and sustain combat operations from Dong Tam would be taken during this phase, and it would continue indefinitely. Actions would be taken during this phase to improve, and expand as necessary, the base facilities.<sup>185</sup>

(S) Planning Directive 7-66--Command Relations for Riverine Operations in RVN, was published by COMUSMACV on 24 August 1966. Command relationships were outlined and charted. It was stated that the terms of the directive would apply specifically to current and projected operations in III CTZ, IV CTZ, and RSSZ, but that the pattern of relations established would be applicable to all areas. The conduct of riverine operations by USA and USN forces was a new concept, it was pointed out, and one which would "require the utmost coordination and cooperation by all concerned." As operations were conducted and lessons learned, command relationships would be revised as needed. The matter of local base defense was settled with the directive that the officer assigned to command a base would also be responsible for the local base defense, and that the base commander for all joint USA/USN land bases would be the senior USA commander assigned; however, USN would provide its appropriate share of forces for such defense. Similarly, joint USA/USN afloat bases would be under command of the senior USN commander assigned. He, too, would be responsible for local base defense, and the USA would provide its appropriate share of forces. Coordination and mutual support would be the order of the day. Relocation of a mobile afloat base would normally be only on the authority of COMUSMACV; however, emergency relocations would be made at the discretion of the afloat base commander, keeping all concerned notified. Finally, extracts of JCS guidance (JCS Pub 2) were provided to insure a better understanding of terms and command relations.<sup>186</sup>

(S) US troops in the Delta remained, it seemed, a matter still under question by the Vietnamese. A memo to Ambassador Lodge from his Senior Liaison Officer, Gen Lansdale, discussed a talk he had had with General Thang, Minister of RD, on 4 September:

Thang commented that he had talked to Chief of State Thieu and Chief of Staff Vien about US combat forces in IV Corps. Thang feels very strongly that there might be some popular reaction set in against the US, once American forces get operating in so heavily populated an area as there is in IV Corps. Thang felt that Thieu and Vien should have spoken about this plainly and firmly to General Westmoreland, at the same time they took strong actions to make RVNAF become effective, starting in IV Corps.

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Thang feels that RVNAF morale and effectiveness is sinking fast, due to the spreading rot of corruption. He admits that RVNAF forces in IV Corps are no match for the VC there, despite occasional success, but could be with drastic reforms.

On 5 September during a Mission Council Meeting, a number of remarks were made concerning the activities of the CG IV Corps, General Quang. General Quang had had a "highly negative" reaction to a recent Time Magazine article which had been critical of him, and COMUSMACV had talked with General Quang subsequently and "had perked him up somewhat." 187

(S) During his October visit, SECDEF was fully briefed on MDMAF. The requirement for two additional River Assault Squadrons (RAS) was stressed. The introduction stated:

If we are to achieve our national objectives in Vietnam we must program for U.S. ground operations into IV Corps in order to assist the RVNAF in their revolutionary development efforts. The prize - 39% of the population and 68% of the rice producing area in the Republic of Vietnam. To do this we must have tactical mobility; in the Delta, this means boats.

The briefing explained the planned employment of the 9th Inf Div, due in-country in December 1966 and January 1967, as the principal riverine ground force. The river assault boats would conform to standard USN organization structure, with two RAS's of about 50 boats each under command of RIVELOTONE. The term RAS was chosen to avoid confusion with the VNN RAG's. The justification for two additional RAS's was briefed:

Although the MDMAF with the two river assault squadrons already approved will give us a good start, we will need at least two additional river assault squadrons by the end of CY 67 to be able to sustain the momentum of riverine operations. Here is why we need the additional river assault squadrons, or a total of four.

Besides the 9th Division, elements of the Australian Task Force and the US 25th Infantry Division located in III CTZ will also be used on riverine operations. The 9th Division will have seven infantry battalions and two mechanized battalions. These battalions will require RAS support. Then we visualize that at least two additional battalions from the US 25th Division

PAGE 141 OF 872 PAGES

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and the Australian Task Force will require RAS support from time to time, or a total of eleven battalions available for riverine operations.

One RAS can lift and support one battalion combat team including artillery; therefore, the four river assault squadrons will be able to lift and support less than half of the riverine ground combat forces at one time. In addition to lifting and supporting the ground combat forces, we will depend on river assault craft for extensive reconnaissance and patrolling, resupply operations, and reinforcing GAME WARDEN operations when necessary. Then there is the bonus to security by the mere presence of US forces in and around these waterways.

The projected employment of the force was described:

We plan to keep two river assault squadrons with the MDMAF when it reaches its full complement of ships. The two additional river assault squadrons requested will be based at Dong Tam with elements rotating to III CTZ and the RSSZ to support operations there. The inherent flexibility and mobility combined with the tremendous fire power of the river assault squadron will permit any number of combinations of river assault craft and ground forces, from small patrols to multiple battalion operations.

The afloat base and river assault squadrons, besides giving flexibility of base location and minimizing plaster expenditures, also represent valuable assets that can be taken home at the conclusion of hostilities and held in readiness for possible future trouble spots where riverine operations might be gainfully employed. 189

(S) By 21 November COMUSMACV could propose to the Mission Council that it was feasible to deploy a battalion to Dong Tam in January 1967, and requested the Council's indorsement of the action. Anticipating Mission concurrence, COMUSMACV directed the planning and preparation for an accelerated deployment to be followed by a brigade in February 1967, if deemed feasible by CG II FFORCEV. On 29 November ANEMB approved the deployment. On 1 December COMUSMACV promulgated the concept for logistical support of the MDMAF forces. This plan provided for two support concepts; one for the fixed land base at Dong Tam, and one for the Mekong Delta Mobile Riverine Base. The land base commander would have logistic responsibility for the Dong Tam base, and the Mobile Riverine Base Commander would have the responsibility for the

PAGE 142 OF 872 PAGES

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Mobile Riverine Base (MRB), while Service-peculiar supply would be the responsibility of the component commander concerned. Saigon was designated the primary supply source for the Dong Tam base with Vung Tau as alternate, with land LOC's to be used whenever possible. The MRB would be supported by Vung Tau with Saigon as alternate, resupply being accomplished by LST.<sup>190</sup>

(S) After evaluating the progress of the base construction at Dong Tam, CG II FFORCEV reported on 4 December that it was feasible to support a battalion at Dong Tam in late February 1967. The planning and liaison machinery went into high gear early in December. It was determined that elements of the 9th Inf Div would be available for training at the Vung Tau base in early January. COMNAVFORV shifted all efforts to preparing the base for riverine training when a proposed training base site at Ap Go Dau was abandoned in favor of Vung Tau. Concurrently, COMNAVFORV recommended close liaison with RVN and US agencies be effected. He requested CINCPACFLT to provide a suitable support ship at Vung Tau about 7 January and to deploy one river assault squadron staff and one river assault division (RIVDIV) staff at the same time. For future plans COMRIVFLOTONE and staff were to deploy in mid-February and a second RIVDIV in late February.<sup>191</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV directed CG II FFORCEV to prepare to deploy an infantry battalion TF from the 9th Inf Div to Dong Tam, to be increased later to a brigade TF and to advise closure dates. CG USAHV was tasked to support the deployment and SA IV CTZ was directed to plan for the provision of RVNAF security forces, coordinate EVN and US security arrangements, and plan creation of a suitable attitude among the people for a US presence in the Delta.<sup>192</sup>

(S) The first elements of the 9th Inf Div landed on 19 December and on 20 December COMUSMACV estimated the battalion TF would move to Dong Tam on 25 January with two advance engineer companies to precede the main force arriving 7 January. He estimated the increase to brigade strength in late February or early March.<sup>193</sup>

(S) The concept of MDNAF, conceived, approved and launched during 1966, was one of the most comprehensive and far reaching accomplishments of the year. The control of the Delta, not only in a military sense, but economically and politically, could well be a key to the entire RVN operation.

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## THE COMMAND POSTURE

### Morale and Welfare

(U) In 1966 the morale and welfare of military personnel in Vietnam continued to be of prime concern to COMUSMACV. Beginning in 1965, and carrying over into 1966 with ever-increasing efficiency, were evidences of new and expanding facilities and programs designed to make the life of military personnel more liveable in the RVN. Free mailing privileges were continued and expanded. Additional USO's and Red Cross recreation centers were added. Television broadcasting commenced in February and in October an Armed Forces Vietnam Television and Radio Station was established and in operation, providing a more comprehensive news coverage and more entertainment. New R&R locations were added and increasing numbers of personnel were permitted to visit the existing centers. Exchange facilities continued to expand. A liberal awards policy was continued. Recreational facilities and billeting and messing facilities were increased and improved. Congress enacted laws that provided additional benefits to military personnel in RVN. All were items designed to sustain and improve troop morale and welfare during 1966.

### Living Conditions

(C) The rapid buildup of US forces during 1965 and the continued influx of personnel into the Saigon/Cholon area during 1966 created a mounting billeting problem for MACV. From a strength of approximately 9,400 in early 1965 the number of US personnel grew to nearly 36,000 in the Saigon area during April 1966. This rapid increase of personnel strained not only the limited available billeting space, but also contributed to the growing inflation problem in the capital city. The forecast for US military population by the end of CY 66 in the Saigon/Cholon/Tan Son Nhut complex was approximately 38,000. This was 12,000 more than COMUSMACV felt desirable. This fact and the shortage of adequate billeting spaces leased by the US Government caused COMUSMACV to direct detailed studies on how to reduce the military population.<sup>194</sup>

(C) The results of these studies indicated that the military population in the Saigon area could be reduced to approximately 22,000 and the recommendations provided plans to maintain that strength, or a lesser level. This was to be accomplished by relocation of units to Cam Ranh Bay, Long Binh, and other areas, and precluded stationing of any new units in Saigon. The studies indicated that it would take up to two years at this rate to lower the population. COMUSMACV decided that this was too long and directed that the reduction take place within one year. The revised estimates then indicated that all Phase II

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relocations would be accelerated to meet that timetable. The resulting changes were that HQ USARV would move to the area formerly set aside for USAID; HQ 1st Log Command would relocate to the Long Binh area and all 7th Air Force personnel would be situated in billets inside the Tan Son Nhut Air Base complex. The only units remaining in Saigon then would be Headquarters Area Command, 4th Terminal Command and the 3d Field Hospital. USARV estimated that their military population could be reduced to 4,500. The efforts of the various components would reduce the total military population to an estimated 22,000.<sup>195</sup>

(C) By stabilizing the military population at approximately 22,000 within the Saigon complex, it was estimated that by the end of CY 1966 present facilities, programmed construction of barracks, relocations of units and options of Vietnamese construction would result in 16,000 billeting spaces in excess of MACV needs. Accordingly, COMUSMACV directed that no acquisition of additional Vietnamese-owned buildings for use as billeting would be initiated without his personal approval.<sup>196</sup>

(TS) By mid-April, after construction of the new MACV headquarters had commenced at the Petrus Ky site, Ambassador Lodge expressed concern about the location, stating it was near a potentially-dangerous area, but adding that the site was ideally located for a trade school USAID was interesting in establishing. COMUSMACV informed the Ambassador that there were no objections to relocating the headquarters, provided a suitable site could be found. Subsequently, COMUSMACV directed his staff to investigate the feasibility of moving the new headquarters to a soccer field across from the Tan Son Nhut Civilian Air Terminal, a site previously requested and turned down. It was determined that construction under way could be stopped, at some loss, and that the soccer field site would be equally suitable from a construction viewpoint. In addition, the move would put MACV closer to the JCS and 7th AF, and permit most of the personnel working in the MACV headquarters to be billeted in the USOM/USAID housing area that had been taken over by USARV, thereby removing many troops from the center of Saigon.<sup>197</sup>

(S) In early May COMUSMACV officially volunteered to release the Petrus Ky site, with the proviso that the Premier would release the Tan Son Nhut site for the new MACV headquarters. The Ambassador was pleased with this solution and agreed to discuss it with the Premier. On 6 May Premier Ky informed COMUSMACV that he had decided to make the soccer field available to MACV as a headquarters site.<sup>198</sup>

(C) During April billeting spaces became so critical that a MACV directive was promulgated establishing new policy and procedures for assignment of personnel and criteria for space authorized per person. The new criteria authorized approximately 110 square feet per officer and 70 square feet per enlisted man. Prior to the publishing of the new directive, there had been no specific space allocated for billeting.

PAGE 145 OF 872 PAGES

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As a result of the change in criteria, many rooms were doubled up; in some cases three and four personnel were assigned to the same living spaces. However, this was limited more to transient billets than those of a permanent nature. The crowding of available dining spaces created another problem. The number of officer and enlisted messes had expanded only to a limited degree, resulting apparently in severely crowded conditions. After study, the situation was determined not to be critical as the time allowed for meals, usually two to three hours, allowed the traffic to flow without serious difficulty.<sup>199</sup>

(C) Another result of the study on billeting space indicated that some US servicemen assigned billets in US military-controlled BOQ's, BEQ's and government-leased quarters, were actually residing in privately-rented quarters without authorization. This practice was considered by COMUSMACV to be conducive to those personnel becoming vulnerable to involvement in civil disturbances, created a problem to the commander in locating an individual in case of an emergency, and needlessly over-extended the use of civilian billets by US military personnel. Therefore, COMUSMACV advised all commanders to take remedial action to eliminate the practice and insure that all 200 personnel resided in their assigned US military-controlled billets.

(S) During May the problem of increasing numbers of US military personnel in the Saigon area had attracted the attention of CINCPAC and the JCS. On 14 May COMUSMACV received messages from both CINCPAC and JCS regarding relocation of personnel and units from the Saigon area. In answering both queries COMUSMACV gave the general background of the buildup of forces in RVN and reasons why many units were located in the Saigon area: control and support headquarters had to be located initially in the Saigon complex because Saigon was the seat of government, site of the American Embassy and headquarters of the Vietnamese Armed Forces. Because of the continuing close coordination required between these agencies, it had been natural to locate the key US headquarters in Saigon; moreover, their location elsewhere was impossible due to lack of facilities and lack of capability to construct facilities in the time frame required. There was also the fact that Saigon was the only deep-water port capable of handling the tonnage required to support the buildup, and was the location of the major aerial port of entry into RVN, Tan Son Nhut. When the influx of personnel had begun, the only facilities available to house and feed them were commercial hotels, leased from the Vietnamese and converted to BOQ's and BEQ's. Senior officers were billeted in buildings formerly occupied by families of MAAG personnel. Immediate plans were developed to construct additional facilities in order to relocate as many personnel as possible on military installations and off the local economy.<sup>201</sup>

PAGE 146 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) The Ambassador and COMUSMACV were concerned about the number of Americans in Saigon and both had initiated studies late in 1965 to identify those units not needed in the Saigon area. They wanted to insure maximum utilization of existing facilities, to relocate personnel then engaged in private rentals into government-owned or leased facilities, and to preclude the introduction of additional units or activities into the Saigon area. Detailed plans were developed for relocating units as rapidly as possible to Long Binh, Cam Ranh Bay, and other areas. As new units arrived they were automatically sent to under-populated areas whenever possible, keeping in mind the unit's mission and the geographic area required for its accomplishments. Another step to reduce the population was to reduce transient movement in Saigon by no longer authorizing leaves and passes into the city.

(C) COMUSMACV summarized his report to CINCPAC and the JCS by advising them that all possible approaches toward alleviating crowded conditions in Saigon were being considered, and new ways to accomplish that objective would be continuously sought. Construction priority for development of facilities for relocation of personnel and units from Saigon and for the new MACV headquarters complex at Tan Son Nhut would be second only to that of the Newport project.<sup>202</sup>

(U) In August the Ambassador suggested, in connection with the program to reduce the US population in the Saigon area, that emphasis also be placed on the movement of civilian employees of US companies having contracts with the Department of Defense. COMUSMACV agreed and requested all component commanders, and the Officer-in-Charge of Construction, to initiate planning to reduce the number of US contractor personnel in the Saigon area and to report MACV by 31 December of the efforts to be made and the anticipated results.<sup>203</sup>

(C) During COMUSMACV's visit to President Johnson's Texas ranch in August, the President expressed his personal wish that the movement of military personnel out of metropolitan Saigon be accelerated. As a result, all components were advised of the President's personal interest and were requested to resubmit their relocation plans to MACV. From these accelerated plans a new MACV relocation program was derived, the details of which were forwarded to CINCPAC on 15 September. MACV was charged with staff supervision of what became known as Project MOOSE, from "Move Out of Saigon Expeditionally"—the difficulties involved caused some staff planners to refer to the project as GOOSE: "Get Out of Saigon Eventually."<sup>204</sup>

(C) Key elements in Project MOOSE were the relocation of MACV headquarters to Tan Son Nhut, movement of the headquarters of USAFV and 1st Log Comd to Long Binh, relocation of 7th AF elements from Tan Son Nhut to other air bases, and movement of elements of the Naval Support Activity, Saigon, to Nha Be. The overall goal of this plan was a reduction of

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12,800 personnel in the Saigon/Cholon area, to be accomplished by an increase at Tan Son Nhut and its environs of 5,200, for a net reduction in the metropolitan area of 7,600 by 30 June 1967. Hopefully, the ultimate residual military population in Saigon/Cholon proper would be reduced to 4,800. Funding difficulties were foreseen, as an estimated total additional cost of \$40 million, required before 30 April 1967, was included in the accelerated program; a raising of the plaster ceiling was also considered essential. By the end of 1966, revised forecasts indicated that the residual population of Saigon/Cholon in December 1967 would be 5,304 and that for Tan Son Nhut 21,184, for a total of 26,488. These figures would require the relocation outside the Saigon area completely of 10,906 personnel. As the year ended, despite the difficulties involved, the target date for the bulk of the relocation remained July 1967.<sup>205</sup>

(U) Directly related to the crowded living conditions in certain areas of RVN was the problem of the health of the command. Preventive medicine continued to be of vital concern to COMUSMACV and his Surgeon, and continuous programs were undertaken during 1966 to suppress malaria and to control and limit the numerous plague epidemics that threatened US and Free World forces as well as RVNAF and the local population. For a more detailed treatment, see Annex I--Medical Activities.

#### Post/Base Exchange Program

(U) Because inflationary tendencies threatened RVN during 1966 every effort was made to persuade all US personnel to limit their purchases to authorized US facilities to help alleviate the problem in the civilian communities. To assist in this effort, Post/Base Exchanges were expanded, new ones built, off-shore procurement limitation was raised from \$10 to \$16 per man per month, and an effort made to increase the varieties of merchandise to make them more attractive to US personnel. By the end of the year great improvement had been made. However, many items such as radios, high-fidelity stereo sound equipment, tape recorders, radio batteries, electric irons, etc., were in short supply and were not held in stock. Authority for the sale of automobiles through the Exchange, beginning in July 1966, was accepted with enthusiasm by the troops. This service proved to be increasingly popular and sales progressed well; in September alone 296 automobiles were sold. From a modest beginning of four automobile sales outlets, by the end of the year there were 15 outlets located throughout RVN. In addition, the program was advertised through available news media and by placing, in outlets not having concessionaries, post cards addressed to the Exchange requesting details and special military prices on various makes and models.<sup>208</sup>

PAGE 148 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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(S) The RVN Exchange policy was questioned by the Chairman, JCS on 9 April. He was surprised at the pounds/man/day of programmed PX supplies and wondered at the apparent lack of austerity. COMUSMACV replied that one aspect of the PX operations might not be appreciated adequately, i.e., the adverse impact on the already strained economy of RVN if the range of items stocked in the Exchange were drastically curtailed. In COMUSMACV's view the Exchange service fulfilled a definite and valuable function in RVN by taking the buying power of US and FVMAF, plus some thousands of civilians, out of competition with the local citizens on the commodity-scarce Vietnamese market. CJCS was advised that US ability to assist RVN in arresting inflation was central to the attainment of stability and political acceptance of our large military presence in RVN. This explanation satisfied CJCS and the matter rested there.<sup>207</sup>

(U) The monthly Exchange sales, which reflected the increasing in-country strength, by the latter part of the year amounted to almost \$19 million monthly. The total yearly sales amounted to \$156,405,237.00. This was big business, so big and so fraught with temptations that the Exchange program was kept under careful scrutiny at all times, not only by COMUSMACV, but by everyone associated with the program. The Chief of the Army/Air Force Exchange Service, the Chief of the Pacific Area Exchange Service, and members of their respective staffs inspected Exchange operations and facilities in RVN during October 1966. New control measures were implemented to keep step with the troop expansion. A PX ration-card issue and control system was developed to monitor the issue of ration cards to nonmilitary personnel, a file was established and maintained on all nonmilitary ration-card holders, and a punch card system was developed that would provide a means for detecting abuse of authorized privileges, which might result in debarment or eligibility termination. And finally, on 31 December, approval was given to a study transferring operational control of the Vietnam Regional Exchanges from COMUSMACV to the Chief, Pacific Exchange System. 208

(C) During the year several problem areas arose concerning PX privileges, one of the most significant occurring near the end of the year. ROKFV personnel were authorized to patronize US Exchanges, as were all FVMAF in-country, by military working agreement. ROK personnel in the Saigon area consistently purchased more than their proportionate share of high-demand rationed items. In a five-week period ending 1 December they purchased more than 22 percent of the high-demand rationed items sold, although ROKFV strength was less than three percent of the PX-supported population. Prior efforts to obtain Korean action to curb excessive purchasing had not been successful. In an effort to produce equitable distribution of these scarce items, a special "ration items" store for the Koreans was established on 5 December in their main billeting area. Although ROKFV had been informed in writing of the plan, the Koreans immediately took umbrage, claiming

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

discrimination; the store was closed 7 December and rationed-item sales to ROK personnel were reinstated in all Exchange branches. ROKFV proposed a control plan whereby ration cards of their personnel permanently assigned in the Saigon area would be overprinted for identification, and only these plus a few exceptions would be allowed to use the Saigon exchange. This was believed to be a step in the right direction, but would not solve the problem completely. In the meantime, sales analysis would continue to determine the effectiveness of the ROKFV control. 209

(U) At the end of 1966 the following exchange facilities were operating throughout RVN:

Branch Exchanges	27
Annex Exchanges	91
Site Exchanges	87
Imprest Fund Exchanges	39
Snack Bars	26
Radio Repair Shops	2
Watch, Camera Repair Shops	4
Barber Shops	51
Clubs & Mess Accounts	754
Mobile Snack Bars	16
Mobile Retail Stores	10
US Automobile Concessionaires	15
Diamond Concession Outlets	15
Gift Shops	13

#### The Rest and Recuperation Program

##### Out-of-Country R&R

(U) The out-of-country R&R program was established in 1964 for all US forces personnel and US Government employees assigned duties in RVN. Originally the military program authorized one out-of-country space-required trip for every 12 months, not to exceed seven days, in a TDY status without per diem. US Government employees were authorized one seven-day out-of-country R&R trip for every 12 months in RVN, but it was charged as annual leave. Actually the length of stay at an authorized R&R location was limited to five days with the two other days being spent in transit. All personnel were required to have served a minimum of three months in-country to be eligible for out-of-country R&R. The program began by utilizing military aircraft exclusively. Related to the R&R program was a program of annual leave. This type of R&R was normally for a period of seven days and was authorized by COMUSMACV, chargeable as

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

annual leave, with travel performed on a space-available basis. Such leave was approved for authorized R&R locations only.<sup>210</sup>

(C) The program initiated in 1964 remained substantially unchanged throughout 1965. The primary differences were that the number of personnel going on R&R, or leave, had increased tremendously and the number of approved locations had expanded. From a beginning at Hong Kong and Bangkok in 1964, the program included Taipei, Tokyo and Manila at the beginning of 1966. As of 1 January 1966, the numbers of personnel authorized to visit R&R locations at any one time were:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DAILY QUOTA</u>	<u>OPERATING AUTHORITY</u>
Hong Kong	300	COMUSMACV
Bangkok	*500	COMUSMACTHAI
Taipei	300	COMUSTDC
Tokyo	200	COMUSJAPAN
Manila	136	CINCPACREPPHIL

\*American Embassy restriction in January was 350. This quota was increased to 500 in February 1966.

With the exception of Manila, all locations were capable of being expanded to accommodate additional personnel. Although CINCPAC could increase the quotas, airlift was a limiting factor; it was anticipated that an increase would be sought from CINCPAC consistent with availability of airlift. Based on a strength of US/FW forces of 184,000 and 22,766 respectively early in January, it was determined that about 8,000 US and FVMAF went on R&R during that month. It was estimated that the number would increase to approximately 24,000 per month by the end of the year. At a joint conference at HQ PACAF on 10-11 January 1966, the following conclusions were reached regarding airlift requirements for the R&R program:

- 1) The MACV R&R program would be available to all US and eligible FVMAF.
- 2) It was impractical to continue use of organized inter-theater aircraft assets because of shortage of military airlift and increasing air logistic support requirements.
- 3) Existing USAF aircraft could be maximized by relocation and by increasing flying hours.
- 4) Space available travel for R&R program was limited, sporadic and many times one-way only. Therefore, it was not considered suitable to plan for its use.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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5) No airlift assets were available from CINCPACFLT or FMFPAC to support the program.

6) A firm plan was needed to employ a combination of USAF and commercial resources.

7) For the period February through December 1966, the estimated cost of the R&R program (airlift only) was \$14.304 million. 211

(C) The concept of operating the airlift for the program provided for commercial aircraft to onload at Da Nang, Nha Trang, and Tan Son Nhut air bases for destinations at Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Taipei. USAF C-118 and C-54 aircraft were based at Clark AFB, Philippines, and Don Muang, Thailand, to support Manila and Bangkok requirements respectively. It was planned that these latter aircraft would provide source-to-user support, thus reducing in-country movements of troops to staging onload bases. Basing the USAF aircraft assets out-of-country would reduce congestion at RVN airbases and maximize their utilization. Effective 1 March, a contract was awarded to Pan American World Airways to operate the Tokyo and Hong Kong R&R channels; the Taipei channel was transferred to Pan Am in May. Bangkok and Manila remained in operation under military airlift. 212

(C) During January JCS queried CINCPAC regarding the use of Hawaii as an R&R area. CINCPAC replied that in his view Hawaii did not appear desirable in comparison with those already in use from either a personal or official view point; COMUSMACV concurred. The rationale for this view included such factors as the proximity of Hawaii to CONUS, which might tempt individuals to continue onward; combat operations having indeterminate starting dates, causing last minute cancellations of plans for family reunions; the time consumed in transit; and the high cost of transportation. In May, however, SECDEF decided to include Hawaii as an R&R area, the decision being based primarily on the need to reduce the gold flow. Responsibility was given to CINCUSARPAC to establish and operate the R&R center, to be located at Fort De Russy in Honolulu. CINCPACAF was given the task of procuring necessary contract airlift to support the Hawaii program. Boeing 707 jet aircraft were scheduled for the flights, which originated from either Tan Son Nhut or Da Nang on an alternate-week basis. The average daily on-the-ground quota was set at 165. The first quota departed RVN during the first week in August aboard aircraft of Northwest Airlines. In September, COMUSMACV planning for Hawaii R&R was based on 660 on-ground quotas for 3d quarter and 990 for 4th quarter FY 67. During the SECDEF visit to Saigon in October, he suggested increasing the R&R to Hawaii. COMUSMACV requested and CINPAC approved an on-ground quota of 628 immediately, 942 for 3d quarter and 1,570 for the 4th quarter FY 67. 213

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(C) There had been hope that Hong Kong would allow an increase from the authorized 300 daily load, but the Hong Kong government had misgivings. Its primary concern was the attitude of the Chinese Communists, who were exploiting for propaganda purposes the operation of large numbers of military aircraft at Hong Kong airport. Also, the Hong Kong government was not convinced of the effectiveness of US administrative procedure, including prevention of incidents. The State Department then advised the Hong Kong government that all military aircraft would be replaced by civilian airlines. A team of permanently-assigned military personnel was established at Hong Kong to administer the program. Increases in on-ground strength were then authorized to 510 in May and to 581 in October. 214

(C) The primary problem in using Taipei as an R&R center had been the lack of a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). This was overcome in April when the governments of Nationalist China and the US signed a formal SOFA. As a result of this agreement, CINCPAC authorized an increase in the daily on-the-ground strength to 300 in May, 450 in June, and the maximum of 600 starting in July. To provide the additional airlift needed to handle this increase, MACV contracted with Pan American Airways to introduce DC-6B aircraft on the Taipei run during May to replace previously scheduled C-130 military airlift. 215

(C) Early in 1966 the number of R&R areas was not sufficient for the total number of programmed R&R personnel, both because of the numerical limitations established by the State Department at some locations and the lack of available airlift. As a result, efforts were made by COMUSMACV to increase the number that could be sent to Manila and Bangkok. However, CINCPAC advised that the use of Bangkok as a pass and leave area for forces stationed in Thailand, plus an average load of 500 R&R personnel, was rapidly saturating the city. As for Manila, the number of suitable hotel accommodations was quite limited, but the restriction to approximately 140 personnel at any one time was raised to 200 as of 1 July. On 1 September the Bangkok channel was taken over by Pan Am, replacing airlift furnished by 13th AF. On 1 October Pan Am replaced Northwest, in operation of the Hawaii channel, when the contract for the 2d quarter was awarded. All R&R channels were now under commercial contract with Pan Am except Manila, which was continued under military airlift. 216

(C) Meanwhile, surveys had been completed at Kuala Lumpur and Penang, Malaysia and at Singapore. The results indicated that facilities there were limited, but that a daily load of 150 personnel could be accommodated at the two Malaysian cities and 300 daily in Singapore. On 8 March, after study and staff visits, CINCPAC authorized Singapore as an R&R location and requested COMUSMACV to suggest a starting date for use. The date was tentatively set at 25 March, if aircraft were

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available; the initial daily load was set for 83 with a buildup to 166 as maximum. The first flight carrying 79 passengers arrived at Singapore on 31 March. At a meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 15 April, attended by representatives of the Malaysian government, US Embassy, and MACV, the Malaysian government agreed to open up their country to R&R in June. Initially, pending CINCPAC approval, the program was to start in June with an on-the-ground daily quota of 83 in both Penang and Kuala Lumpur. Depending on availability of aircraft and local accommodations, the program was expected to increase gradually to a daily figure of 300 each in both cities.<sup>217</sup>

(C) At about the same time, consideration was given to the feasibility of utilizing Colombo (Ceylon), Karachi (Pakistan), and New Delhi (India) as R&R centers. SECSTATE sent a query to the Ambassadors involved and asked for their evaluation of the possibilities for R&R in each locale. The answers were generally negative: none of the locations offered much in the way of recreational facilities, weather was disagreeable, most were Moslem areas with a resultant lack of beverages suited to vacationing Americans, and living accommodations were minimal and expensive. From those answers it was apparent that the use of Colombo, Karachi, and New Delhi would not be practical.<sup>218</sup>

(S) In June JCS requested CINCPAC's view on expansion of the R&R program, asking clarification of the estimated number of personnel to participate in FY 67, the feasibility of two R&R's per man in lieu of in-country leave, and reconsideration of Ceylon as an R&R site. After receiving comments and recommendations from COMUSMACV regarding the points raised by the JCS, CINCPAC forwarded the following comments:

1) Estimated R&R participations:

a) Personnel must serve three months in RVN to be eligible for R&R.

b) Eighty percent of those eligible will desire to participate.

c) Requirements and estimated participation were computed monthly based on 80 percent of the average monthly growth rate, which is less than 80 percent of the average monthly strength, and below 80 percent of end-FY 67 strength. Recent experience by MACV indicated the actual number of personnel desiring to participate in the program would fall short of the 80 percent; therefore, the conservative projected R&R participation figure of 250,000 submitted early in the year by COMUSMACV was considered to be realistic.

2) Two R&R periods were not recommended, because:

PAGE 154 OF 872 PAGES

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- a) Transportation requirements for in-country movements would double.
  - b) Additional movement of R&R personnel would critically affect already over-crowded airfields.
  - c) Loss of additional duty time would be disruptive to the command.
  - d) A significant increase in support personnel would be needed.
  - e) Ordinary leave in-country was not being authorized.
- 3) Utilization of Ceylon as an R&R site was considered inadvisable, as eight R&R centers were already in operation with Hawaii planned to open in August. The addition of Ceylon would only compound management problems and require additional support personnel to staff a liaison center there. <sup>219</sup>

(U) While there was considerable effort to enlarge the R&R program to take care of the increased number of military personnel in RVN, other problems in the established program became apparent. USAFV had been assigned the responsibility for processing departing and returning out-of-country R&R flights, and some deficiencies in passenger processing had been reported by officer observers. Those deficiencies indicated included the following:

- 1) An officer was not present to supervise the processing.
- 2) No positive check was made to ensure NPC conversion.
- 3) Buses not always available to transport passengers from terminal to planeside.
- 4) No briefing was given passengers to cover processing responsibilities, ~~and procedures.~~
- 5) No baggage checks were issued for personal baggage.
- 6) No steps were taken to insure that passengers had ID tags.
- 7) No check was made to insure that passengers on certain northbound flights had appropriate clothing for cold weather.
- 8) Immunization records were not scrutinized for accuracy.

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9) Procedures for processing passengers were confusing, and the entire processing procedure needed better organizing and guidance.

10) In-bound flights were seldom met by processing teams, and passengers were left to their own initiative for processing and onward movement to their parent units.

11) When flights were met, no NCO or officer was present to supervise the processing.

These deficiencies were called to the attention of USARV and steps were taken to correct them, in order to organize better the processing and be more responsive to the ever-increasing number of passengers. <sup>220</sup>

(S) On 6 October the JCS indicated that SECDEF was concerned that COMUSMACV would not meet the minimum objective of 250,000 R&R trips for FY 1967, and that the concern was compounded by the impact of the R&R program on the ability to stay within the plaster-spending ceilings established by SECDEF, and requested COMUSMACV to provide a summary of actions underway and contemplated to reach the minimum goal for FY 1967. COMUSMACV replied that the problem of meeting the minimum goal did exist, and that because of the tremendous increase of military strength in RVN in the past six months and projected for 3d and 4th qtr FY 67, increased R&R quotas at five selected sites was an urgent requirement. December R&R schedules provided seats to all R&R sites, except Tokyo, at the maximum numbers permitted by current approved quotas. The Tokyo quota had not been effectively utilized due to the long flight, abnormal personal expense, and the requirement for seasonal winter clothing, which most personnel did not have. The effective utilization of the Tokyo quota appeared feasible in 4th Quarter FY 67. Four of the nine sites were limited for increased quotas by insufficient billeting accommodations. COMUSMACV also stated that existing quotas were a severe restriction against his capability to influence 250,000 troops to go on R&R in FY 67, with the resultant 2.4 billion piaster savings to the RVN economy. <sup>221</sup>

(U) During October plans were made and action initiated to provide for future expansion of the out-of-country R&R program, to meet the objectives of keeping pace with the increasing number of eligible participants and of meeting the DOD goal of reducing piaster spending by sending 250,000 personnel on R&R during FY 67. Increases in on-ground strength limits at five sites were requested as follows: <sup>222</sup>

<u>SITE</u>	<u>3RD QTR FY 67</u>	<u>4TH QTR FY 67</u>
Bangkok	747	996
Taipei	747	830
Manila	216	216
Hong Kong	830	996
Hawaii	942	1,570

PAGE 156 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) In October CINCPACREPPHIL requested temporary suspension of the MACV R&R program to Manila during the period 17-28 October because of the Seven Nations Conference; COMUSMACV replied that the request would be honored. On 11 October CINCPACREPPHIL expressed the concern of Manila officials and the White House advance party that the imposed suspension might subject the Seven Nation Conference and its participants to adverse criticism, and hoped that adequate steps would be taken to minimize such criticism, suggesting a temporary increase of on-ground quota upon resumption. COMUSMACV's response stated that no adverse criticism of the Seven Nation Conference was anticipated as a result of cancellation of Manila R&R from 12 to 28 October, noting that during this period seats were available to other R&R sites and that personnel who could not be diverted to other sites in October could be accommodated in November, and that the alternative suggested was not necessary. The temporary suspension of R&R to Manila was removed effective 0001 hours 29 October. 223

(U) During the period 20 September to 18 November MACV, USFJ, and USARJ legal representatives clarified and confirmed policies and procedures for handling R&R military personnel from RVN who became involved in incidents in Japan which required disciplinary action. The SOFA between the US and Japan made it mandatory to hold in Japan individuals who became involved in incidents over which the government of Japan had and retained jurisdiction. 224

(C) In November COMUSMACV directed component commanders to take immediate and positive steps to insure proper orientation of personnel prior to their departure on R&R, leave, or TDY. Particular emphasis was to be placed on prohibitions against the carrying of weapons. Recently a serviceman on R&R in Hong Kong had threatened a rickshaw boy with a cocked and loaded .45 pistol; the serviceman was carrying this weapon in violation of the law. COMUSMACV pointed out the serious consequences that incidents of this nature could have on future R&R programs and the relations between the United States and host governments. The welfare of the US serviceman in RVN and the United States position in Southeast Asia could not and would not be permitted to be jeopardized by the heedless conduct of a few individuals. In November and December COMUSMACV directed all major commands to enforce prohibitions against carrying weapons out of country by proper orientation of personnel and by improvement of customs procedures. 225

(U) COMUSMACV also emphasized the requirement for command support of R&R aircraft utilization. During November the R&R seat utilization rate declined; of a total of 19,719 seats available, only 17,914 were filled, for a 90.8 percent utilization. COMUSMACV informed all subordinate commanders that to meet the program objectives, it was

PAGE 157 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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essential that planning be meticulous and continuous toward a goal of 100 percent utilization. Quotas to Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Tokyo were to be met on the same basis as Hong Kong, Bangkok, and Hawaii; quota-fill rates less than 99 percent were not satisfactory. 226

(C) During the period 1-15 December, the American Consul in Hong Kong conducted a survey to determine the average expenditure by US R&R personnel during a five-day stay. The results, compiled from questionnaires completed by 1,699 Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine personnel, revealed an average expenditure of 462.17 dollars for the period. It was noted that military personnel arrive in Hong Kong with extensive shopping lists for friends in RVN. The R&R office in Hong Kong estimated the individual's own expenditure to be about 250.00 US dollars for the five-day period. 227

(TS) In late November COMUSMACV informed CINCPAC that the total personnel on out-of-country R&R was based on the program of 63 percent for FY 67 and 80 percent for FY 68 of the in-country strength. Based on the forecast authorized strength commencing with the 2nd Quarter FY 67 and ending with the 4th Quarter FY 68, projections for R&R were: 228

<u>FISCAL QUARTER</u>	<u>STRENGTH</u>	<u>AVERAGE OUT-OF-COUNTRY R&amp;R</u>
2nd FY 67	240,112	3,097
3rd FY 67	268,112	3,446
4th FY 67	280,859	3,623
1st FY 68	293,476	4,784
2nd FY 68	303,783	4,952
3rd FY 68	310,638	5,064
4th FY 68	312,729	5,093

(C) In planning for the FY 68 R&R program, several unfavorable contingencies were considered. The maximum authorization for Tokyo could not be utilized effectively in the winter season. Maximum use of Hong Kong was doubtful on a yearly basis, due to tremendous use by tourists and the probability of temporary seasonal cutbacks in allowed on-the-ground strengths. Maximum use of Hawaii authorizations in tourist season, from July to September, had not been proven feasible to date, and might involve costs to the individual that would inhibit full utilization. Several small sites had little expansion capability and lacked mass appeal at present. The FY 68 requirements were expected to be as follows:

PAGE 158 OF 872 PAGES

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	<u>1st Qtr</u>	<u>2nd Qtr</u>	<u>3rd Qtr</u>	<u>4th Qtr</u>
Seats required per month:	33,000	34,000	36,000	38,000
Estimated site capabilities per Month:	29,400	30,000	31,000	32,500
Additional monthly requirement:	3,600	4,000	5,000	5,500

At the year's end, additional R&R sites were being considered. These included Ceylon, Okinawa, Alaska, Bali, and Australia. Preliminary evaluation indicated that Australia should be most suitable. In January 1967, R&R to Guam will be implemented for personnel of Guamanian ancestry serving in RVN.<sup>229</sup>

#### In-Country R&R

(C) At the beginning of the year in-country R&R centers were located at Saigon, Da Nang, Dalat, Hue, Nha Trang, and Vung Tau. However, the deteriorating political situation occurring in March and April, culminating in demonstrations and riots, caused COMUSMACV to review the advisability of using these locations. In addition to the "struggle movement" and its inherent effect on US personnel there, was a severe economic problem to be considered. Infiltration was rampant in all of RVN in early 1966, particularly in the capital city. Because of the large numbers of US personnel stationed in Saigon and the large numbers of R&R personnel arriving daily, it was deemed appropriate to eliminate Saigon and other urban areas as R&R locations.<sup>23</sup>

(U) At the end of the year, in-country R&R centers were located at two sites, Vung Tau and Da Nang. The Vung Tau site actually contained three different R&R centers. The US R&R center, capable of billeting 260 enlisted personnel for a three-day period, had facilities including mess, beach, bar, and outside 16-mm movie theatre. The Australian R&R center was capable of billeting 50 officers and enlisted personnel for a seven-day period; the Australians used the US recreation facilities. The ROK R&R center was capable of billeting 70 personnel for a seven-day period, with facilities including a mess hall and a small bar; while this center has a beach, the Koreans generally used the US beach and snack bar facilities. The Da Nang "China Beach" R&R center was capable of billeting 300 personnel for a three-day period, and would accommodate 400 after 1 January 1967. Facilities include a large PX, snack bar, and beer hall; gymnasium, library, and branch PX will be available after 1 January 1967. A Chu Lai R&R center is under construction, which will billet 200 personnel for a three-day period; this center is scheduled to be completed in April 1967.<sup>231</sup>

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### Tour Length

(U) During 1966 several suggestions were made by various authorities as to how service in RVN could be made more attractive, so that more personnel would extend their tours of duty for periods of six months to one year. A proposal most often mentioned was to give officers the same complete income tax exemption enjoyed by warrant officers and enlisted men. This plan had considerable backing from high-ranking government officials, and in August the President sent to Congress a bill providing a \$500 monthly income tax exemption for officers, an increase over the existing \$200 exemption. The Bill was passed in October as Public Law 39-739, retroactive to the beginning of 1966.

(C) The Chief of Staff, US Army (CofSA) requested comments from COMUSMACV in March regarding a possible bonus for military personnel in RVN who would extend voluntarily. One suggestion offered by CofSA was based on a percentage of base pay, proficiency pay, and flight pay, e.g., 15 percent 1st month, 20 percent 2nd month, up to a maximum of 40 percent for six months, the maximum permissible extension; the maximum bonus entitlement for any month would be \$350. The objective of this proposal was to secure extensions in short-skill areas particularly, to increase operational efficiency, and to relieve the strain on personnel resources. COMUSMACV replied on 7 April that certain long-range disadvantages would accrue if the bonus plan were put into effect. His primary concern was that it might generate a mercenary image of US troops in the minds of Congress and the US public. He reiterated his view that the 12-month tour created a valuable pool of counterinsurgency experience. Additionally, COMUSMACV indicated that the bonus might make RVN even more attractive to black marketeers and other undesirables. This evaluation by COMUSMACV evidently persuaded CofSA that the plan was undesirable, and the subject was dropped. By the end of August 1966, no specific extension program had been approved and the normal tour of duty in RVN remained at 12 months; both COMUSMACV and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) believed that retention of a 12-month tour for most personnel was extremely important from a morale standpoint. 232

(S) By June 1966 operations in RVN had progressed to the point that increased stability in the organization of USMACV was necessary to pursue more effective long-range goals and objectives. Command and staff continuity, therefore, became a problem of increasing magnitude and one of paramount concern to COMUSMACV, who considered it imperative that a minimum tour of two years, with provisions for extension when desirable or necessary, be established for a limited number of selected officers who occupied key command, staff, and advisory positions. In a message on 28 June, COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC of his concern in this matter. He prefaced his message by stating once again that he considered the current one-year tour highly desirable because of the increasing intensity of combat, the large number of personnel living under austere

PAGE 160 OF 872 PAGES

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conditions, and the debilitating effects of climate and environment. He felt, however, that there were certain officers in key positions who must be extended in order to achieve the degree of stability and continuity required to prosecute the war in RVN and to complete successfully the many civil programs that had been initiated. COMUSMACV then proposed that after an individual had served in the command in a critical position for a period of six to nine months, he would be offered two options. The first would be to return to the United States at the end of 11 months for a 30-day leave, including transit time, after which he would serve an additional period of time. The second option would permit the officer to move his dependents, at government expense, to a location near RVN where adequate housing could be acquired through government lease. In this case the officer would serve an additional 12 months after the arrival of his dependents in the selected overseas area, with provision for further extension. The officer would be authorized to return to the United States for 30 days' leave to accompany and establish his family, and during the 12-month extended period he would be afforded the opportunity for short visits with his family, approximately every 30 days. While this plan was not limited to any particular grade, key command and staff and important advisory positions were usually filled by colonels/captains or higher. In a few instances, officers in lower grades, who held critical positions, would be considered for extension. It was expected that a total of approximately 150-200 officers would extend voluntarily under the above options. An exploratory study to determine the feasibility of locating dependents in Taipei or Manila had indicated that a maximum of 30 families could be located in Taipei and 100 in Manila. In view of the ability of US agencies to support this program, Manila was preferred over Taipei as the most suitable area. The program would be similar to that in operation for USAID and the State Department, which permitted families of key personnel to relocate near RVN as an incentive for retaining the sponsor in his job beyond tour length. If approved by CINCPAC, COMUSMACV would designate the officers for extension and would initiate action in coordination with appropriate military commanders and government agencies to develop details for execution of the program.<sup>233</sup>

(S) After receiving comments from PACOM subordinate commands, CINCPAC advised the JCS that he strongly supported the COMUSMACV plan and recommended that action be taken to change the present tour criteria to accommodate approximately 200 senior officers. CINCPAC desired that personnel be identified on a case-by-case basis rather than by a billet identification, with mutual agreement in each case between COMUSMACV and the military Services. CINCPAC further recommended that conceptual approval be granted for the relocation of selected dependents to the Manila area, and that the military departments be encouraged to sponsor officially and provide normal entitlements for those relocated dependents.<sup>234</sup>

PAGE 161 OF 772 PAGES

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(S) During the SECDEF Saigon Conference in October, SECDEF authorized the extension of tours of selected key officers beyond 12 months with the attendant authorized government lease of up to 100 houses in Manila and the movement at government expense of the families whose sponsors were on extended tour in RVN. In October COMUSMACV directed an attitude survey to determine how the officers who might be affected by the proposal of tour extension would react to the option of family settlement in the Philippines or to the alternate options as described. To accomplish this survey, the general/flag officers of the command, chiefs of special and technical staff sections of HQ MACV, officers of the senior advisory echelons, and officers representing the command and staff base within the components were addressed by letters through command channels. The letters requested a response on an attached check list, with the assurance that the response would indicate neither a decision to accept one of the options at that time nor an indication that change in the individual officer's tour length had been effected. The set of options that could be selected by designated key officers is summarized as follows:

Option 1. Acceptance of US Government leased and furnished family quarters in the Philippines.

Option 2. Acceptance of a plan providing for 30 days' leave in CONUS after nine months duty in RVN, with space-required travel allowed, and 15-day periods of leave at the completion of subsequent six-month increments.

Option 3. Acceptance of travel at government expense to and from a secure area in Southeast or Central Asia for the officer's wife and coincident leave, with travel paid to and from the selected area, for the officer.

Option 4. Acceptance of a combination of the options offered subject to conditions of the extension.<sup>235</sup>

(S) A MACV staff officer visited the Philippines during October; coordination with Embassy and USAID housing officials resulted in a determination that suitable houses to accommodate entry of five to ten MACV families per month on a phased basis could be obtained in Manila and environs. On 25 October, COMUSMACV requested that CINCPAC initiate action to obtain approval of the Government of the Philippines (GOP) for entry and residence of MACV families in Manila, stating that the agreement with GOP should contain provisions for duty-free import of personal and household effects and motor vehicles, and all privileges and immunities afforded other US military dependents then residing in the Philippines.<sup>236</sup>

(S) On 2 November CINCPAC informed COMUSMACV that the JCS had recommended to SECDEF that there be no preemption of existing military housing, and that no temporary or sub-standard military housing be used. In addition, the JCS had noted the deferred FY 66 appropriation for

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housing at Clark AFB and Sangley Point, and recommended that SECDEF immediately approve construction of 100 suitable family houses, authorized and funded but deferred and that DOD-leased housing, furnished, be provided in Manila. CINCPAC authorized direct liaison between COMUSMACV and CINCPACREPPHIL and requested that CINCPACREPPHIL be invited to housing discussions so that all concerned would be advised of the development and could provide a time-phased plan for implementation of the Tour Length Extension Program.<sup>237</sup>

(S) During November, MACV and DA representatives traveled to Manila to gather data to provide SECDEF with a basis for decisions as to where in the Philippines the families of key MACV officers might be located. The compiled data indicated that the decision could be either for leasing in the Manila civilian community or new construction on Clark AFB. The option-survey return indicated that MACV requirements for Philippine housing would be an initial need for 60 sets of family quarters, with a requirement for possibly 100 by the end of CY 1967. In late December, CINCPACREPPHIL stated that unless otherwise directed, on 6 January 1967 a request would be made to the Embassy in Manila to initiate action for GOP approval and tax-free entry of about 100 MACV unaccompanied families. The SECDEF decision was expected in early 1967, and it was anticipated that some families would commence travel to the Philippines in March 1967. In late December SECDEF, authorized construction of 100 sets of family quarters at Clark AFB and it was anticipated that 20 houses per month during the period 1 June - 31 October 1967 would be completed and occupied by MACV families.<sup>238</sup>

(U) In November SECDEF provided advance implementing instructions concerning Public Law 89-735, which authorized, effective 2 November 1966, a special 30-day period of leave to a military member who, by reenlistment, extension of enlistment, or other voluntary action, extended his required tour of duty in hostile fire area for at least six months. SECDEF established the policy, determined the eligibility criteria, and provided administrative instructions and restrictions to put the law into effect.<sup>239</sup>

(U) In November, COMUSMACV concurred in CINCPAC's recommendation to the JCS that MACV be granted interim authority to issue travel orders on a space-required basis for leave travel to and from CONUS. It was believed that such authority would enhance the voluntary extension program of foreign service tours in Vietnam, expedite movement of personnel, and have a favorable impact on morale.<sup>240</sup>

(S) On 18 November a JCS message to CINCPAC, with information to COMUSMACV, stated that the President had asked for an immediate progress report on the recently-implemented Public Law 89-735. The JCS asked for an initial report as of 15 December to arrive not later

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than 19 December, the report to indicate the number of extensions, by Service, approved for a 30-day leave; the number, by Service, that had actually departed on a 30-day leave; and a breakout of officers and enlisted personnel participating. Following the initial report, quarterly reports would be submitted to arrive not later than 30 days after the end of each quarter. CINCPAC passed the action to COMUSMACV and on 18 December the initial report was submitted. A total of 95 officers and 4,223 enlisted men from all services had extended, with 30-day leaves approved. Some 25 officers and 1,457 enlisted men had actually departed on leave as of 15 December.<sup>241</sup>

#### Awards and Decorations

(U) Service in Vietnam could be a most trying and frustrating experience. There were no front lines and no rear areas. Much of the area of the country was infiltrated by the Viet Cong, and efforts to identify them among the friendly population were extremely difficult. At no time or place in Vietnam could a member of the US forces rest assured he was in a safe area. Organized enemy offensive attacks by structured military organizations were often preceded or followed by intricately-planned terrorist activity. In this atmosphere of universal danger, there were thousands of examples of courage above and beyond the call of duty and of meritorious achievements of the highest order. COMUSMACV considered it appropriate that campaigns should be designated and bronze campaign stars be authorized for the Vietnam Service Medal. In a message to CINCPAC on 15 May 1966, COMUSMACV observed that many thousands of military personnel had been awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received in battle, and many thousands had been decorated for valorous acts before the enemy. In his view it was difficult to rationalize that US servicemen should earn these combat decorations and then be returned to the United States without credit for campaign participation.

(U) Prior to the May communication to CINCPAC, the matter had been discussed between USMACV and DA. COMUSMACV felt that because of the nature of the conflict, where combat operations were underway throughout RVN at any given time, and the inherent mobility of US units committed in Vietnam, it would be appropriate to designate campaigns by period of time; previous methods of designating campaigns geographically did not lend themselves to operations in Vietnam. Based on this method could be the "Viet Cong Summer Monsoon Offensive 1965" dating from the arrival of US ground combat units in RVN on 8 March 1965 to the termination of the monsoon season (1 November 1965) or the date of the Christmas standdown (24 December 1965). It also appeared appropriate to designate a campaign prior to 8 March 1965, possibly named Vietnam Advisory Effort.

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Any description of specific battles or units participating in specific battles would lead to almost insurmountable problems in determining those eligible for battle credit and would preclude many personnel from receiving credit they deserved. It would be difficult to designate individual advisors with RVNAF participating in the same operation, and would be virtually impossible to credit advisors, air, and naval personnel hundreds of miles away who, while not involved in the major actions, were participating in smaller and sometimes independent operations on a daily basis; in addition, personnel subjected to terrorist activity would not be recognized. For these persons it was recommended that battle credit not be limited to individual units, but should include RVN in its entirety. In addition to the campaigns discussed above, COMUSMACV desired that a campaign be designated for the period 2 November 1965 or 25 December 1965, as appropriate, and terminating early in April 1966. He strongly recommended immediate consideration be given to designating campaigns and authorizing wear of bronze service stars on the Vietnam Service Ribbon.<sup>242</sup>

(U) CINCPAC concurred in principle, but thought that campaign names which tended to add credence to or memorialize communist factions or actions should be avoided, e.g., Viet Cong Summer Monsoon Offensive 1965. To support COMUSMACV's recommendations, CINCPAC added that the proposal would assist in the preparation of unit histories and provide a means for authorizing award of campaign streamers, war service streamers, and silver campaign bands. In addition, CINCPAC believed the time frames for identifying campaigns as discussed in COMUSMACV's proposal appeared logical.<sup>243</sup> By August DA had approved two campaigns--the Vietnam Advisory Campaign, 15 March 1962 - 7 March 1965, and the Vietnam Defense Campaign from 8 March 1965 to 24 December 1965. A later campaign was to be added.

(U) In September DA delegated authority to CG USARV, as Senior Army commander in Vietnam, to approve the award of the DSC to US Army personnel, and stated that the authority could not be further delegated. COMUSMACV requested the same authority for the Army element of HQ MACV. DA's response noted:

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It is noted that at the time the authority to award the SS was delegated to MACV, there was no major Army headquarters to whom delegation of award authority could be made. With the introduction of USARV in July 1965 an Army headquarters became a clearly defined Army component of MACV. Then in consonance with our policy of decentralization, authority for award of the DSC was delegated to CG USARV as the senior Army component commander. While your desire to have award authority for the DSC is understood, it is our continuing belief that the DSC, which is the highest Army-awarded medal for valor, should be awarded only by the Army component. In this regard it is noted that neither Navy nor Air Force has delegated authority to MACV for their comparable awards.<sup>244</sup>

After CG USARV was delegated DSC awards authority, there were two occasions on which Army personnel of the Army element of HQ MACV were recommended for the DSC. Since COMUSMACV did not have approving authority, the recommendations were submitted to and approved by CG USARV and returned to COMUSMACV for awarding; as COMUSMACV was also CG USARV, the process was not too time-consuming.

(U) In November COMUSMACV promulgated SECDEF instructions on the subject of processing recommendations for the award of the Medal of Honor:

DOD Directive 1348.18, dated 1 November 1966 . . . contains public affairs guidance as follows: premature public disclosure of information concerning recommendations, processing, and approval/disapproval actions is a potential source of embarrassment to those recommended and in the case of finally approved recommendations, could diminish the impact of ceremonies at which the awards are made. To prevent premature disclosure, processing of Medal of Honor recommendations will be handled on a "For Official Use Only," basis until the awards are officially announced or are presented.<sup>245</sup>

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(U) Effective 3 November the Distinguished Unit Citation was designated the Presidential Unit Citation (Army). This was a change in title only; all other criteria pertinent to the award, wearing, and description remained unchanged, and awards made under the former designation would not be changed. 246

(U) To recognize those personnel who responded to occasions calling for actions of heroic or meritorious nature, MACV established policies and procedures for submission and processing of recommendations for awards to its members and units. Such policies included expeditious recommendation and presentation at appropriate ceremonies in RVN, while at the same time insuring that the high standards established for awards were upheld and maintained. 248

(U) The following decorations (Army only) were awarded during 1966:

DSC	29	**BSM-V	5,044	JSCM	764	*TOTAL	155,500
**SS	1,193	BSM	13,274	**ACM-V	3,016		
IM	703	**AM-V	2,381	ACM	14,400		
DFC	1,058	AM	92,418	PH	20,969		
SM	251						

\* Includes USARV.

\*\* Incl ROK-5 SS; VN-8 SS; VN-22 BSM-V; VN-3 ACM-V

(U) Recommendations forwarded to other headquarters (all Services) were:

	MH	#DSC	DSM	SS	IM	DFC	**SM	BSM	AM	JSCM	*COM	TOTAL
Army	4	6	8	0	3	7	0	26	6	1	57	118
Navy	1	0	0	0	29	0	1	169	159	1	171	531
Air Force	2	0	1	6	30	13	3	93	92	6	94	340
Marines	5	1	1	11	21	4	0	83	35	1	43	210
RVNAF	0	0	0	9	1	7	4	22	22	0	10	75
USCG	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Civ	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4
Total	<u>12</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>401</u>	<u>314</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>376</u>	<u>1280</u>

\* Incl Army, Navy & AF Commendation Medals.

\*\* Incl Soldiers, Navy & Marine Corps, and Airmen Medals.

# Incl Distinguished Service, Navy, and AF Crosses.

No statistics were recorded by COMUSMACV regarding final action on recommendations submitted to higher headquarters. 249

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(U) With reference to the award of the Joint Service Commendation Medal, DOD Directive 1348.14, with change 2, authorized the Combat "V" for the JCSM if the citation was for acts or service involving direct participation in combat operations. Interpretation in MACV was that it would be proper to award the Combat "V" with all JCSM's awarded as a result of service in RVN, in order to distinguish award in combat area from award in a non-combat area. CINCPAC's interpretation was that the Combat "V" should be awarded for acts or service by an individual involved in direct participation in combat operations involving exposure to personal hazards due to direct enemy action or imminence of such action, not for acts or services performed in a geographical area. CINCPAC also asserted that each case should be judged on its own merits. This interpretation was forwarded to the JCS, who concurred with CINCPAC.250

(C) During 1965 the GVN had authorized the RVN Campaign Medal for issue to Allied forces assisting in the war against the Viet Cong. During the fall of 1965 Public Law 3405 was passed approving acceptance of the award, and on 19 October 1965 the President signed the bill. This act became common knowledge to officials of the GVN and to members of US forces serving in Southeast Asia. On 15 January 1966 COMUSMACV emphasized to CINCPAC the long administrative delay in issuance of instructions for acceptance of the Campaign Medal. CINCPAC added to JCS that the delay had fostered an embarrassing situation which could only be alleviated by the prompt and effective removal of remaining administrative delays; early authorization should be granted in order to permit timely presentation of the award to deserving personnel. JCS replied that OSD had been made aware of the desire to expedite action, and on 8 February JCS notified CINCPAC and COMUSMACV that approval for acceptance of the Campaign Medal had been authorized. COMUSMACV officially notified Chief JCS that the United States accepted the offer of the Vietnam Campaign Medal to members of the US forces in Vietnam. To ensure equitable distribution of the award, Chief JCS queried COMUSMACV concerning the ships of the Seventh Fleet; COMUSMACV recommended adoption of the same geographic and period-of-service limitations for the Vietnamese Campaign Medal as were applicable to the US Vietnam Service Medal. The decision of the JCS, received during April, included those serving outside the geographical limits of RVN and contributing direct combat support to the RVNAF for six months in their struggle against an armed enemy.251

(U) Final acceptance of foreign awards required Congressional approval until 19 October 1965. On that date PL 89-257 was enacted, rescinding that requirement and delegating authority to accept foreign awards to the Services. This authority was further delegated, COMUSMACV and CG USARV receiving approval authority for Army personnel. The

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Department of the AF delegated approval to the local Air Force commander and the Navy Department authorized commanding officers to approve acceptance awards.

(U) In the case of recommendations by the RVNAF for tender of ARVN unit awards to USA units, approval authority for battalion or lower was granted to COMUSMACV. For larger units, and units of the USN, USMC, and USAF, the Services held approval authority.<sup>252</sup>

(U) The following Vietnamese decorations were authorized by the RVN Ministry of Defense to be awarded to foreign military and civilian personnel of all grades serving as military advisors in RVN or serving with foreign military units that provided tactical support to the RVNAF, in recognition of their meritorious service:<sup>253</sup>

<u>DECORATION</u>	<u>RECIPIENT</u>		
	<u>OFF</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>CIV</u>
National Order Medal	X		
Military Order Medal		X	
Knight Cross Medal or Gallantry Cross	X	X	X
Medal of Honor, 1st Degree	X		X
Medal of Honor, 2d Degree		X	
Medal of Unity			X
Life Saving Medal	X	X	X
Special Service Medal	X	X	
Staff Service Medal	X	X	X
Training Service Medal	X	X	X
Army Distinguished Service Medal	X		X (Diplomatic)
Army Medal for Meritorious Service		X	
Technical Service Medal	X	X	X
Hazardous Service Medal	X	X	
Air Distinguished Service Medal	X		
Air Gallantry Medal	X	X	(Flight Crews only)
Air Medal for Meritorious Service		X	
Navy Medal for Meritorious Service		X	
Navy Distinguished Service Medal	X		X (Diplomatic)

(C) During December a study was being conducted on widening the provision of GVN awards and decorations to SEVENTHFLT personnel to encompass personnel of the 3d Air Div. As a corollary undertaking, recommendations would be developed along the same line for Thailand-based USAF units. The latter would be developed in conjunction with the US Embassy Saigon and US Embassy Bangkok.<sup>254</sup>

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(C) A US Mission policy adopted in July 1965 limited award of US military decorations to members of the RVNAF for acts of heroism directly related to US personnel or for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy of a nature which fully met the criteria for award of the DSC, or its Service equivalent. This policy was developed to insure that meritorious awards did not result in handles for communist propaganda, or create jealousies among senior RVNAF officers. In March 1966 COMUSMACV pointed out to the Ambassador that although Service Department regulations authorized award of meritorious decorations to foreigners, there had been no Mission policy established on US awards to Free World Forces (FWF) committed in RVN. COMUSMACV's recommendation that the following statement be accepted as Mission policy on individual awards to foreigners in Vietnam was approved in April 66.

US decorations which may be legally awarded to foreign personnel are contained in pertinent service publications. US Mission Policy is to recommend foreign military personnel for US decorations only for acts of heroism directly related to US personnel or for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy of a nature which fully meets the criteria for award of the DSC or its Service equivalent. Under the extraordinary criteria, the acts need not be directly related to US personnel. Recommendations for awards submitted in accordance with this policy must have been witnessed by a member(s) of the US military forces. All such recommendations will be routed through COMUSMACV for comment and securing concurrence of the foreign government concerned prior to forwarding to respective departmental headquarters for final approval. Authority is delegated to COMUSMACV to concur or nonconcur for the US Mission to Vietnam.<sup>255</sup>

In June COMUSMACV requested authority to approve and award the Silver Star to foreign military personnel for valorous acts in RVN. He informed the Ambassador of his request and provided the following rationale, including a recommendation:

Under present circumstances all recommendations for awards to foreigners must be processed to service department level in Washington DC. The administrative lag based on this long approval channel, is sometimes one year from the date of the action to the date of the award. To rectify this problem, I have requested, through military channels, that authority be delegated by all

PAGE 170 OF 872 PAGES

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services to COMUSMACV to award valorous awards of the Silver Star and below to individual foreign personnel.

Working relationships between US and RVNAF and US and Free World Forces are extremely cordial, and mutual respect is growing daily. I believe these relationships could be immeasurably enhanced if I had the prerogative of awarding decorations for valor to their deserving personnel immediately following engagements with the enemy. While I do make a point of visiting and congratulating personnel in such foreign units, I am limited to verbal bouquets and hand shaking. Delegation of the authority I have requested will in some measure alleviate the situation. However, it occurs to me that the criteria which I recommend you reaffirm in April 1966, is more stringent than is compatible with a liberal awards policy. I believe a reduction of the requirements for an individual foreign serviceman to qualify for a US valorous award, from the criteria applicable to the Distinguished Service Cross to the criteria applicable to the Silver Star, would appreciably increase the opportunities to decorate foreign service personnel, but would remain sufficiently restrictive to insure against degradation of our awards system.

I recommend the following statement be accepted as Mission policy on individual awards to foreigners in Vietnam:

US decorations which may be legally awarded to foreign personnel are contained in pertinent service publications. US Mission policy is to recommend foreign military personnel for US decorations only for acts of heroism directly related to US personnel or for gallantry in action against the enemy of a nature which fully meets the criteria for award of the Silver Star. Under the gallantry criteria, the acts need not be directly related to US personnel. Recommendations for awards submitted in accordance with this policy must have been witnessed by a member(s) of the US military forces. All such recommendations will be routed through COMUSMACV for comment and securing concurrence of the foreign government

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concerned prior to forwarding to respective departmental headquarters for final approval. Authority is delegated to COMUSMACV to concur or nonconcur for the US Mission to Vietnam.<sup>256</sup>

The Ambassador approved this policy statement on 19 July. On 19 August DA delegated authority to COMUSMACV, as Senior Army Commander in RVN, to approve the award of the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, and Army Commendation Medal to foreign nationals in the grade of Colonel/Captain or below for valorous acts in actual combat, in direct support of operations in RVN. In early November CINCPAC responded to COMUSMACV's June request, stating that DA had previously granted awarding authority to COMUSMACV as senior Army Commander in RVN, and that JCS indicated the Navy contemplated early delegation of authority to CINCPACFLT and CG FMFPAC; in October the Air Force had delegated authority to CINCPACAF and 7th Air Force. On 30 November, SECNAV delegated authority to CINCPACFLT to award the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, and Navy Commendation Medal to foreign military personnel in the grade of Captain/Colonel and below for heroic deeds while participating in combat operations in SEASIA. Authority was also granted for CINCPACFLT to sub-delegate this authority to CG FMFPAC.<sup>257</sup>

AWARDS APPROVAL AUTHORITY

<u>DECORATION</u> (Sv. Equip.)	<u>ARMY</u>	<u>AIR FORCE</u>	<u>NAVY</u>	<u>MARINE CORPS</u>
DSC	USARV	DAF	SECNAV	SECNAV
DSM	DA	DAF	SECNAV	SECNAV
SS	#*COMUSMACV/USARV	#CDR 7AF	#PACFLT	#FMFPAC
IM	COMUSMACV/USARV	PACAF	PACFLT	FMFPAC
DFC	#*COMUSMACV/USARV	#CDR 7AF	#PACFLT	#FMFPAC
SM	*COMUSMACV/USARV	CDR 7AF	SECNAV	SECNAV
BSM	#**COMUSMACV/USARV	#CDR 7AF	#PACFLT	#FMFPAC
AM	#**COMUSMACV/USARV	#CDR 7AF	#PACFLT	#FMFPAC
JSCM	COMUSMACV	COMUSMACV	COMUSMACV	COMUSMACV
ACM	#**COMUSMACV/USARV	CDR 7AF	#PACFLT	#FMFPAC
PH	#**COMUSMACV/USARV	CDR 7AF	NSAS	III MAF
UNIT AWARDS +	DA/USARV	DAF	SECNAV	SECNAV

\* Major generals in command and brig generals in major generals command position.

\*\* Brig generals command separate brigades.

\*\*\* Commanders of hospitals as authorized by CG 1st Log Comd.

# For valorous awards to foreign military personnel in grade col/capt and below.

+ Presidential Unit Citation: Valorous unit award and meritorious unit commendation at USARV.

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## Uniformed Services Savings Deposit Program

(U) As part of continuing efforts to make service in RVN more attractive, and at the same time to reduce the spending of piasters, with the resulting inflationary effect on the local economy, Congress turned to methods of rewarding savings on the part of the individual serviceman. Based on the experience of the Army's Soldiers' Deposit program, which had lost favor in recent years because its interest rate was no longer competitive, Congress on 14 August 1966 enacted Public Law 89-538, entitled the Uniformed Services Savings Deposit Program. Unlike the Soldiers' Deposits, the new program would include officers as well as enlisted personnel, but would be available only to those serving overseas. The regulations provided that military members might deposit sums monthly not to exceed the total of their unallotted pay and allowances; interest at the rate of 10 percent compounded quarterly would be paid on accumulated balances, to include deposits made before the 10th day of any month. Only approved emergency withdrawals could be made overseas. On return to CONUS, members may elect to withdraw their balances immediately, or they may leave the balance on deposit and continue to draw interest for an additional 90 days, after which time the account no longer draws interest and must be withdrawn.<sup>238</sup>

(U) Implementing instructions were received from the Services and promulgated to MACV components during the first week of September. By the end of October 11,342 accounts had been opened, with a total of \$3,233,577 on deposit. As the obvious advantages of the program were recognized, as the program was increasingly well publicized, and as administrative procedures were standardized, participation increased. At the end of November there were 16,166 accounts for a total of \$5,344,513, and by the end of the year the program had grown to 20,487 accounts, with total deposits of \$9,650,639.<sup>259</sup>

## The USO in RVN

(U) The United Services Organizations, Inc. (USO), began the year 1966 with four clubs in operation in support of US servicemen in RVN. By the end of the year the number had grown to 10, employing a professional staff of 29. Three of the USO clubs were located at Da Nang, with the others at Saigon, Tan Son Nhut, Nha Trang, Di An, Cam Ranh Bay, Qui Nhon, and Chu Lai. Only two of the clubs were located within purely military complexes, one at Da Nang and at Cam Ranh Bay; here it was a matter of bringing the USO to the troops, basically because no suitable buildings were available in the towns, and also to limit the military presence in the towns adjacent to the large military installations.<sup>260</sup>

## UNCLASSIFIED

(U) Services provided in the USO clubs varied according to space, need, and circumstances. Normally all clubs included a snack bar, lounge, movies and television, game rooms, letter-writing facilities, and a library. Some of the larger clubs had overseas telephone exchanges, photographic laboratories, APO facilities, barber shops, art centers, and even free refreshments. The success of the USO clubs was reflected in the attendance figures: during April 138,032 personnel visited the six clubs then in operation, and by the end of 1966 the combined door-count of the ten clubs recorded 377,889 visitors. In December the Saigon USO club welcomed its two-millionth serviceman since its opening in April 1963, and at about the same time the number of overseas telephone calls completed reached 10,000.

(U) During 1966 more shows than ever appeared in RVN, an average of four, and at times as many as seven, professional shows per month being provided. Normally shows did not exceed five persons, including at least one celebrity entertainer. Small groups were preferred because they could more easily be transported to isolated areas. The shows were popular and effective morale-boosters; many times this was the first opportunity that a young soldier had ever had to see a show-business celebrity or a top-name athlete. Hearing Bob Hope, Eddie Fisher, Martha Raye, Ann-Margret, Anita Bryant, and Roy Acuff, or shaking hands and talking to John Wayne, Robert Mitchum, George Jessel, John Unitas, Sam Huff or Archie Moore and a host of others was a big event for the individual and the entire installation. Operational responsibility for the logistical support of USO shows was delegated to CG USARV, who further delegated it to CG 1st Log Comd. The Entertainment Director scheduled the shows in the four CTZ's through the respective Special Services Officers; COMUSMACV monitored the program. Security precautions were taken at all times to insure the safety of the entertainers.<sup>261</sup>

(U) In addition to the USO sponsored entertainment, other efforts were being made to keep troop morale at a high peak. Time noted one such effort:

The demand for entertainment by US forces in RVN is so insatiable that it has created a flourishing year-round vaudeville circuit, especially in the boon-docks where troops have little opportunity to spend their money. The Vietnam circuit has become the Orpheum of the Orient for adventurous performers. In 1964 the first touring variety shows arrived in Saigon and a year later the World Wide Talent agency was formed providing outside talent from Hong Kong, Manila and Tokyo. In 1966 the agency booked 14 acts from the outside, 25 Vietnamese bands, four Filipino bands and 42 Vietnamese girl singers. Many entertainers are from the US

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where at best they would be taking second or third billing in night clubs and some would never make it past the small time. Most people in the US have never heard of them, but in Vietnam they are popular and in their own way have become headliners. They go into the boondocks knowing the risks are real, roads terrible, living conditions primitive and the performing areas a nightmare. Sure they are here for the money, however, they also feel an obligation to do what they can for the troops. . . .262

## American Red Cross

(U) During the year 1966, the American Red Cross effort in RVN increased with the buildup of US forces in-country. The same problems encountered by the military also confronted the Red Cross. More personnel were required to staff the expanding activities, and additional logistical support was required. The number of professional staff members increased from 95, assigned at the beginning of the year, to 254 at the year's end. The number of Field Director stations grew from a modest seven on 1 January to 30 on 31 December 1966, plus an additional 20 sub-stations located throughout RVN from Dong Ha in I CTZ to Can Tho in IV CTZ. In addition the number of recreational center club-mobiles, which roamed about RVN entertaining the troops in the field where security permitted, increased from three to 15 as the year ended. Thirteen military hospitals were staffed with ARC personnel to provide health, comfort, and welfare services to patients, whereas only five had been so staffed on 1 January.

(U) During CY 66 the following services were provided US military personnel in RVN:263

Emergency Leaves and Extensions	30,078
Government Benefits	1,933
Other Benefits	78,354
Personal Problems	16,068
Family Problems	10,924
Other	15,628
Total Cases Served	143,577

## Postal Operations

(U) During the first half of 1966 mail service continued to be a major problem. However, increased efforts and more efficient

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management cut the median transit time for airmail letters and packages between CONUS and RVN to three to four days per major base area. The real problem was surface mail, which sometimes took as long as 60 to 90 days in transit. This problem was greatly alleviated in November 1966 with the enactment of Public Law 87-725. This law authorized the airlift of all letters and personal tape recordings between the US and Military Post Offices overseas at surface-rate postage, and applied to small packages weighing up to five pounds, newspapers, and certain magazines.

(U) The enactment of Public Law 89-368 in March was a boost to the morale of servicemen in Vietnam. This law authorized Armed Forces personnel serving in a combat zone to mail home gifts tax and duty free up to a value of \$50.00, provided the items were purchased in an exchange or other authorized retail activity. Prior to enactment of the law the tax and duty free limit had been \$10.264

(C) During CY 66 military postal operations continued to expand. One action had significant importance: The single-manager concept was discontinued and the predominant-user concept was instituted. Under the single-manager concept, the Department of the Air Force had been responsible for providing postal services to all Armed Forces personnel, organizations, and activities in RVN. Under the predominant-user concept, the service which had predominate interest in an area would provide postal service for all personnel, organizations, and activities in that area. The basis for this change in operational concepts was the fact that the majority of units in the troop build-up were Army units; many of these units had organized postal sections, and the Army was better able to provide postal service to Army units. One other reason was that during late 1965 the Air Force was operating only two aerial mail terminals, 18 operational APO's, seven mail-address-only APO's, and an area postal directory. During the late summer of 1965 informal attempts were made to change the existing inter-service agreement for postal operations. On 22 October COMUSMACV recommended that CINCPAC change the existing concept; CINCPAC forwarded the request to HQ Army - Air Force Postal Service, and HQ AAFPS approved the request on 16 November 1965. Concurrent with the approval COMUSMACV requested that additional postal units be sent to RVN to augment organized postal units; this request was approved and the Army Postal Units began arriving in March 1966. By the end of August 1966 Army Postal Units had relieved the Air Force at Vung Tau, Qui Nhon, Cam Ranh Bay, Nha Tranh, and Pleiku, the areas where it had predominant interest. The Air Force provided postal service in those areas where it had predominant interest, and was responsible for operating aerial mail terminals at Saigon, Da Nang, and Cam Ranh Bay to handle incoming bulk mail segregation and distribution to APO's and to consolidate and dispatch out-going mail. The Air Force would also operate an APO to serve the organization and activities located in the Saigon/Cholon/Tan Son Nhut area. The Navy and Marine Corps

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provided service in those areas where they had predominant interest, primarily in the I CTZ.<sup>265</sup>

(U) Problem areas did appear during the year and continued to hamper postal operations. These problems areas fell into three categories: facilities, personnel and transportation. The postal facilities throughout RVN were inadequate in terms of space and security. Staff postal officers were continually conducting campaigns to upgrade and expand facilities, but the situation, though somewhat eased, still existed at the end of the year. The number of postal facilities offering the sale of money orders and stamps had increased from 75 at the beginning of the year to more than 150 by the end of the year.<sup>266</sup>

(U) In the personnel problem area, Army postal personnel strengths were not always in keeping with the increasing troop strength. Additional postal elements had been programmed but were not due to arrive until late in the year. Postal units were habitually programmed to arrive after the majority of other forces in the troop buildup; this appeared to be an area for change. Troops require postal service as soon as practicable after arrival, therefore postal support elements to include base post offices or postal regulating detachments should be scheduled to arrive early in the build-up schedule. This matter was solved during October when DA authorized USARV to activate seven additional postal units from in-country resources and promised to expedite arrival of scheduled in-coming postal personnel. The new units were established and by the first of November the required personnel were in-country.

(U) In the transportation problem area, timely delivery of mail to isolated areas was a major problem as the year began; however, by the end of the year the problem had almost been eliminated. All large units were receiving daily mail service, as were most isolated units. In-country airlift requirements for the mail could not be disassociated from tactical emergencies and maintenance of aircraft, which sometimes caused mail delays. In spite of these diversions, daily mail service was being provided to most servicemen in RVN.<sup>267</sup>

(U) Plans to handle the anticipated Christmas period heavy mail load were begun in July and the code name Operation PINE TREE was adopted for all matters pertaining to Christmas mailings in RVN. Problems that required in-country solving were isolated and eliminated. Recommendations were made to CINCPACAF and CINCUSARPAC concerning personnel requirements and means to expedite mail shipment. All of these were accepted and by October all plans were in effect to handle the requirements of Operation PINE TREE.<sup>268</sup>

(U) A revised mail distribution system which would incorporate direct flights from San Francisco to Danang and Cam Ranh, as well as Saigon, was achieved on 28 November when the first direct mail deliveries were made.

PAGE 177 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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(U) During the year 1966 the workload for military postal activities was as follows:<sup>269</sup>

Total Mail Moved	94,430 tons
Total Postal Money Orders Sold	\$200,040,262.89
Total Stamps Sold	\$ 4,575,219.57

### Discipline, Law and Order

#### Military Justice

(U) Policies and procedures for the administration of military justice in Vietnam were published in MACV Directive 22-1, 4 December 1965. This directive outlined the various jurisdictional areas within the various Services, and assisted and advised commanders in the discharges of military personnel in Vietnam; administration of discipline was primarily a uniservice responsibility and component commanders promptly handled them.

(U) Each Service within HQ USMACV had a designated officer as commander of its personnel. These commanders, listed below, exercised command over and were responsible for the administration of discipline of their respective personnel, including those attached to the MACV Advisory Teams.

Army--GG, HQ Det, US Army Element, USMACV (MACV ACofS, J1);  
HQ Commandant was designated as Dep Comdr, responsible for the administration of discipline.  
Navy--Commanding Officer, US Naval Unit, USMACV (COMNAVFORV).  
Air Force--Commander, Dets 10, 11, and 12, 1131st Special Activities Squadron (MACV ACofS, J5), who delegated disciplinary authority to Cdr 377th Combat Support Group.  
Marine Corps--CO Marine Corps Unit, HQ USMACV (Director COG).

General court-martial (GCM) jurisdiction was generally as prescribed by Service directives. Special and summary court-martial jurisdiction was as prescribed in MACV Directive 22-1.<sup>270</sup>

(U) At the beginning of 1966 there was no specific guidance concerning procedures for criminal cases involving US civilian personnel in Vietnam. However, cases were investigated which included violations of laws or regulations of one or more jurisdictions, e.g., US/GVN/MACV. Such violations fell basically into three categories:

1) US civilians extended one or more of the military facility privileges (Access, Messary/Mess/Finance) and who violated the privilege.

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2) US civilians who were not authorized military facility privileges, but who:

a) Usurped privileges by circumventing established procedures.

b) Conspired with a person afforded the military facility privileges in order to acquire goods or services.

3) Civilians who were not authorized military facility privileges and had no connection with the military, but who took advantage of their status as US citizens to cover illegal activities such as black market or currency manipulations.

(U) To preclude such activities as mentioned above, an agreement on procedures was reached between COMUSMACV and the American Ambassador on 13 April 1966, covering the following:

1) Actions to be taken after receipt of preliminary investigation indicating violation of laws or regulations:

a) Suspend facility privileges by COMUSMACV.

b) Notify employer.

c) Notify American Embassy.

d) Notify APO's, FPO's, Military Finance Officers, and Provost Marshals.

2) Actions to be taken after completed investigations which substantiate an alleged violation:

a) Withdraw all privileges by COMUSMACV.

b) Notify employer of actions taken requesting specific actions by employer, if appropriate.

c) Notify American Embassy.

d) Notify APO's, FPO's, Military Finance Officers and Provost Marshals.

e) Forward copy (2) of completed case to appropriate federal agencies (Internal Revenue Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, etc.).<sup>271</sup>

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(C) As 1966 progressed the matter of control of US citizens became a matter of increased concern to the US Ambassador. To determine the practical and legal limits of his police power in RVN over US citizens, he requested that the MACV SJA prepare a staff study concerning existing authority. The study, based on the US Code, executive orders, pentilateral and economic agreements, and GVN cooperation agreements, was completed during April. The conclusions were that the Ambassador could legally issue regulations concerning Mission personnel, providing those regulations were not in violation of US or GVN laws. In the present circumstances, he could issue police regulations concerning all US citizens in RVN, providing they were not violative of US or GVN laws; he could also be assured that the enforcement of police regulations by US military police was legal on the basis of the existing RVN citizens' arrest law, military security, and authority from the Ambassador. An additional conclusion was that the MP's authority would be strengthened if the consent of the subject US citizen was obtained as a condition precedent to the extension of US support. While the Ambassador could promulgate police regulations applicable to US citizens in Vietnam, fullest support would be insured by basing enforcement of the regulations on the consent by the subject US citizen and the citizens' arrest law. The RVN citizens' arrest law is very similar to those extant in the United States and interpretation would be relatively simple. The study recommended that a statement of conduct be promulgated, to which US citizens were expected to adhere. This statement would include the requirement to possess a proper identity card at all times, the necessity of complying with MP's to produce the card when requested, agreement to comply with MP requests to avoid off-limits areas and obey curfew regulations, a statement of understanding that MP's may apprehend and deliver to GVN authorities those who offend RVN laws, and the knowledge that MP's could escort from public view those persons committing certain public offenses, such as public drunkenness, brawling, destruction of private or public property, or openly lewd conduct. The study also recommended that employers and military agencies handling US support for otherwise qualified US civilians insure the insertion of a clause in the contracts of employment and in the extension of any US support, that the person would comply with the Ambassador's regulations as a condition of employment or receipt of the US support privileges. The study finally recommended that the MACV Provost Marshal prepare and publish an SOP clearly setting forth the procedures to be applied concerning civilians.<sup>272</sup>

(U) For reasons of clarity all US citizens were categorized as follows:

- Category I - US citizens employed directly by the US Government or any of its agencies.
- Category II - US citizens employed by private business firms, either foreign or US, under contract to the US Government or any of its associated agencies.

PAGE 180 OF 772 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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Category III - US citizens engaging in private endeavors within the RVN not under the direction or auspices of the US Government or any of its subordinate agencies. This included news media personnel and tourists. In a case where the particular status of US citizens was questionable, they would be considered Category III upon establishment of their US citizenship.

The Ambassador and COMUSMACV agreed that MP's would give information, advice, and assistance within their capabilities to all US military and civilian personnel in RVN. MP's could apprehend and temporarily detain all US personnel when necessary for the protection of human life and US property, or when the individual's public conduct reflected unfavorably on the prestige of the US. At the same time it was stressed that these procedures did not affect in any way the rights of US citizens under the constitution and laws of the United States, nor did they affect the jurisdiction of GVN courts and law enforcement officials over US citizens in RVN.

(U) Responsibilities of the US Embassy, US Forces Police, and the MACV Provost Marshal were established as follows:

1) The US Embassy would insure that all US civilians in-country were aware of the agreement which authorized US Forces Police to exercise certain police powers over them. It would arrange for each civilian to be issued an appropriate identification card. The Embassy would also furnish the MACV Provost Marshal current lists of agencies and names of persons to be contacted when US civilians were apprehended or detained.

2) US Forces Police would apprehend and/or detain US civilians under conditions of the agreement. They would use only minimum force to apprehend or detain and exercise discretion in the handling of all uncooperative subjects. Those suspects who refused to identify themselves would be turned over to GVN authorities and a full report made of the incident.

3) The MACV Provost Marshal would provide to all concerned, lists of agencies and names of persons to be contacted when US civilians were apprehended and would provide the Embassy a copy of all reports concerning the detention or apprehension of US civilians.

(U) Civilians taken into custody would be released as soon as possible on their own recognizance. However, in instances where such releases would be impractical, civilians in Categories I and II would be released to their immediate supervisor or his authorized representative—in the case of merchant seamen, this would be the Ship's Master or agent in-country. Those civilians as defined in Category

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III who did not have an immediate supervisor would be released to the Consulate at the US Embassy. Civilians in Category III who did have a supervisor would be released the same as Category I and II personnel.<sup>273</sup>

(U) On 4 August 1966 specific guidance concerning US Forces Police relations with news media was promulgated. This guidance provided that USFP would not exercise police jurisdiction over civilian press personnel who were working at their profession and normally would not curb their activities in any way. Press personnel would be allowed to move about freely without interference from MP's. By agreement with newsmen they would produce their identity card (MACV Press Card) when asked to do so. If a newsman refused, but stated verbally that he was a member of the press, his word would be accepted and he be allowed to proceed. In such a circumstance a report would be rendered immediately. If USFP should be performing duty in an official cordoned-off area, newsmen would be warned of any danger and allowed to proceed after being informed that they did so at their own risk. However, if there existed real danger US newsmen would not be allowed to proceed until safety conditions permitted.<sup>274</sup>

(S) The judicial application of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) to US civilians in RVN was discussed again in December 1966. The Department of State had asked whether the Mission Council believed it necessary to apply the UCMJ to US civilians employed by the US Government or one of its contractors. MACV SJA stated that, in his opinion, application of the UCMJ would be proper, referring to precedents in the Korean War, World War II, and World War I. The USAID legal advisor did not feel that the evil to be eradicated or diminished was so clear and present as to warrant such drastic action. The Ambassador stated that he would like to see the Code applied to US civilians in RVN. While some members of the council were against the proposal, most of them agreed with the Ambassador, but no further information was promulgated during the year.<sup>275</sup>

(S) During 1966 there was an increase in incidents involving US personnel, both military and civilian, and Vietnamese nationals, due to the rising troop strength. Often the English language newspapers in Saigon published accounts of altercations between US personnel and Vietnamese taxi drivers, bar owners, National Policemen, etc. Often these articles identified the violator only as foreigner or American, leaving to the reader's interpretation whether the American was military or civilian. It was assumed by some authorities that due to the preponderance of military personnel in the Saigon area, it was they to whom these articles referred. The Ambassador, therefore, discussed the conduct of troops in the Saigon area with COMUSMACV, once during May and again in the summer of 1966. It was the contention of the Ambassador that troop conduct was getting worse. COMUSMACV discussed this allegation with his staff and received strong denials based on personal

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inspections and review of incidents. The opinion was that the overwhelming majority of servicemen were extremely well behaved.

(S) COMUSMACV requested staff reaction to a proposed requirement that all troops wear the uniform at all times, with civilian clothes to be allowed only on R&R. The general reaction of the staff was favorable, the reasoning being that many incidents which were being attributed to the military, actually involved construction workers and other civilian personnel in-country; requiring the uniform would identify who was doing what to whom. A conference was held on 18 August to discuss the problem, but as a result of the conference there was no change in the off-duty uniform of military personnel.<sup>276</sup>

(U) COMUSMACV periodically published command letters on the subject of Standards of Conduct. In those letters to all commanders in RVN he stressed as particularly disturbing incidents involving US Military personnel and Vietnamese nationals. He repeatedly and emphatically stated that, "Commanders must continually stress the high standards of conduct expected of US military personnel. . . . Commanders must insure that all of their personnel are impressed with the seriousness of this problem, not only by written directives and messages, but also by frequent and repeated briefings. . . ." COMUSMACV reiterated that the Nine Rules set forth the guidelines for dealing with all Vietnamese, and that each individual must be made aware of these precepts. In COMUSMACV's view, those who ignored or violated them must be disciplined, promptly and appropriately. He further advised all commanders that they would bring this matter to the attention of all their personnel on a continuing basis and that he expected positive results and would accept nothing less.<sup>277</sup>

(U) As opposed to police control of US civilians, the administration of military justice for USMACV was cause for little concern at the beginning of 1966. Although a review of the court-martial rate during 1965 indicated a rising number of courts-martial at the end of the year, this was attributable to the rapid increase in the number of US troops arriving in RVN. At the end of the first six months of 1965 the average court-martial rate for all troops in RVN was 1.17 trials per thousand men. During the latter part of 1965 the average court martial rate increased to 2.03 per thousand men. Although this figure was still lower than the available figures for the world-wide Army rate (3.55 per thousand men) it was considerably higher than for the first portion of the year. A primary reason for this rise was the fact that personnel were no longer being individually screened prior to coming to RVN.

(U) Statistically the court-martial rate created no undue concern within the command during 1966. In fact, there was a definite decline in the rate of courts-martial toward the end of the year.<sup>278</sup>

PAGE 183 OF 772 PAGES

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UNCLASSIFIED

COURT-MARTIAL 1966

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Courts-Martial	490	360	499	596	593	583	700	639	659	738	654	820
Rate/thousand	2.58	1.39	2.24	2.41	2.27	2.15	2.57	2.08	2.06	2.10	1.8	2.10
DA/thousand	2.76	2.76	2.76	2.85	2.85	2.85	3.01	2.85	2.85	2.85	3.01	3.01

Criminal Acts Against Vietnamese

(U) The committing of offenses by US personnel against the Vietnamese steadily declined during the first quarter of 1966, but rose slightly during the second quarter. The general categories of this type of criminal offense were homicide, rape, assault, and larceny. There were also several instances of US guards shooting Vietnamese who were stealing from US installations. Traffic fatalities were included as a part of such offenses but were not normally considered as criminal acts, although this particular tragedy accounted for the majority of deaths occurring from all categories of incidents. Quick apprehension of US offenders and rapid dispensing of discipline in each case served to satisfy the Vietnamese sense of justice, and in the opinion of MACV SJA there was no substantial detriment to US-VN relations as a result of these incidents. To overcome any possible groundswell of adverse reaction to misconduct of US troops, SJA, in March, requested the GVN Minister of Justice to furnish a monthly report of incidents in which Vietnamese complained to their own police concerning the conduct of US personnel. These reports were to be used in conjunction with US reports to reveal any discrepancies and would afford a more valid estimate of the actual situation.<sup>279</sup>

(U) The number of serious cases, bar incidents, and offenses against the Vietnamese were relatively small in manner. Nevertheless, they warranted close attention and continued supervision. Vehicular accidents were a major cause of claims during the first nine months of 1966. Realizing the adverse effect this could have on US-GVN relations, the problem was watched closely and continued examinations of claims records was ordered by COMUSMACV to see if a recommendation for additional command emphasis on driver safety and training was called for.

CRIMINAL ACTS AGAINST VIETNAMESE<sup>280</sup>

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Serious		7	12	16	12	19	12	6	12	8	7	7
*Offenses & Incidents												
in Saigon/Cholon area.	118	52	69	67	unk	115	74	106	164	214	580	338
Traffic Fatalities		30	25	22	23	unk	20	26	16	22	13	14
Narcotic Incidents		11	11	8	6	4	4	12	9	10	13	10

\*Through October only bar incidents were included; commencing in November all offenses and incidents such as curfew, uniform, and pass/leave violations were included.

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Foreign Claims Against the US Government

(U) Foreign claims against the United States Government were of two types in Vietnam, combat claims and non-combat claims. The former was a responsibility of the GVN, but there were instances in which requests for compensation for damages, injuries, or death arose from combat-related incidents and were submitted to US authorities. Final action on all substantiated combat claims was taken by the GVN. Non-combat claims against the United States were processed and adjudicated by the Foreign Claims Commission located within the Office of the MACV SJA. By definition, non-combat foreign claims were requests for compensation for injury, death, or damage to property of an inhabitant of Vietnam, other than in combat, caused by US Armed Forces or civilian employees of the DOD in the commission of negligent, wrongful, or other acts involving fault. The primary purpose of COMUSMACV's policy in defining, processing, and settlement of claims by Vietnamese against the US Government, was to promote and maintain friendly relations through the prompt settlement of meritorious claims; proper implementation of these policies did much to foster the good will of the people and contributed to the success of the mission in Vietnam. Investigation of non-combat claims was a responsibility of each Service and local procedures were authorized and executed; final adjudication, however, was a MACV responsibility. 281

(C) The monthly number and details of foreign claims against the United States was as indicated below: 282

FOREIGN CLAIMS ACTIVITIES CY 1966

	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>	<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>
Claims on Hand												
1st of Month	352	361	339	350	384	367	476	439	602	440	437	417
Claims Received	<u>159</u>	<u>205</u>	<u>261</u>	<u>264</u>	<u>214</u>	<u>334</u>	<u>288</u>	<u>375</u>	<u>359</u>	<u>374</u>	<u>360</u>	<u>379</u>
Total	<u>511</u>	<u>566</u>	<u>600</u>	<u>614</u>	<u>598</u>	<u>701</u>	<u>764</u>	<u>814</u>	<u>961</u>	<u>814</u>	<u>797</u>	<u>796</u>
Disapproved	19	23	18	13	22	15	18	56	43	49	49	53
Approved	120	179	202	207	180	186	250	172	213	261	250	228
Other Disposition	11	25	30	10	29	24	57	73	46	67	27	36
On Hand End of Month	361	339	350	384	367	476	439	602	440	437	417	479
	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>						
Amount Claimed	\$20,495.09	35,611.01	66,883.85	53,235.26	69,084.29	77,974.68						
	<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>						
	83,962.56	89,106.75	100,208.59	149,156.12	148,156.12	105,172.44						

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<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>
Amount Approved \$17,398.83	30,288.93	45,848.77	45,645.07	42,804.90	63,959.88
<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>
42,272.89	26,758.22	47,333.31	60,969.91	53,897.33	56,340.49

Black Market

(C) During the critical buildup period from March 1965 to August 1966 the growing US logistical-support base was taxed to its limit as demands for supplies, services, and construction escalated rapidly. Exchange and commissary merchandise arrived, with other supplies and equipment, in ever-increasing quantities. As the supplies arrived, proper facilities had not become available to receive, warehouse, and secure them. Controls could not be instituted because of lack of port facilities, warehouses, and personnel for accounting and protecting the merchandise. Because of the shortage of MP's it became necessary to hire civilian guards to secure merchandise in various warehouses leased throughout Saigon. Ships were unloaded and supplies stored in any available area; Exchange items were sometimes stored in as many as 13 different locations. Exchange goods were moved from the port completely across the city in unguarded open-top vehicles to various storage compounds, where there was often a complete lack of security. The in-country transshipment of Exchange merchandise was often subjected to as many as three trips in unguarded vehicles; the result was almost constant loss and pilferage.

(C) Until 26 December 1965, the Navy provided Exchange and commissary support to all services in Vietnam. In April 1965 JCS approved the establishment of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service in Vietnam and on 26 December that activity assumed the responsibility for exchange operations. The establishment of a single over-all system was required because of the urgent need for expansion of Exchange service, the need for greater efficiency, and the fact that the A&AFES was the service that normally supported Army/Air Force units in a combat environment. Subsequent to A&AFES assumption of the Exchange responsibility, merchandise was concentrated at two facilities of the Vietnam Regional Exchange. Changes were made in the distribution system and a plan for Exchange supplies to be delivered to the major ports of Vietnam was initiated. Supplies were ordered based upon the percentage of personnel to be served from each port, eliminating some multiple handing and transshipment. All Exchange supplies were moved by government transportation to the depots, where they were received, stored, and issued to the sales outlet. Strict accounting procedures were instituted to preclude misappropriation and carelessness. When possible, merchandise was moved directly to selling outlets in the locked vans of the Exchange service. Other means of safeguarding merchandise were the use of standardized packs and shipping containers, protective shields on pallets to eliminate shipboard pilferage

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use of convoys, guards, and forewarning to depots of incoming shipments. Security fencing, covered storage, and MP details were provided; in the Saigon port area sentry dogs were used and Vietnamese civilian guards provided security at all installations. 283

(C) The Navy Exchange had indicated that intransit loss of exchange merchandise for 1965 was approximately 4.5 percent of \$50 million sales, or \$2.25 million for the year. A large portion of these losses had occurred during the last quarter of 1965 when the troop buildup was most rapid and movement and storages facilities were strained. As of 1 May 1966 the A&AFES had not conducted an inventory since the 26 December 1965 takeover from the Navy, and to cover any losses during the first six months of 1966 the A&AFES set aside four percent of sales. This amounted to \$400,000 per month and was considered to be sufficient to meet losses incurred during the transition period. It was estimated that pilferage losses for the first four months of 1966 would not exceed three percent, or \$1.1 million based on \$37 million sales. As the exchange was eminently better off in terms of security, storage, and control, it was estimated that the three percent pilferage rate would drop. 284

(C) Several steps were taken by COMUSMACV to prevent highly negotiable items from reaching the black market. At the beginning of 1966 the individual liquor ration was six bottles per month exclusive of wine. Early in 1966 this was reduced to three bottles per month, including wine, in the belief that this would reduce by 30 percent the liquor believed to be reaching the black market. In this connection, all commanders were directed to exercise strict control over the rate and use of alcoholic beverages. In some areas, such as the III MAF and 1st Cav. Div (AM), exchange did not sell liquor to individuals; all liquor in those areas was dispensed by one drink at clubs and messes. 285

(C) It was apparent at the time of the takeover by the A&AFES that the quantities of female items being brought into VN far exceeded the needs of the 700 authorized female patrons. Action was taken to reduce drastically shipments arriving during May 1966, and although the Exchange still handled female items, they were salable only to authorized female patrons. Other rationed items approved by the MACV Ration Control board were cigarettes, cameras, electric fans, record players, tuner amplifiers, movie projectors, slide projectors, radios, tape recorders, typewriters, TV sets, and watches. However, the receipt of these items during the summer was so small that it did not constitute as large a problem as anticipated. Beer also came under ration control during June, three cases being allowed per individual. The serial number of exchange items selling for \$10 and more were recorded on the sales slip and a copy forwarded to the nearest Provost Marshal for screening and investigation where warranted.

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(C) Black market activities and currency manipulation were matters of serious and continuing concern for COMUSMACV. At regularly-scheduled commanders' meetings he repeatedly stressed his concern in those areas to all commanders and sergeants major. Major points stressed included the dangers of increased opportunities for illegal operations in this environment; the importance of MP's and inspectors in the control of illegal practices; the need for all commanders to be especially alert for indications of illegal practices of all kinds, and the necessity for organizing a system of proper checks and balances to eradicate illegal practices. Commanders were reminded that in every war a certain moral deterioration occurs, and that they must counteract this tendency through their alertness, by setting the proper example, and by taking necessary actions to discourage that deterioration. COMUSMACV emphasized that he would not tolerate immoral practices, and wanted examples made of all violators; he repeatedly pointed out that the stakes were too high to gamble in those areas which could reflect so adversely on our efforts, and that all means at MACV's disposal would continue to be applied to control black market operations and suppress corrupt practices of all kinds.<sup>286</sup>

(U) On 8 November Saigon city officials announced that the sidewalk black market stands located on the main streets in downtown Saigon, would be removed by 17 November. Saigon newspapers indicated that the vendors were shocked at being informed that their flourishing businesses were illegal, and even further astounded that they had less than two weeks to dispose of their goods. The marketeers organized under-the-counter chamber of black commerce and openly petitioned city hall for a staying order, to hold back the crackdown until February. Premier Ky said nothing, but the marketeers of Saigon, a city which had learned to take vice in stride, interpreted the silence as agreement. This was in error. On 17 November the Vietnamese Combat Police moved in and smashed Saigon sidewalk black market shops, routing the dealers from their stands and burning piles of illegally-procured US goods. For more than a month the main streets of downtown Saigon were devoid of the numerous sidewalk black market stands, but a few days prior to Christmas they began to reappear. US-attributed items, possibly from the Commissary, PX, or saleroom, were interspersed sparsely among legitimate goods in several stands. Conspicuously absent was the large volume of such merchandise which had existed prior to 17 November; also absent were such high-value items as US-source watches, tape recorders, radios, and similar items available prior to the police cleanup. An objective estimate of all US-source merchandise displayed in the stands amounted to perhaps one percent of the former total. During a press conference in late November, COMUSMACV was asked, "Has the black market been curtailed?" He replied, "It has been greatly curtailed; however, it is a job that requires a continuing effort from all concerned."<sup>287</sup>

PAGE 188 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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### Corruption

(S) The problem of corruption within the RVN had been a matter of increasing concern to COMUSMACV for an extended period. He forwarded a personal memorandum on this subject to the Ambassador on 15 November, and provided CINCPAC with the text of the memo on 24 December. In addition to the many problem areas which had received the close attention of various US Mission Agencies, COMUSMACV noted, the omnipresent issue of corruption was being raised by several sources, the press in particular. Unsubstantiated allegations of corruptive practices had been made on numerous occasions, but the subject, as of November 1966, had not become a national issue in the US. However, press trends suggested that corruption, particularly among GVN officials, civilian and military, might well receive rather flamboyant national coverage. In order that the Mission would be in a sound posture when and if this possibility materialized, COMUSMACV suggested that the Embassy task a specific Mission agency to gather precise facts incident to corruption, and that these facts be analyzed closely with a view to developing appropriate remedial measures. As a parallel action COMUSMACV suggested that a complete study and review be made of the entire GVN pay structure, with the aim of consolidating what appeared, from a military standpoint, to be an unwieldy combination of base pay and numerous special allowances. 287A

(S) Within MACV, measures were already in progress to reduce the opportunities for payroll corruption. These actions included establishing precise strength-accounting procedures for all RVNAF units; checking the accuracy of payrolls to insure that all servicemen actually received the full amount of pay to which they were entitled; and precluding commanders from including deserters, deceased, or fictitious names on unit payrolls. MACV programs provided for regular inspections and verifications of the use of Ministry of Defense funds. On 8 December the Ambassador directed the establishment of an inter-agency committee to deal with the problem of corruption at top US level in Vietnam. The committee, composed of representatives of MACV, JUSPAO, CAS, and Embassy, and chaired by USAID, was responsible for examining corruption in all aspects, reporting to the Ambassador directly or through the Mission Council as appropriate, and making recommendations on how best to deal with diversion and corruption for both the US and GVN. The committee was to begin meeting early in 1967. 287B

### Currency Control

(U) Prior to 1 September 1965 US dollars were the medium of exchange in Vietnam. With the rapid buildup and attendant inflationary trend plus the increase of gold-flow from US sources, it became necessary to introduce Military Payment Certificates (MPC) as the only authorized medium of exchange in all US-sponsored activities. Effective 1 September 1965 all military personnel were paid only in MPC, and all US currency in

PAGE 129 OF 872 PAGES

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the hands of the troops was collected by Agent Officers who in turn exchanged it for MPC and returned it to the individual concerned. The introduction of MPC reduced currency manipulation and simplified control. Initial problems in making sufficient piaster conversion points available were eliminated, and piaster conversion points operating on a 24-hour basis were established at all ports. Generally, all civilian firms dealt only with MPC and piasters. When a firm did receive funds or profit, a check was made out by the appropriate US fund-generating agency and mailed directly to COMUS. No US dollar instrument was authorized to flow within RVN.<sup>288</sup>

(U) As a result of evidence indicating black marketing in US Postal Money Orders, COMUSMACV implemented a number of control procedures during early 1966. Personnel were not authorized purchase of money orders in excess of the amount of pay drawn each month. A new MACV form was developed, recording name and address of payee and purchase; forms were forwarded to MACV FM for review and investigation if warranted. The US community was advised that excess purchases of money orders would be reported to IRS. IRS recommended development of a treasury check similar to a PMO which would be non-negotiable outside the US. And finally, GVN law-enforcement agencies conducted operations to assist in control of illegal money transactions.<sup>289</sup>

(U) In addition to regulatory controls to discourage and prevent black market activities, it was necessary to institute programs directing troop-savings into US channels rather than to the economy of RVN. By so doing it was hoped the inflationary impact of the US buildup could be kept to a minimum. COMUSMACV directed that a reporting system be devised to present monthly the status of the anti-inflationary actions taken within the command. The report was designed to measure and portray graphically the following programs:

- 1) Savings Bond Program.
- 2) Special action to increase troop savings.
- 3) US facilities expansion program.
- 4) Status of Banking facilities.
- 5) Exchange sales per capita.
- 6) In-country R&R program.
- 7) Out-of-country R&R program.
- 8) Per capita piaster sales.

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- 9) Per capita MFC sales.
- 10) Per capita money order sales.
- 11) Per capita treasury check sales.

Through this report it was expected that COMUSMACV could keep abreast of the anti-inflationary program and determine if the items were serving the intended purpose.<sup>290</sup>

#### Narcotics and Marijuana

(C) In September COMUSMACV informed the American Embassy by memorandum that a survey had been completed in the Saigon/Cholon/Tan Son Nhut area to determine the availability of narcotics and marijuana to US forces. The survey indicated that the Vietnamese law is not well defined; that there is no effective central narcotics-enforcement agency; and that existing laws and statutes are not enforced vigorously. There was no apparent GVN control over the sale of marijuana, and only limited control over opium. Marijuana was being procured in cigarettes and bulk form, opium in liquid and solid form, and morphine in vial form. In the Saigon area, 29 outlets were identified. In addition, marijuana and opium could be purchased from pedicabs, cyclo drivers, proprietors, employees and patrons of hotels at bars and private residences.

(C) During FY 66 a total of 100 cases (96 marijuana) involving 167 US forces personnel were investigated throughout Vietnam. From 1 July 1966 to mid-September investigations had been initiated in 24 cases (22 marijuana) involving 54 US forces personnel. COMUSMACV stated that the availability of narcotics and marijuana to the members of our forces was a matter of concern. He believed this situation warranted formal representation to the GVN urging improved control and enforcement procedures. On 12 November COMUSMACV referred to his memorandum of 15 September and asked to be advised of the status of this action at the Mission Coordinator's earliest convenience, but by year's end no definitive action had been taken.<sup>291</sup>

#### Physical Security of US Personnel and Installations

(C) As in the previous year, physical security of US personnel and installations was a major problem in 1966, and was compounded by the troop buildup in urban areas in general and in Saigon/Cholon area in particular. The 89th MP Gp continued to provide security support throughout RVN. One of its subordinate elements, the 716th MP Bn, was under the operational control of Headquarters Support Activity Saigon

PAGE 141 OF 172 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(HEDSUPPORT), remaining under control of its successor, US Army Headquarters Area Comd (USAHAC), after 1 April 1966. The primary mission of the 716th MP Bn and attached units (527th MP Co, assigned to the battalion 8 September 1966; 90th MF Det; and Co C, 524 Inf, attached on 16 December 1966) was security and law enforcement in the Saigon/Cholon/Tan Son Nhut area. Specific security missions included BOQ's, BEQ's, the US Embassy, critical US facilities and installations, and the Saigon port. The port security mission was handled by the 300th MP Co, 92nd MP Bn, in support of the FM, 4th Terminal Comd. The law enforcement mission involved normal military police functions, including criminal investigation. Most 716th MP Bn personnel were employed in securing critical US installations, activities, and billets. To improve the security of fixed guard posts, USAHAC engineers began construction of reinforced concrete booths (kiosks), consisting of an 8-inch thick concrete semi-circle with a supported metal roof. This gave the guard excellent chest-high protection against small arms fire and good protection against Claymore or similar type explosive devices. Furthermore, the kiosk provided adequate protection from the weather and was virtually maintenance-free. As of 31 December 1966, 102 booths had been emplaced, with future planning calling for an increase to 200.<sup>292</sup>

(C) Previous encounters with terrorists had proven the need for MP personnel to achieve and maintain fire superiority. To this end the 716th MP Bn employed machine gun patrols, operational during the critical hours 2300 - 0700 daily. Each vehicle (1/4 ton M-151), with the windshield removed and replaced by a single layer of sandbags, was manned by two MP's, the rider armed with an M-60 machine gun, and the driver, an M-16 rifle. These vehicles, mounting AN/VRC-10 radios, were assigned to patrol specific areas within metropolitan Saigon/Cholon; they were capable of providing almost instant fire support to static guard posts within their area, or to respond to calls from adjacent areas. With their extreme mobility, erratic patrol patterns, and firepower capability, the gun jeeps were a constant threat to the terrorists and success of their activities.<sup>293</sup>

#### The Threat to Saigon

(C) The Viet Cong Military Region T4, or Saigon Special Zone (SSZ), was composed of five VC districts. The enemy main force in the SSZ consisted of two--possibly three--separate battalions, under operational control of Regiment 165A, with headquarters in the Tay Ninh area. All battalions were known to be understrength, with only 250-400 per battalion; a large number of personnel were known to be women. In addition to the infantry battalions there was a reconnaissance company, a transport company, a security guard company, and an 81-mm mortar company available for duty. Also in the SSZ were approximately five battalions and one company of local forces, located in each of the five VC districts surrounding Saigon. The activated strengths of the

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local forces were approximately 7,200. In addition to the combat units there were believed to be five "A" and four "B" sapper teams operating in the Saigon area. "A" teams were hit-and-run terrorist organizations. "B" teams operated in the city of Saigon under a legal cover, bombing, assassinations, kidnapping, and giving aid to "A" teams when the latter operated in the city. Both type teams had the capability to attack and occupy targets, although not for extended periods.<sup>294</sup>

(S) Operations conducted by main force and local force units during the year had been by reinforced companies or less and had avoided contact with larger forces. The VC maintained a consistently high incident rate in the SSZ. The majority of the personnel in these forces were native to the area and knew it well; many had legal cover and there were increasing efforts by the VC to obtain legal cover for all personnel, which would enable them to move throughout the area almost at will. Great emphasis had been placed by the VC on the political reliability of personnel in the sapper and reconnaissance units and as a consequence they had a high percentage of party members and were intended as an elite group. They had had first priority for personnel since they started their expansion in July 1965.<sup>295</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV accepted that the VC had the capability to attack throughout the SSZ in up to battalion strength, to interdict LOC's in and out of Saigon, to attack Tan Son Nhut and Bien Hoa airfields, to conduct harassing and bombing attacks in Saigon, and to infiltrate in and out of Saigon at will. Although the VC had freedom of movement as individuals generally throughout the Saigon area, friendly operations were a threat to bases and semi-permanent installations such as region headquarters and supply dumps. The VC were forced to relocate their hospital to Tay Ninh Province because of the threat posed by RVNAF operations in the region. The battalions and the four "A" units had been forced generally to set up bases on the edge or just outside the region. The VC movement was dependent upon the political cadre for direction and support; this cadre, to be effective, had to remain in place and hence was vulnerable to identification and elimination.<sup>296</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV took the position that the RVNAF was responsible for the defense of the Capital Military District (CMD), which included Saigon, Cholon, TSN Air Base, the port of Saigon, Nha Be POW storage area, and MACV HQ buildings and billets. For this function, RVNAF forces available included ARVN battalions, RF battalions and PF platoons. However, in the case of TSN Air Base, the USAF, USA, and VNAF were responsible for their own internal security and protection of their own resources. US MP's, in coordination with RVN National and Military Police, provided guards at all US installations.<sup>297</sup>

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Terrorism

(C) VC terrorism of Vietnamese was well established. The technique was employed early in the insurgency as a device for disposing of GVN adherents, eliminating GVN support, eroding GVN control, and dominating the local populace. Terrorism was employed by the enemy in disputed and GVN-secured areas. Generally, terrorism directed against FVMAF had been limited to the use of explosives, including hand grenades and Claymore mines. Reported instances of ambushes were probably intended not so much for terrorist purposes as for enforcing territorial control and interdicting LOC's. A primary means of implementing VC terrorism was the kidnapping and assassination of local GVN officials. Most frequent targets for assassination were hamlet and village chiefs and other low-level officials. The evident objects of this program were to reduce public confidence in GVN protective abilities and to make recruitment of capable officials difficult. Many hostile activities were inter-related in purpose, and, of these, terror was the most illustrative. The bombing of a US billet, for example, reduced the confidence of the population in the GVN to maintain order and security. It was intended to demonstrate to the population, too, that the GVN's military ally was unable to protect his own billets. It also, of course, killed and wounded Americans. Whatever deleterious effect billet-bombing had on US morale was a bonus effect.<sup>298</sup>

(C) From 1 January to 31 December 1966, there were 37,092 VC incidents directed against US/GVN/FVMAF in RVN, including 414 persons assassinated and 587 persons kidnapped. Many of the casualties were the result of grenades thrown by enemy terrorists. In many instances, Vietnamese civilians were killed and wounded by terrorists in the enemy attempts on US personnel. Communist terrorist activities operated on the principle that "it was better to kill ten innocent people than to let one enemy escape."<sup>299</sup>

(S) As brought out in the Mission Council in late December 1966, terrorists functioned as an arm of a political underground movement and it appeared that terrorism in Saigon was generated by a rather large organization. For some reason, either for profit or because of orders, action was not taken by the VC on all available targets. Considering the size of the target US personnel presented, the Deputy Ambassador noted that perhaps American personnel were reserved as a particular target against the day when the VC would need one.<sup>300</sup>

Examples of VC Terrorism

(C) On 6 January a claymore mine was detonated at the main gate of Tan Son Nhut airfield, killing one Vietnamese and wounding five

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Vietnamese and five Americans. On 31 January the VC detonated two charges at a US BEQ in Dalat, killing one American, wounding ten Americans and one Vietnamese; one American was listed as missing. In another act of terror the VC detonated two claymore mines outside the JGS compound gate in Gia Dinh, killing 12 and wounding 54 Vietnamese on 17 February 1966. On 27 April, a claymore mine exploded in Gia Dinh, killing nine Koreans and two Vietnamese and wounding nine and two respectively; the Koreans were laborers employed by RMK. On 10 May, in confused firing after the VC exploded a mine near the Brink BOQ in Saigon, five Vietnamese were killed, 21 Vietnamese and eight Americans were wounded.<sup>301</sup>

(C) In other acts of terror in RVN, on the 11th of August an explosive device was detonated at the US MP firing range of Binh Tri Dong. One company of the 716th MP Bu was on the firing range, and the result was two MP's killed and 17 wounded. In the city of Hue an explosive device was set off during a fair on 17 August. The device consisted of approximately two kilos of explosive material and was thrown or placed on the roof of an eating establishment; the explosion and panic which followed resulted in 26 Vietnamese killed and 150-200 wounded. On 18 August VC attacks on US vehicles in Saigon resulted in four Americans killed and five wounded. The VC hit the Da Nang NCO club on 20 August with hand grenades; ten Americans and two Vietnamese were wounded from this action. Again in the city of Hue, 26 Vietnamese were wounded from an explosion on 6 September, when the VC threw explosives into a crowd of local inhabitants who were gathered for a lecture regarding the elections of the constituent assembly.<sup>302</sup>

(C) On 17 October a VC terrorist threw a hand grenade into the back door of a crowded movie house in Quang Tri City; four ARVN were killed, 50 ARVN and 20 civilians were wounded. Again on 17 October, at 0640 hours a claymore mine exploded approximately 50 meters north-east of the Ky Son BEQ in Saigon; one US and one Vietnamese were killed, with seven US and two Vietnamese wounded; the VC-type claymore mine had been planted on a bicycle and aimed toward the BEQ. On 30 October the Vietnamese National Police captured a VC demolition team in Saigon. After interrogation the team led them to a cache of 1,746 blocks of TNT and 10 weapons. This led to an increased alert at all US billets. At 2155 hours 30 October, at the Capitol BEQ (which had received intelligence that it was to be hit) a taxi stopped in front of the building. The taxi failed to move after a whistle signal and warning shots were fired; the MP then opened fire, wounding a passenger, a VNAF pilot. On 18 October, a VC terrorist threw a grenade toward a group of US officers near a BOQ in Saigon; five were wounded.<sup>303</sup>

(C) In terrorist activity during National Day Ceremonies on 1 November, Saigon came under attack at 0710 hours from approximately 12 rounds of 75-mm RR fire near Kennedy Square and Le Loi Circle.

PAGE 195 OF 872 PAGES

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Again at 0845 hours Saigon was hit with approximately 12 rounds of 75-mm RR fire. As a result of these attacks 13 Vietnamese and one US were killed, five US and 32 Vietnamese were wounded.<sup>304</sup>

(C) In Binh Duong Province on 18 November, two VC terrorists disguised as Government Information Service Agents put a musical instrument containing a mine in the Information Service Office. Seven Vietnamese were wounded. In Saigon on 4 December 1966, a 20-25 pound satchel charge exploded on a roof of a building in the USAID compound. Eleven US were wounded as a result of this attack.<sup>305</sup>

#### Measures Against Terrorist Attacks

(U) There was some thought by US officials that an effective community relations program would be enhanced by removing the barriers in front of US installations. On 25 March the CO of HEDSUPFACT, who until 1 April 1966 was responsible for security in the Saigon metropolitan area, held a press conference at which he discussed security of US billets in the Saigon/Cholon area. He stated that although security was a major concern, his policy was not to block streets or sidewalks unnecessarily, so he had ordered all barbed wire removed from US buildings in the area. "An extra six feet does not make much difference when a bomb goes off," he noted; "we're not afraid of the VC, and we're going to let him know it."<sup>306</sup>

(C) On 1 April the Victoria BOQ was bombed by a VC terrorist squad using a small truck with 450 pounds of plastique. The truck was lodged adjacent to the front entrance of the BOQ when the explosion occurred. A short but violent gunfight preceded the bombing. Casualties for the action included three US MP's killed, three Vietnamese killed and 107 Americans, three Australians, and six Vietnamese wounded.<sup>307</sup>

(S) After this serious incident, less consideration was given to Vietnamese sensitivities concerning steps to be taken for the protection of US facilities. COMUSMACV directed CG HAC to take immediate, positive action to provide increased security of US billets in the Saigon/Cholon area. Among the steps to be considered were: stationing marksmen at concealed vantage points, use of flood lights, substitution of acetate for glass in windows, and use of more effective types of weapons. He directed that attacks such as the one on the Victoria BOQ be analyzed in an effort to determine the tactics, time frame, and other pertinent factors, to assist in developing appropriate countermeasures. COMUSMACV further stated that whatever equipment or supplies were needed would be procured on a priority basis from COMUS.<sup>308</sup>

PAGE 196 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) In anticipation of assuming the physical security function for the greater Saigon area from HEDSUPPORT, EAC had initiated in March an extensive study concerning physical security of billets. The purpose of this study was not only to improve existing security but to take a fresh look at the entire physical security system. The conclusion reached was that terrorist attacks could be prevented by applying active and passive measures in a centrally controlled and integrated program. The results would be proportionate to the investment of personnel, equipment, and material. After the bombing of the Victoria and the COMUSMACV guidance given above, the initiation of the study recommendations was accelerated, including roving jeep patrols with mounted M60 machine guns, an improved program of shifting personnel to critical areas, based on intelligence, and the use of greater variety of small arms on MP posts to replace the shotgun which had been previously used by US MP personnel. The HAC program also called for billet occupants to perform security functions under the direction of a designated senior occupant.<sup>309</sup>

#### Port and Shipping Security

(S) Security for shipping and ports in RVN was a continual problem area for the command. Against a threat which could be articulated in a variety of ways at the enemy's own choice of time and place, elaborate measures were instituted to provide the necessary security. CG III MAF was responsible for security of US shipping in I CTZ. In Da Nang harbor, stringent security measures were in effect. One Coast Guard WFB conducted a nightly patrol off the beaches, while a Seventh Fleet destroyer conducted a nightly patrol of harbor entrances. Two patrol boats were stationed in the harbor at all times, and two 45-foot picket boats patrolled the harbor 24 hours a day. The Harbor Entrance Control elements conducted radar, seismic, and visual surveillance. Two VNN vedettes patrolled nightly with USMC liaison personnel aboard. Underwater Demolition Teams (UDT) and Explosive Ordnance Demolition (EOD) personnel were available if required. Anti-swimmer nets were installed. Guards were placed on US-flag vessels if requested by the master. Armed guards and barricades were placed at entrance to piers, landing ramps, and staging areas 24 hours a day; extra guards were placed at ammunition offloading points. A jeep patrol was in operation between waterfront guard sites.<sup>310</sup>

(S) CG USARV was responsible for security of shipping in II, III and IV CTZ's, including Saigon/Nha Be, Vung Tau, Qui Nhon, Cam Ranh Bay, and Nha Trang. The 92d MP Bn was committed to the mission of general support for vessel and port security along the Saigon River from Vung Tau to Saigon. The battalion was responsible for providing security teams for MSTs and US-flag ships entering Vung Tau and those in transit, via the Saigon River, to Saigon or Nha Be and returning. Security teams

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were responsible for safeguarding vessels, cargoes, and storage facilities within the Saigon port area; escorting of supplies and equipment from the port area to storage facilities outside the confines of Saigon port; and for operating harbor patrol boats at Nha Be and Saigon port. The following security measures were taken: MP guards were placed on all MSTIS ships transiting the rivers between Vung Tau and Saigon and while these ships were in the above ports. US guards traveled on the Japanese-manned LST's transiting the Mekong and Bassac Rivers. During the transit between Vung Tau and Saigon, US ships were escorted ahead and astern by VNN boats. The main ship channel was swept for mines twice daily by the VNN. Air cover was provided when designated critical ships transited between Vung Tau and Saigon, or on the Mekong-Bassac Rivers. RVNAF Forces were on alert in areas where ships were transiting. MP's were stationed on board moored MSTIS-controlled ships and periodically detonated grenades overboard to discourage enemy underwater activities. Six harbor craft manned by MP's were on constant patrol in the port of Saigon. All US ships were informed of the dangers of sabotage upon arrival in RVN. All MSTIS-controlled ships were required to floodlight the waterline when in port, and floodlighting was recommended for all US merchant ships. Piers were examined underwater and grenades were detonated at berths prior to the mooring of US ships.<sup>311</sup>

(FOUO) In order to reach the port of Saigon, ocean-going ships had to transit the Long Tao River from Vung Tau to Saigon. On either side of the river between the two terminals was the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ) which had been an enemy base area and a sanctuary for over 20 years. In 1966 one of the objectives of the VC in the RSSZ apparently was interdiction of allied shipping.<sup>312</sup>

(FOUO) The threat to friendly shipping on the main ship channel to Saigon was intensified during the latter part of February by the VC attack on the SS Lorinda, a Panamanian flag PCG-3 vessel, on 27 February, approximately 15 km SE of Nha Be. For approximately ten minutes the VC attacked with 7.62-mm and .30 cal. small arms fire, an unknown type MG, and a 57-mm RR from the west bank of the channel. Ten 57-mm RR rounds impacted on the boat and three seamen were wounded, including the master. The ship went aground, but was later refloated and proceeded to Saigon. On 3 March, the Paloma, a self-propelled oil barge flying the VN flag, was attacked by MG and 57-mm RR three km from where the Lorinda was attacked. The Paloma received five hits around the waterline and was towed to Saigon. To counter this threat, on 25 March COMUSMACV launched Operation JACKOTAY (See Chapter V) in order to nullify the enemy threat to shipping.<sup>313</sup>

PAGE 198 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) On 26 May, at the Nha Be anchorage approximately 5 km SE of Saigon, the Panamanian freighter Eastern Mariner suffered an explosion from a probably underwater mine, causing an eight-inch hole on the starboard side and a ten-inch hole on the port side; the ship settled by the stern but did not block the fairway. On the same day the 250-foot merchantman Mile Dalmar in the same area was hit by an explosion believed to be from a mine attached to the anchor chain; no damage resulted from this explosion. Later in the day a mine was discovered attached to the anchor chain of the US ammunition carrier SS Lady of Peace anchored at Nha Be. Navy EOD personnel estimated that the mine contained approximately 100 pounds of explosive.<sup>314</sup>

(S) On 23 August 1966, the MSTIS freighter Baton Rouge Victory hit a mine, believed to be command-detonated, on the Long Tao River in the RSSZ. The explosion caused heavy damage on the port side of the engine room. The ship subsequently sank after being maneuvered to the north bank of the river. Her tonnage consisted of vehicles, four IBM computers, 500 pallets of PX supplies, and general cargo. As a result of this action seven US personnel were killed and three wounded.<sup>315</sup>

(C) In the RSSZ on the Long Tao River, 27 km SE of Saigon on 22 September, a USN minesweeper was hit in the pilot house by fire from a 57-mm RR while on a routine patrol, killing one US and wounding five. On 2 October the VC mined and sank a VNN LCM, killing three US and wounding ten US and five VNN. Also on 2 October the VC sabotaged two Vietnamese vessels. The first, a river assault group (RAG) gunboat, was sunk by an explosive charge that was hung over the side and detonated; a USN advisor stated that it appeared a VC agent had been on board, as an individual who was not a regular crew member was missing after the mining. The second incident, not in the RSSZ, was an explosion aboard a VNN vessel anchored in My Tho harbor; evidence indicated that the explosive device was placed inside the ship. The ship was carrying Vietnamese nationals in training for the Olympic swimming team; after the explosion, one of the swimmers was missing and was believed to have been the saboteur. These were the first known incidents in which the VC were able to board VNN ships and successfully perpetrate sabotage missions. On 4 October a VNN gunboat was mined on the Dan Zay River in the RSSZ; it broke into five pieces and sank, killing the entire crew of three Vietnamese. The craft had been transporting elements of the 4th US Div in Operation BATON ROUGE. On 7 October, the VC placed mortar fire on a USN LCM, wounding 16. On 1 November the VC detonated a mine in the Long Tao River, sinking a USN minesweeper; four US were wounded and two missing. These incidents, and the mining of the Baton Rouge Victory, indicated that the VC had the capability of interdicting any type of craft or ship in the navigable channels of the RSSZ, at the time and place of their choosing. COMUSMACV reported the VC unit probably responsible for these incidents was the 225th Amphibious Sapper Bn, with a reported strength of 400 men.<sup>316</sup>

PAGE 199 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) On 31 December, a US minesweeper discovered a Russian-made contact mine in the Long Tac Channel. The mine contained 500 pounds of TNT, was  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter and 52 inches long; the anchor cable appeared to have been cut and it was drifting with the current when discovered. US Navy EOD personnel disarmed the mine. This was the first discovery of a Russian-made mine in the area of the RSSZ; this was also the first known use of a contact mine. The availability of contact mines to the enemy in any significant quantities represented a marked increase in the threat to shipping in the RSSZ.<sup>317</sup>

(S) The disabling of the Panamanian freighter, and the discovery of additional mines affixed to the anchor chains of other vessels, forced a reappraisal of GVN and US port security measures. CG USARV was assigned responsibility for all matters pertaining to port security. The specific task for port security of Nha Be and Saigon ports was further assigned to CG 1st Log Command. To assist and advise the CG 1st Log Command, COMUSMACV requested USCG personnel trained in port security. These personnel would be utilized in determining port security requirements, coordinating input of personnel and equipment of the participating commands, and monitoring the readiness posture of port security units.<sup>318</sup>

#### Security of the Nha Be Tank Farm

(S) In January 1966, USAF Secretary Harold Brown visited RVN and became concerned about the security of the Nha Be POL storage facilities, ten miles south of Saigon on the Saigon River. During a briefing at the then 2nd Air Div, the Secretary asked why the tank farm at Nha Be had not been attacked by the VC; one suggestion was that US air power had not attacked similar facilities in NVN. CJCS had indicated an apparent tendency in Washington to cite the Nha Be vulnerability as a reason for not striking the Haiphong POL facilities.<sup>319</sup>

(S) MACV had been analyzing the effect on friendly operations if Nha Be were lost to enemy action. COMUSMACV admitted that the VC had the capability in January 1966 of destroying 50 percent of the tank farm, but felt that this would not have a detrimental effect on US combat operations and by 1 April even 100 percent destruction could be accepted; he recommended to CJCS and CINCPAC the maximum use of this analysis in future targeting plans with reference to NVN's POL facilities. Nevertheless, CINCPAC was apprehensive about the relatively small forces assigned to the defense of Nha Be, and requested a reassessment to determine if additional forces were required. Although COMUSMACV had stated that the loss of the tank farm could be absorbed, CINCPAC felt that any loss would be hard to replace and that the psychological repercussions resulting from the loss would be serious.<sup>320</sup>

PAGE 200 OF 872 PAGES

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(5) Sharing CINCPAC's concern, COMUSMACV took continued action to improve the defense and security of Nha Be area. MP's were assigned to provide three daylight water patrols and as many as six, augmented by USN PBR's, during periods of increased tension. USN forces conducted minesweeping and hull-bottom searches daily. MP's were stationed on anchored shipping. POL facility security forces were increased from three to four RF companies, counter-mortar radar was installed, and an armed helicopter team and one surveillance aircraft were airborne during daylight hours. Artillery support was provided by five 105-mm and one 155-mm howitzer platoons, one at Nha Be and the remainder elsewhere in the CMD; H&I fires were scheduled nightly. Increased patrols and ambushes were conducted, and the JGS took action to improve coordination of security operations by placing all security forces associated with Nha Be under operational control of the Nha Be Sensitive Area Commander. While it was felt that these measures would improve the situation, 100 percent security could not be guaranteed for Nha Be.321

#### Airfield Security

(C) Enemy attacks on friendly airfields were numerous during 1966. These attacks normally occurred after midnight, during periods of poor lunar illumination, and were executed by small teams of VC with mortars, and/or RR. The enemy operated with good intelligence and the apparent cooperation, either willing or coerced, of the local population located in their avenue of advance on the airfields. MACJ2 felt that the most creditable successes achieved by the VC in 1966 were their attacks against airfields.

(C) The first enemy attack on a friendly airfield in 1966 was on 25 January, when 20 81-mm mortar rounds landed on Da Nang AB near the billeting area. One US airman was killed and six were wounded, but there was little material and no aircraft damage. On 20 February, the VC attacked An Khe airfield with 150 rounds of 82-mm mortar fire. Seven US were killed, 51 wounded, and eight CH-47 (Chinook) helicopters damaged in this attack; although the defenders were supported by a flareship, the only apparent enemy casualties were four VC killed. On the same evening the enemy attacked Binh Thuy airfield in Quang Dinh Province. An agent had warned that the VC planned to attack Binh Thuy during the period 10-20 February, and as a result, no US personnel were casualties and only one U-10 aircraft, three trucks, and a POL tank were damaged. Two Vietnamese were killed and six wounded, in addition to two sentry dogs killed.322

(S) In the early morning hours of 13 April, the enemy infiltrated the defenses of Tan Son Nhut (TSN) airbase and placed 82-mm mortar and 57-mm RR fire on US aircraft and personnel. This attack was well planned, and it appeared that both weapons and ammunition might have been pre-positioned prior to the attack. No prior information about the attack had been available, and there was considerable confusion and a slow

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reaction by the base defense. Casualties included seven US killed, 135 US wounded, 14 ARVN wounded, four aircraft destroyed, 56 aircraft damaged, and 400,000 gallons of fuel lost.<sup>323</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV directed that increased emphasis be placed on surveillance, illumination, counterbattery, and patrolling at all airbases. However, it was re-emphasized that base defense was an RVNAF responsibility as far as the outer perimeter was concerned. COMUSMACV also directed CG II FFORCEV to undertake a war game and survey of artillery support at TSN, which was accomplished in early August and the findings forwarded to COMUSMACV and to DSA III Corps. As a result, additional security measures were put into effect at TSN. Two additional RVNAF battalions were added to the outer defense belt, bringing the total to three; each battalion established a quick-reaction force for response in its assigned area, and communications with these forces from the TOC and CMD were improved. The perimeter fence was completely refurbished and strengthened, and a perimeter lighting system was to be installed as soon as necessary materials were available. Old French mine-fields were replaced, and a joint-defense CP was designed. MACV provided all available resources to aid in the rapid development of this defense program. US units located on TSN provided interior guard coverage of the US facilities and surveillance of all other areas. A quick-reaction force was immediately available with a sizeable back-up force, and US and RVNAF were inter-connected with both land-line and radio communications. Starlite-scope night-viewing devices were issued to US security forces, a countermortar radar unit provided a limited detection capability, and fifty US sentry dog teams were employed on the base each night. Although considerable improvement was realized, COMUSMACV reported that TSN Air Base remained vulnerable to mortar attack because of the built-up areas and density of population in the immediate vicinity. In an attempt to offset this problem, an active psywar program was undertaken, while saturation patrols and ambush points operated each night in the outer defense belt.<sup>324</sup>

(S) On 20 April, an estimated 15 VC penetrated An Khe airfield, and damaged two C-130's with satchel charges. In a VC mortar attack on the New Fledku airfield, light damage and casualties resulted on 22 April. On 18 May Soc Trang airfield was fired upon by 82-mm mortar and 75-mm RR; losses included one aircraft destroyed and nine others lightly damaged. A friendly reaction force was dispatched, resulting in 41 VC killed and five captured. On 22 June the VC attacked the airbase at Soc Trang, for the sixth time in nine months, with an estimated 20 rounds of 75-mm RR fire, three O-1E's were damaged, one UH-1D destroyed, 16 UH-1D's damaged, and three US wounded. The VC again hit Binh Thuy airbase on 7 July with an estimated 40 rounds of 81-mm mortar; casualties were one US AP killed and four US wounded. One B-43 was destroyed, and two B-43's and one C-47 were

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damaged. Again, as in the case of the 20 February attack on Binh Thuy, the base was warned ahead of time that an attack was to take place.<sup>325</sup>

(C) In an attack on 22 July, the VC attacked the Quang Ngai airfield with 81-mm mortar fire; five US were killed and one wounded. On 23 July in Quang Nam Province the VC attacked Marble Mountain air facility, Da Nang and the naval hospital located adjacent to the base with approximately 30 rounds of 81-mm mortar. Casualties were 17 wounded from the hospital, ten from the airbase. Aircraft damaged included nine O-1E's, three U-1A (Otter) three UH-1D's, two UH-1E's, three UH-1B's, two U-6A's (Beavers) and one CH-34. On 28 August the VC attacked the Vinh Long airfield with seven rounds of 75-mm RR fire, damaging seven helicopters. Four US were killed and 61 wounded in a 3 September attack on the support area of Camp Radcliff (1st Cav Div) by approximately 40 82-mm mortar rounds; 19 H-13, 11 CH-47 and 47 UH-1 were damaged or destroyed in this attack.<sup>326</sup>

(C) Indications were that the VC/NVA were planning to increase the number of attacks against airfields in the RVN. Intelligence reports from II, III, and IV Corps reflected that the VC had specifically targeted airfields at TSN, Bien Hoa, Da Nang, Marble Mountain, Vung Tau, Binh Thuy, Pleiku and Long An. The reports indicated that these attacks might be in retaliation for the bombing of the Hanoi and Haiphong oil-storage facilities by US aircraft on 29 June.<sup>327</sup>

(C) Three detailed maps of Da Nang airbase were discovered during search of a house in Da Nang in late September. The most detailed map showed all buildings and roads on the base, as well as the surrounding area, and was keyed with 40 numbers and descriptions of such key areas as the VNAF headquarters, communications towers, flight line, and alert crew quarters. Documents and captives indicated Da Nang, Chu Lai, and TSN as targets for destruction at all cost. MACV J2 believed that an attack on these bases, if timed to coincide with major contact in the field, could reduce and disrupt friendly reaction capabilities.<sup>328</sup>

(C) On 21 September Chu Lai airfield received approximately 15 to 30 rounds of mortar fire; 16 US were wounded and eight aircraft were damaged. The next day Hammond airfield was attacked with an estimated 20-30 rounds of 60-mm mortar fire, small arms, and automatic weapons. One US was killed and 25 wounded; 15 aircraft were damaged in this attack. On 18 October an unknown number of VC fired small arms, set off claymore mines and launched grenades into the 173d Abn Bde base near Bien Hoa. Two US were killed, 12 wounded, and one UH-1B destroyed.<sup>329</sup>

(C) TSN airbase was attacked again on 4 December; an estimated 35 VC penetrated the perimeter and attacked the base with small arms and

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mortar fire. The results of this attack were three US killed, 29 US and two Vietnamese wounded. Five C-47's, one C-121, two RB-57's, two RF-101's, four P2V's, one RF-4C, and three CG-3C's were damaged. The VC lost 31 killed and four captured, along with their weapons. The COC summed up the attack on TSN in the following manner: "brunt of highly successful ground operations borne by US Air Force with close air support furnished by the US Army."<sup>330</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV reported to the Mission Council on 5 December that from the VC point of view the attack on TSN had been a dismal failure and an expensive effort for the communists. The reaction by the defending forces had been excellent, and artillery and air strikes were rapid. COMUSMACV believed that the reason there had not been greater attacks was due to the MSS and Special Branch Police, who had been picking up members of terrorists and other elements of the VC infrastructure. COMUSMACV stated that while efforts toward greater security must continue, he did not share the concern expressed by others in the Mission. He felt that the US was getting on top of the situation, and that TSN had actually proved to be a setback to the VC; no aircraft had been destroyed, and those damaged would be operational by mid-December.<sup>331</sup>

(S) Because of the VC-initiated mortar attacks on friendly installations in the latter part of 1966, and indications that the level and frequency of this type of attack would increase, COMUSMACV on 31 December 1966 directed installation of a better system to provide warning of enemy activity. COMUSMACV requested development of a seismic detector, such as the Sandia device, to provide the significant warning. He envisioned emplacing the detectors in rings, approximately 3,000 meters in radius, around friendly installations, with the detectors monitored at a single station within each perimeter. COMUSMACV requested DDR&E assistance in expediting an evaluation of this concept, urging that, if the concept proved feasible, a high priority be assigned to the development, testing, and procurement of a suitable device.<sup>332</sup>

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PAGE 206 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 207 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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PAGE 208 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 209 OF 872 PAGES

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~~TOP SECRET~~

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PAGE 211 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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PAGE 213 OF 822 PAGES

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PAGE 214 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 216 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 218 OF 872 PAGES

UNCLASSIFIED

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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PAGE 22 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 226 OF 872 PAGES

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CHAPTER IV

BROADENING THE LOGISTICAL BASE

BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTS

(U) Although a study of the logistical aspects of the Vietnam war offered neither the color nor the drama of the combat operations, it revealed nonetheless an astonishing spectacle. The problem of supplying the ever-increasing numbers of combat forces presented enormous challenges. This chapter is the chronicle of how the task was accomplished.

(U) The US armed forces operate with a logistical tail equalled by no other nation; US tactical concepts, weaponry, and interest in the welfare of the individual contribute to this condition. Yet in Vietnam the United States faced basic logistical problems unique in its military experience. It had no nearby, off-shore, comparatively secure major installations, such as England and the major ports of the Continent during World War II. In that war it had developed a series of Pacific island bases as the Allies moved toward the Japanese mainland, and during the Korean War could rely upon extensive logistical facilities in Japan until the small perimeter at Pusan could be expanded and secured. But in Vietnam, the US faced many miles of ocean between its military operations and its major supply bases in Okinawa, the Philippines, and Japan. The country itself offered little beyond the austere facilities required by the RVNAF. Its one major port, at Saigon, was barely adequate to support normal commerce.

(U) Vietnam was in the grip of a major war; communist insurgents dominated much of the countryside and were in a position to harass and terrorize most other areas. Though major population complexes were under government control, military garrisons continually were subject to attack. It became obvious, therefore, that the US would be obliged to contend with the VC at the same time and in the same areas that it was developing its logistical installations. This promised to impose time-consuming diversions from tasks at hand and, in addition, to place initial limitations on the number of civilian non-combatants available for contract labor.

PAGE 230 OF 872 PAGES

UNCLASSIFIED

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(C) By mid-1965 the military situation had deteriorated significantly. The rapid introduction of US combat forces was required immediately. If the VC were to be denied further military successes, the size of the initial US force would have to be substantial, and the subsequent deployment of further forces would involve ever-increasing numbers. Consequently, military planners faced a formidable challenge: they would have to "broaden the base" concurrently with the influx of ever larger combat forces. There would be no methodical logistical buildup before the fact.<sup>1</sup>

(U) In 1965 the "base" was established. The next year was to be the year of expansion, consummation, and finally, stability. The start had been impressive. Early in 1966 SECDEF was moved to observe:

There is some merit to the question of whether the war is costing more per enemy killed than any war in history. We are using in Vietnam what we have more of than anything else, money, instead of that which we value so highly, lives. Never has any army in history had such equipment and firepower. In short, we are substituting dollars for lives.<sup>2</sup>

As 1966 began, the infantry company commander could ask for and receive fire support the like of which his predecessors of earlier wars could not have imagined. His weaponry, which ranged from the sophisticated and lightweight XM16E1 Colt automatic rifle to the thunderous strikes of the B-52 Stratofortress, could only be described as massive.

(C) During the Honolulu Conference of January and February 1966, an important concept of particular importance to logisticians evolved. This was that the required force levels would dictate the logistical buildup—the logistic capability would not dictate the force levels. Although the concept was never formally stated as a departure point for military planning, its consideration was implicit in the deliberations of the conferees. It meant that logistical limitations had ceased to be the governing factor in the pace of the US buildup. The "ability to support" was slowly returning to its normal focus—that of being one of the several principal considerations associated with the determination of force levels.<sup>3</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV had examined the immediate needs of his command and concluded that, in terms of ground forces, he required the entire 25th Inf Div, an additional ROK regimental combat team, a separate brigade for the Pleiku area, the remainder of the 1st Marine Div, and one additional infantry battalion for both the 1st Cav Div (AM) and the 173d Abn Bde. He recognized that these deployments once again would strain the logistical base, but in his review of the support capability, he had concluded that he now possessed sufficient flexibility to meet the challenge. His

PAGE 231 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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recommendations were accepted and the 25th Inf Div, which had been alerted in December, began to deploy to the RVN.<sup>4</sup>

(C) Following the Honolulu Conference, COMUSMACV developed certain policies which were intended to make the most of existing support facilities. They permitted greater flexibility and provided for means to overcome inevitable supply shortfalls on isolated items. In general, they were to:

- 1) Contract for civilians to perform duties which they could accomplish, such as the operation of port facilities and repair of equipment.
- 2) Where required, shift functions between Services. Service identity and uni-service support practices were less important than providing required support as efficiently and promptly as possible.
- 3) Establish cross-servicing arrangements, so that specialists in one Service would be able to apply their talents to the needs of any Service short such specialists.
- 4) Create a management system especially designed to alleviate logistical bottlenecks and shortfalls, where possible anticipating their occurrence.<sup>5</sup>

(C) The idea of setting up a management team to anticipate and forestall impending logistical crises was a direct result of the Honolulu Conference. This management team was established on 1 March 1966, under the supervision of the MACV J4. It served to consolidate a number of management activities that had been decentralized previously under various MACV-staff sections. Specifically, the management system was designed to measure requirements against capabilities on a month-by-month basis, to include the following areas:

- 1) Port operations, including lighterage, terminal service, storage, and associated transportation.
- 2) Supply and maintenance.
- 3) Transportation.
- 4) Construction.
- 5) Hospitalization.
- 6) Communications.

In addition, it would chart increases in logistical capabilities resulting from the arrival of additional support units, the award of civilian

PAGE 232 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

contracts, and similar actions. In short, COMUSMACV had created a centralized management activity to study continuously the logistical situation. It would serve to keep him informed and enable him to take prompt command action whenever the need seemed indicated.<sup>6</sup>

(U) As MACV planners proceeded in the directions dictated by the Honolulu Conference, they developed certain guidelines which formed the basis for logistical decisions. Some of these guidelines were mere extensions or continuations of existing policies. Others were new, or were departures from previous policy, and reflected the presence of new factors in the logistical picture. During April 1966, MACV J4 presented a briefing to COMUSMACV which articulated these guidelines for COMUSMACV's approval. In this manner the guidelines became the basic concepts which were to direct actions in the logistical field throughout the year.<sup>7</sup>

(C) The basic principles of centralized control and decentralized execution would continue. With the assistance of the recently constituted J4 management group, COMUSMACV would coordinate activities and prescribe policies for joint logistical planning and operations; the component commanders would see to their execution. To the extent possible, the logistical buildup and the force buildup would be complementary. The concurrent buildups would proceed apace, neither one to the detriment of the other, and available shipping would be judiciously allocated so as to render this precarious balance feasible. With CINCPAC's assistance, COMUSMACV would establish the necessary management controls.<sup>8</sup>

(C) Support would continue on an area basis for all common supply and service activities. This meant, for example, that the Navy would support Army units in locations for which the Navy had been assigned the support mission. However, "service-peculiar" support would continue as the responsibility of the various components. The presence of service-peculiar equipment and the need for service-peculiar repairs, parts dictated this policy. In practice, the "area" approach to supply and service support provided that:

1) The Army component would perform common support within the II, III, and IV Corps Tactical Zones (CTZ), plus any portion of the I CTZ where major Army forces were deployed. This latter provision did not represent a deviation from the basic policy, as an examination of the various Tactical Areas of Responsibility (TAOR) will reveal.

2) The Naval component would perform common support within the I CTZ. Since the bulk of this support was rendered on behalf of US Marines, it was consistent, for the most part, with the usual Navy mission.

3) The Air Force component would perform common support for its air bases. This support was provided to the air and ground elements

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of all Services stationed on the bases or in their immediate vicinities.

4) Separate arrangements would be developed for MACV advisory elements, the FW military forces and the RVNAF.<sup>9</sup>

(C) The US advisory elements, though predominantly USA, nonetheless included substantial portions of each Service. These elements received common support from the component commander in whose area they were located. However, since some of their equipment was RVNAF-peculiar (for example, the M2 carbine), this support was provided by the RVNAF. In addition, the advisory elements used equipment provided through the MAP, the support for which was also provided by the RVNAF. Finally, there were occasional instances in which an advisor possessed equipment, peculiar to his Service, which was neither common to the US components nor provided to the RVNAF through the MAP; in such cases, he was well advised to get rid of it. (See Footnote 10)

(C) Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF) were supplied, in general, by the USMACV component commander in whose zone they were located. There was, however, the question of furnishing support for equipment peculiar to the FW nation and common neither to US forces nor to RVNAF. Fortunately, the incidence of such examples proved comparatively small, in large measure due to the scope of MAP and the fairly general practice among the allies of US procurement. These problems were resolved on individual bases, as was the question of funding, itself a subject of some complexity.

(S) The PVNAF operated a separate logistics system, into which flowed the proceeds of the MAP plus other procurement funded by the GVN. COMUSMACV intended that this system should remain separate, since at the termination of the war the RVNAF would continue to require an orderly system to support its military operations. He also intended that US and RVNAF logistics systems would be coordinated at appropriate levels to insure maximum use of resources and facilities jointly available, and that both logistics systems would be responsive immediately to the emergency needs of all the Allies.<sup>11</sup>

(S) In order to complement the common supply system, the components would examine procurement practices and develop jointly common stockage levels. The achievement of common stockage objectives throughout the country would simplify and streamline the supply system, improve distribution, and ease management problems. The components also would continue to use Service channels to promote the rapid development of offshore bases for equipment rebuild. As of the April briefing, the Army had initiated studies to determine the most suitable locations, and the Navy had begun already to use its facilities at Subic Bay in the Philippines for this purpose.<sup>12</sup>

PAGE 234 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) Construction efforts would be canalized primarily toward projects which would develop "throughput" in the in-country portion of the supply pipeline. This was a complex problem. In the language of the logistician, "throughput" is a function of time. How long does it take to move cargo from origin to destination and, more importantly, what can be done to reduce this time? In RVN, throughput speed was being frustrated by so many knotty, interrelated problems--in the face of great urgency--that at times improvement seemed years away. COMUSMACV had identified the basic problem as one of port construction and improvement, involving both seaports and aerial ports. He directed, therefore, that construction priority would go to port expansion, with the number one priority allocated to the bleakest bottleneck of all--the port of Saigon. This took the form of Project Newport, in fact a new port, construction of which had begun in 1965. It was located at a wide place on the Dong Nai River, northeast of Saigon. Its completion would permit military shipping to bypass the Saigon River entirely, and its location was ideally suited for expeditious supply of the entire III CTZ, both by road and from the air. 13

(S) A related concept was that ground commanders would emphasize and increase their use of roads. This was much more an operational problem than a logistical one, since the roads were, in most instances, adequate to tolerate continued military traffic. The need was to secure these roads and to free them from VC interdiction and harassment, so as to permit an ever-increased use of trucks, in lieu of aircraft, for resupply. Rising force levels demanded that the use of land, sea, and air vehicles be brought into balance. From a management viewpoint, functional, rather than tactical, considerations had to dictate the mode of transport for supplies. In the early months of 1966, nearly the reverse was true, with the result that airlift was drained to its last ounce of capability. VC interdiction of roads forced cargo into the air, and port congestion forced cargo into the air. In addition, there were certain expedited supply procedures, designed to attack isolated shortfalls, which relied exclusively upon air shipments. The increased use of the roads was an obvious and much needed course of action.

(S) A second area in the construction field, of both high priority and great importance, was the cantonment construction program. Troop cantonments included everything from billets and mess halls to sewage and roads. "Cantonment" is the all-inclusive term applied to the total of construction performed to construct a base camp. COMUSMACV directed that the construction program would follow two guidelines:

1) Austerity would be a basic policy. Troop labor would be used to the extent possible, particularly in building troop billets. This approach would conserve resources, time, and money, and would reduce the inflationary impact of the US presence by reducing local procurement and the hire of local nationals.

PAGE 235 OF 872 PAGES

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2) Permanent construction would be reserved for installations which were included in the Long Range Stationing Plan. Facilities which would be abandoned at the termination of hostilities would not be accorded the unneeded embellishments provided by permanent-type construction.<sup>14</sup>

(S) Finally, COMUSMACV recognized that the use of private contractors would continue to play an important role in the logistical picture, and he foresaw that requirements for the huge RMK-ERJ combins would extend into 1967. Their services were expensive, in that overall costs included the price of the company's separate management and logistical structure, which had been created specifically to support its RVN operations. Their presence was inflationary because of extensive local procurement on a cost-plus-fixed-fee basis, and because of their substantial introduction of US dollars into the local economy through the salaries of US civilian employees. Nonetheless, their services represented a critical portion of the logistical picture, and, though it appeared their work volume would peak late in the year, it also appeared they would be needed for the foreseeable future.<sup>15</sup>

(U) These, then, were the concepts which dominated the logistical effort for 1966. They envisioned a joint military-civilian effort, carefully balanced against the planned buildup of combat forces, policed by a series of built-in controls and priorities, and overseen by a management group which could monitor closely the entire program and recommend appropriate actions when difficulties developed. Develop, of course, they did.

## SUPPLY

### Common Supply System

(C) The need for a common supply system grew from the "area" supply concept, previously mentioned, and first developed in 1965. In the spring of that year COMUSMACV adopted a logistics plan that essentially was based on establishment of "support areas" and two major "logistics areas." The former were supply installations which served directly the combat units; the latter were large logistical complexes that existed principally to support the support areas, and were to be located at Cam Ranh Bay and Saigon.<sup>16</sup>

(S) Establishment of extensive USN logistical facilities at Da Nang, activation of the USA 1st Logistical Command (Log Comd), and the centralized location of USMC in the I CTZ were factors which permitted the division of supply responsibilities among the components on a geographic basis which generally coincided with CTZ boundaries. The next logical step was to identify the items

PAGE 236 OF 872 PAGES

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of supply, common to all the Services, which could be supplied to users irrespective of Service identities. These items would constitute the common supply system. The Army, through its United States Army Ryukyus Islands (USARYIS) headquarters on Okinawa, would operate and manage input for the out-of-country end of the pipeline. Excluded from the common supply system were air and ground munitions. Each Service provided its own Class V and VA support under procedures which served special services-peculiar requirements.<sup>17</sup>

(S) MACV established 1 March 1966 as the date on which Phase I of the common supply system would begin. Phase I included Class III support to all four CTZ's and Class I, II, and IV support to all CTZ's except in I CTZ, where the USN would continue to support the USMC. MACV established 30 June 1966 for Phase II, the second and final phase of the conversion. On this date, Class I, II, and IV support would be extended to I CTZ. This did not mean inactivation of the Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPACT) in Da Nang, but it did mean a change in the source of most common items and certain other changes in the mechanical process of handling supply actions administratively.<sup>18</sup>

(S) Two factors affected the target dates that MACV had selected. First was the timeliness of a required SECDEF decision as to the number and scope of the supply items to be designated "common." Second was the speed with which USARYIS could react to its impending mission to man the out-of-country end of the RVN pipeline. On 23 March COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC that local arrangements for the start of the common supply system were sufficiently complete and that, contingent upon USARYIS readiness, he was prepared to get on with it. He asked to be advised on the status of the DA preparations.<sup>19</sup>

(S) Meanwhile, funding complexities were developing in Washington. To circumvent these as much as possible, the JCS proposed and SECDEF approved a "cross-Service reimbursable" plan, sent to the field on 31 March. DA had the mission of resolving the details of the plan, and by the end of the first week of May, USARPAC had been able to provide guidance to the headquarters most concerned, USASV and USARYIS. Phase I of the plan presented no great problem, since it involved only extension of Class III support to I CTZ beyond the existing USARYIS mission. However, on 12 April USARYIS advised that it could not assume the remainder of the I CTZ mission until 1 July for Classes II and IV, and until 1 October for Class I. It was prepared to begin Phase I of the common supply system and did so on 1 May.<sup>20</sup>

(S) Phase I of the plan thus began approximately sixty days later than scheduled. The Class II and IV portion of Phase II began on schedule, but the Class I portion began some ninety days late. The delays beyond MACV objectives were caused by a number of factors, including funding coordination, a pipeline fill time, cataloging of the roughly 3,500 items designated by SECDEF as "common," and development of demand data as a basis for requisitions.

PAGE 237 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) The common supply system was not a universal panacea; ammunition supply and service-peculiar items remained component supply entities, and each presented its own management problems. However, it offered some very important benefits. First, it arrested duplication of effort among the Services, a normal and predictable trend in a condition of rapidly-expanding force levels. Second, it provided more reliable demand data, resulting in a more orderly flow of supplies. Third, it was better suited for timely response to the increasing requirements generated by ever-larger forces. Finally, it promised to be a versatile and flexible instrument, adaptable to a variety of supply missions—for example, supply of FVMAF on whatever basis might be required by the agreement with the allied nation concerned.

(U) Closely connected with the beginning of the common supply system was the phase-out of the Headquarters Support Activity (HEDSUPPORT) Saigon, a USN facility whose mission became an anomaly with the activation of the USA 1st Log Comd. HEDSUPPORT had been the logistical organization for support of US forces in the Saigon area, but by the start of 1966 these responsibilities were being assumed by the 1st Log Comd on a gradual basis, in line with a program started during the previous year. COMUSMACV established 30 June as the date on which this transition would be complete.<sup>21</sup>

### III MAF Logistical Support

(C) Evolution of the common supply system and introduction of the 1st Mar Div wrought major changes in the logistical support of USMC units in the I CTZ during 1966. NAVSUPPORT Da Nang was the Navy organization for supply of common items in I CTZ. Its USMC counterpart was the Force Logistical Command (FLC), which procured and distributed both the common items and USMC-peculiar items and operated sub-activities in each of the TAOR's.<sup>22</sup>

(C) Throughout 1965, the USMC logistical support had been provided by the Force Logistical Support Group (FLSG), headquartered in Da Nang. This organization was a major subordinate command of the 3d Force Service Regiment (FSR), located on Okinawa; it was a complete logistical entity and served all of III MAF. When the 1st Mar Div arrived at Chu Lai in March 1966, it became evident that the logistical system would require major expansion, and that the expansion would require substantial organizational changes. The FLC was established to serve these increased needs, and was activated on 15 March as a provisional organization. The time frame coincided generally with the first efforts to begin the area-based, common supply system in RVN, with responsibility for I CTZ delegated to the USN component.<sup>23</sup>

(S) FLC was under the command, less operational control, of CG FMFPAC; CG III MAF exercised the operational control. It was organized

PAGE 238 OF 872 PAGES

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with its headquarters in Da Nang, and FLSG in each of the TAOR's, and a Force Logistics Support Unit (FLSU) at Hue/Phu Bai. FLC procured common items through NAVSUPACT Da Nang. It procured USMC-peculiar items through FMFPAC supply channels, principally the 3d FSR. Additionally, it handled Class V and VA supply for USMC forces, and it operated expedited supply procedures, discussed hereinafter, which met COMUSMACV's requirements that each Service develop means to preclude unanticipated shortfalls of critical items essential to the conduct of tactical operations.<sup>24</sup>

#### MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN Forces

(S) MARKET TIME (CTF 115) and GAME WARDEN (CTF 116) were supported logistically from several sources. They requisitioned common items of supply from the nearest support facility. At Nha Trang, Cam Ranh Bay, Vung Tau, and Qui Nhon, these facilities were activities of the USA 1st Log Comd. In the Saigon/Bien Hoa/Nha Be area, the facilities were the HSAS, subsequently NAVSUPACT Saigon. In I CTZ the facilities were either the III MAF's FLC or NAVSUPACT Da Nang; the latter was the primary source for vessels operating in the Hue/Da Nang/Chu Lai area. USN-peculiar items were requisitioned directly from the Naval Supply Depot (NSD) at Subic Bay in the Philippines, which maintained a 180-day stockage for the MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN ships. Whenever a requisitioned item was unavailable at Subic, NSD passed it on to the Naval Supply Center at either Oakland or San Diego. These centers airshipped high-priority cargo directly to Tan Son Nhut (for delivery through NAVSUPACT Saigon) or to NAVSUPACT Da Nang.<sup>25</sup>

(S) The Navy did not operate extensive maintenance facilities on shore in RVN to support its MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN operations. Commander Task Force 73 (CTF 73), who was also commander of the Seventh Fleet's Logistic Support Force, had this responsibility. He served as monitoring agent in the Western Pacific area for Commander Service Force Pacific (COMSERVPAC). When operational equipment of a MARKET TIME or GAME WARDEN vessel suffered either combat damage or routine operational break-down, the CTF reported his support requirement through the USN logistical chain, using a reporting procedure known as CASREPT, discussed as an expedited supply procedure later in this chapter.<sup>26</sup>

#### Transfer of HEDSUPACT Functions

(U) Prior to the introduction of substantial US combat forces, logistical support for both the MACV headquarters and its field advisory elements had come from the USN Saigon facilities. These facilities,

PAGE 239 OF 872 PAGES

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variously abbreviated as NSAS and HEDSUPPACT Saigon, constituted the Headquarters Support Activity for all US personnel in RVN, regardless of their geographic locations. Consequently, adoption of a common supply system, with its attendant reassignment of supply functions, directly affected the mission and functions of HEDSUPPACT Saigon—regardless of the component which might administer its services. The most significant of these changes involved the support of US advisory elements. These ceased to be the support responsibility of HEDSUPPACT and instead became support responsibilities of component commanders in whose CTZ's they were situated.<sup>27</sup>

(C) With the introduction of US ground forces in large numbers activation of the 1st Log Comd, the decision to establish the common supply system, and the assignment to the Army of a support mission for three of the four CTZ the bulk of the RVN logistical mission was changing from USN to USA auspices. Because of the nearly total in-country responsibilities previously assigned to HEDSUPPACT Saigon, this organization became a hub of the transition. It involved simultaneously a transfer of functions between Services and an expansion of the system. COMUSMACV's plan to complete the transfer emphasized gradual and orderly change. The many HEDSUPPACT functions were isolated and evaluated separately and formed the basis for memoranda of understanding between the two headquarters. These memoranda, written for each of the functions to pass from USN to USA responsibility, set down the required procedures in detail, provided for the necessary overlap of personnel, transfer of property, lead time for requisitions, and similar matters. The many functions and dates of transfer from HEDSUPPACT to 1st Log Comd are shown:<sup>28</sup>

<u>FUNCTION</u>	<u>TRANSFER DATE</u>
Transportation Service	1 Nov 65
Port Operations	15 Nov 65
Dental Service	15 Nov 65
Exchange	26 Dec 65
Medical/Dental Supply	1 Jan 66
Chaplain	15 Jan 66
Civilian Personnel	1 Feb 66
Purchasing and Contracting Supply	1 Feb 66
Real Estate	1 Mar 66
Class I	1 Mar 66
Clothing Sales	15 Mar 66
Clubs and Messes	1 Apr 66
Purchasing and Contracting Public Works	1 Apr 66
Household Goods and Baggage	1 Apr 66
Repair and Utilities	1 Apr 66
Medical Services	1 Apr 66
Billeting	1 Apr 66
Commissary	1 Apr 66
Ship Stores	1 Apr 66

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FUNCTION

TRANSFER DATE

Special Services	1 Apr 66
Installation Coordinator	15 Apr 66
Provost Marshal	15 Apr 66
Fire Marshal	15 Apr 66
Explosive Ordnance Disposal (Land)	15 Apr 66
Class II and IV	1 May 66
Finance Disbursing and Fiscal Accounting	7 May 66
Troop Education	15 May 66
Motor Transport	15 May 66

(C) The translation service and the Exchange technically did not become 1st Log Comd functions. The former became a function of HQ MACV and the latter an activity of the Far East Army and Air Force Exchange Service (FEA&AFES). In addition, the fiscal accounting portion of the USN finance operation was deliberately carried through 30 June in order to terminate at the close of the fiscal year.<sup>29</sup>

(C) Problems associated with the changeover proved remarkably few. USARV requisitions for personnel to man the various functions did not reach the JCS until late January, with the result that many of the replacements were not in-country in time to meet various target dates. However, the only major problem revolved around a Navy decision to retain a Navy-peculiar support facility in the Saigon area. The commander of the newly-activated USN component, Naval Forces Vietnam (COMNAVFORV), saw the need to establish a USN-peculiar support facility to provide administrative and USN-peculiar supply support for II, III, and IV CTZ's. - Naval advisory elements, plus the extensive GAME WARDEN and MARKET TIME operations in the coastal and Delta areas, made this an obvious requirement, but the original concept of phasing out HEDSUPFACT Saigon involved the transfer of all HEDSUPFACT resources to USARV. The Navy proposed, therefore, that the troop education function, the Class II and IV supply function, and the non-MAP portion of the motor transport function--together with the warehouse space required by these activities--be retained under USN administration. Such a plan would permit continued support of USN advisory and operational elements in the three CTZ's and simplify the problem with respect to USN-peculiar supply. COMUSMACV disapproved this proposal as being inconsistent with the concept of area support. He fixed mandatory transfer dates for the functions under consideration, and on 15 May the last of these passed to USARV. On 17 May HEDSUPFACT Saigon was officially disestablished, and on the same day NAVSUPFACT Saigon was activated to assume USN-peculiar support in the II, III, and IV CTZ's.<sup>30</sup>

(S) On 17 March COMUSMACV had received a briefing on the progress of the transfer of functions, at which time he considered the proposed structure of the USA successor to HEDSUPFACT Saigon. He directed that

PAGE 241 OF 872 PAGES

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it should be a separate organization assigned to and under the operational control of USARV. It would be commanded by a general officer and would be called the Headquarters Area Command (HAC). HAC was activated officially on 1 April under command of Brig Gen R. L. Ashworth, USA, and thus was in existence 46 days prior to the disestablishment of HEDSUPACT. On 17 May HAC assumed full responsibility for support of the MACV "installation" throughout Saigon and Cholon, and Gen Ashworth became the "Installation Coordinator." Activation of HAC completed the Saigon/Cholon supply line as conceived under the common supply system. It represented an important achievement, for in centralizing procurement under the 1st Log Comd, COMUSMACV completed the management structure necessary for country-wide supply action through USA facilities at USARYIS. Now possible were other actions to streamline the logistical picture. These included the attainment of common stockage levels, and transfer of USA logistical and logistical advisory functions from MACV to USARV.<sup>31</sup>

#### Common Stockage Objectives and Reduced Stockage Levels

(U) An important goal for any logistical system is the attainment of common stockage objectives. It is a difficult and sometimes impossible goal to reach, for many variables bear on the problem. However, the mere process of striving serves the end of continual review and, where possible, revision of existing stockage levels so as to bring them more in line with continually changing requirements.

(S) COMUSMACV had noted wide deviation among the components of stockage levels for more common items. On 26 May, in a message to CINCPAC, he noted that Class I, III, and V might be handled between the components on a common basis, provided that stockage levels could be agreed upon. It was true, he noted, that Class V involved certain Service-peculiar ordnance, but even these might be handled on a common basis from the viewpoint of stockage. The following stockage levels were in effect at the time for the three classes of supply:

	<u>USARV</u>	<u>7th AF</u>	<u>NAVFORV</u>	<u>III MAF</u>
Class I	105 Days	30 Days	150 Days	52 Days
Class III	60	30	120	30
Class V	60	45	30	45

A similar representation for Class II and IV would be deceptive in that major differences exist in how the components handle and account for these classes. The above is, however, a good general indicator of the wide deviation to which COMUSMACV referred. He suggested a CINCPAC study to determine optimum stockage levels and upon its completion, a conference of all parties concerned to resolve differences.<sup>32</sup>

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(S) This proposal, however, encountered immediate resistance from the Navy. COMNAVFORV on 27 June, and CINCPACFLT on 29 June, agreed that the MACV objective was desirable, but stated that administrative, tactical, and regional variables made the attainment of truly common stockage levels unrealistic. Their examples:

1) Stockage levels must ultimately depend upon how rapidly the supply point can replenish its stocks. This is affected by length of the supply line, frequency of resupply, weather, port facilities, and available transport.

2) Missions which generally afford an even and orderly depletion of assets permit lower stockage levels than those which are less predictable. The nature of the mission, therefore, requires that stockage levels be sufficient to absorb the impact of a sudden drain, and missions vary from locale to locale.

3) The size of the stockage level will depend upon the flexibility demanded of the supply point. If the supply point must meet the requirements of a constant force-level, then it can operate with a lower stockage level than would be required if the reverse were true. The capability to supply an over-night 25 percent increase in forces, as might be the case upon the temporary deployment of a division force into another CTZ, would require stockage levels sufficiently high to absorb this impact.<sup>33</sup>

(C) Clearly, any plan to adopt arbitrary stockage levels throughout RVN would require further study. It was possible, however, to reduce the overall level of supply stocks in-country, for several reasons. Improved facilities for forward area storage, more rapid resupply rates primarily resulting from quicker transport, and more efficient methods of distribution were among the more important. Additionally, a reduction of stockage levels could help in several separate but related areas. Lower stockage would mean a requirement for fewer storage facilities. In turn, this would mean less construction and the possible diversion of military construction funds to other equally needed projects. As an added benefit, a lower level of construction would reduce inflationary pressures upon the RVN economy.

(S) For these reasons, at his Commanders' Conference on 30 May, COMUSMACV asked the component commanders to study the impact of adopting a "moderate risk" supply level. On 1 June, a J4 message to the field described this level as:

Class I	75 Days
Class II and IV	45 Days
Class III Packaged	45 Days
Class III Bulk	30 Days

PAGE 243 OF 872 PAGES

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Class V	60 Days
Class VA	30 Days
Post Exchange Items	30 Days

COMUSMACV did not intend these to be arbitrary levels. COMNAVFORV comments with respect to the difficulty of attaining common levels were well taken, and it had become apparent that the continuing change which characterized the logistical picture would preclude inflexible stockage policies. Rather, COMUSMACV desired to draw attention to the need for continuous review of stockages and wherever possible, to revise stockages downward. He was encouraged by progress in this regard and, on 27 July, was able to advise CINCPAC that each component had been able to initiate some reductions. When fully implemented, COMUSMACV estimated that the reduced stockage levels would permit a construction savings of some \$90 million as projected through the end of CY 67.<sup>34</sup>

(C) Thus, though 1966 did not see the reality of like stockage levels, it did see progress in the matter of reducing existing stockages. There were continuing problems as the Services attempted to integrate methods. For example, at one point the Services were overstating POL storage requirements because, though computing POL according to CINCPAC guidance, they were stating construction for storage facilities on a uni-service basis. Such examples were typical problems that occurred as the logistical picture continued to expand. However, COMUSMACV had succeeded in developing throughout the command an awareness of two important needs: first, continuous review of stockages, with a view toward eliminating duplication and revising levels downward; second, continuous re-inement of supply policies, so that the language and methods of the respective components might become more nearly similar.<sup>35</sup>

(C) The MACV J4's effort to coordinate logistical functions among the Services was complicated by the fact that he continued to retain responsibility for USA logistical advisory functions. This was a continuation from the period during which MACV had been primarily an advisory and assistance headquarters, but with the expansion of US operations this had become much more an "additional" duty than a "primary" duty. From a functional standpoint, the time had come to place this responsibility with the USA component, where already USARV's 1st Log Cdn had assumed the bulk of the USA logistical burden. Since military assistance in RVN was predominantly assistance to the ARVN in essence this move would terminate the logistical aspect of military assistance at the joint level.

#### Transfer of USA Logistical Functions

(C) On 25 May COMUSMACV asked USARV to study the possibility of assuming the USA logistical functions then being performed by the MACV J4. This study would encompass "logistics advisory functions, required

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organizational changes, co-location of logistics advisors with supported ARVN tech service agency, one organizational element in USARV to whom logistics advisors would report, and a small tri-service element at MACV level who would keep books and deal with all service logistics matters including tri-service logistical problems.<sup>37</sup>

(C) One month later, USARV produced its study, and with it, recommendations so sweeping that the MACV Chief of Staff felt it necessary to analyze the study carefully. Accordingly, on 1 July he directed the Joint Staff to develop a position for presentation to COMUSMACV. The USARV recommendations went beyond the scope originally sought, and revolved around the proposition that the entire USA military assistance and advisory effort should be the exclusive function of the Army component command. MACV should be freed of the advisory burden, USARV felt, so as to be able to devote its energies to the management of its component commands; force levels had expanded to the point that MACV was no longer an "assistance command," but rather a joint headquarters with the overriding mission of directing joint combat operations. Since the individual Services had assumed the mission of funding for their respective portions of the MAP, it would be more efficient for the individual Services to administer the funds. Logistical functions are not easily separated from operational and training functions, and the same headquarters that provides logistical support should also direct operations and supervise training. The USARV study did concede, however that MACV should retain operational control of advisory elements directly associated with RVNAF tactical operations.<sup>38</sup>

(C) On 16 July COMUSMACV approved the transfer of logistical advisory functions, but deferred approval of the other recommendations for further evaluation. He directed that a joint MACV/USARV planning group be convened to develop the necessary details for carrying out these recommendations, and on 18 July this group met for the first time. MACV J4 announced that USARV would assume USA logistical functions within the limits of COMUSMACV's original concept on 1 September. The joint MACV/USARV planning group, meanwhile, continued its deliberations of the broader, long-range USARV proposals.<sup>39</sup>

### Supply and Distribution

#### Class I

(C) Supply of rations was generally satisfactory at the start of the year and continued to improve. The one significant problem in the Class I area was the lack of refrigerated storage. At the beginning of 1966 floating storage served to alleviate this problem, but in so doing served also to aggravate an existing shortage of refrigeration ships for normal resupply. In January, there were two reefer barges at Qui Nhon,

PAGE 245 OF 822 PAGES

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two at Cam Ranh Bay, and one reefer ship at Da Nang. As more US ground forces arrived in-country, the practice of using ocean-going vessels for the storage of perishables tended to increase. Though such vessels were not considered permanent assets and were, in fact, merely delayed for discharge, nonetheless their significantly increased turn-around time upset the Class I resupply cycle seriously. Finally, on 16 May, COMSERVPAC was forced to ask USARV to expedite the discharge of three reefer ships then in RVN waters; he set mandatory sailing dates for these vessels and stated that, if necessary, they should sail with incomplete discharge of cargo. There were three possible steps to the solution: provide more refrigeration ships, construct more on-shore storage, and accept lower levels of perishable rations. As it turned out, each of these steps was pursued, with the result that by the end of August, the problem had been largely relieved.<sup>40</sup>

(C) On 23 June the COMSTS held a "reefer conference." An important result of this conference was a decision to supplement MSTs reefer assets with "vessels of opportunity." This meant that MSTs would charter any available refrigeration ships to augment its own fleet. By 15 July CINCPACFLT advised that MSTs had succeeded in chartering two additional reefer ships, and that the first of these would arrive at the West Coast in August. Meanwhile, construction of on-shore refrigeration facilities had progressed, and units which had deployed in the spring had begun to receive refrigeration units for use with base-camp mess facilities. This permitted release of floating storage, as demonstrated by the release to MSTs on 11 July of a vessel that had been providing off-shore refrigeration at Da Nang.<sup>41</sup>

(S) Shortfalls in stock objectives for the perishable "A" ration caused supply points to accumulate the differences in "B" rations, which could be stored without refrigeration. Consequently, in August USARV reported overall Class I levels at 97.8 days against a 105-day objective, yet its "A" ration level was only 12.8 days against a 30-day objective. Though not at the desired optimum, these figures represented adequate Class I supply action, and also represented significant improvement over conditions which threatened in the spring of the year. They permitted a satisfactory mix from the food service viewpoint and, throughout the country, preparation of wholesome and nutritional meals. As the first six months of 1966 terminated, MACV reported that its Class I supplies were adequate.<sup>42</sup>

(S) A comparison of stocks vs stockage objectives, by CTZ, as of August 1966:

	<u>I CTZ</u>	<u>II CTZ</u>	<u>III CTZ</u>	<u>IV CTZ</u>
	<u>S</u> <u>O</u>	<u>S</u> <u>O</u>	<u>S</u> <u>O</u>	<u>S</u> <u>O</u>
Class IA	6.0 - 45	12.8 - 30	12.8 - 30	12.8 - 30
Class IB	134.0 - 90	61.1 - 45	61.1 - 45	61.1 - 45
Class I MCI	47.0 - 60	23.9 - 30	23.9 - 30	23.9 - 30

PAGE 246 OF 872 PAGES

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The 1st Log Comd provided Class I support to the II, III, and IV CTZ's to the Saigon/Cholon area, and wholesale support to the NAVSUPACT Saigon. NAVSUPACT Da Nang provided Class I support to the I CTZ, which included III MAF, USN construction units, support personnel, and the advisory groups. In this connection, III MAF maintained minimal Class I stocks internally. The objectives were for Class IA, 7 days; for Class IB, 15 days; and for Class I MCI, 30 days. When added to the overall NAVSUPACT Da Nang objective of 195 days, this additional 42-day total represented a backup of approximately eight months in theoretical support of USMC units, a figure more than twice the three and one-half month objective for support of the II, III, and IV CTZ's.<sup>43</sup>

#### Classes II and IV

(S) The condition of the Class II and IV support effort decidedly was subject to several interpretations. One could paint either a black picture or a bright picture, depending upon the approach. Typical were the following excerpts from a logistical summary submitted by III MAF at the close of the first six months of CY 66: ". . . Class II and IV were unsatisfactory, with the vast majorities of items on requisition being delivered beyond priority designator delivery dates. Roughly fifty percent of the authorized line items were at zero balance. . . ." On the other hand, the report concluded that "there were no critical shortages. . . ." This apparent ambivalence derived largely from the sheer scope of Class II/IV supply and the wide initial gulf between the desirable and the attainable. Hundreds of commodities—repair parts, component parts, and end items—were involved, and they created many isolated problems which often required separate solutions. There developed a number of expedited supply procedures to cope with the more severe of these problems. These procedures are discussed subsequently in this chapter.<sup>44</sup>

(S) Despite substantial line numbers at zero balance, at the start of the year no component commander had reported any shortage sufficiently severe to affect his ability to conduct required combat operations. As of 25 February, 7th AF reported that of 5,100 authorized vehicles, only 45 percent of these were on hand. Among the more significant of USARV's list of items in critical short supply were 5-ton trucks, air mattresses, poncho liners, mess kits, shotguns, 175-mm gun tubes, and refrigerators. III MAF reported shortages of canvas, water cans, and field fortification materials.<sup>45</sup>

(S) In general, the recurring problem in the Class II/IV field, concerned aircraft, aircraft components, and aircraft repair parts. Predictably, the 1st Cav Div (AM) experienced its share of these. In April the USARV G4 organized a "fact finding task force" which conducted a thorough review of supply problems within the division, with a view to obtaining as many critical line items as possible from in-country resources. The team observed all supply activities and made an analysis

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of the entire logistical system. An urgent problem was the shortage of repair parts for the CH-47 helicopter. This versatile aircraft was particularly needed for transporting artillery to remote and otherwise inaccessible areas in support of far-ranging ground operations in the rugged Central Highlands. Unfortunately, by the first week in July, mission-ready capability had declined to less than 40 percent, with the result that, at about the same time, the decision was taken to hand-carry the repair parts requisitions to CONUS. Some of these requisitions were filled out incorrectly, creating further delay, but ultimately USARPAC advised that about 82 percent of the requisitions could be filled quickly.<sup>46</sup>

(S) In May there developed a shortage of UH-1 helicopters for support of GAME WARDEN operations. On behalf of MACV, CINCPAC requested that JCS increase PACFLT's portion of monthly production from four to six aircraft. Ultimately, 20 UH-1's were transferred from USA to USN for support of GAME WARDEN. This action occurred at the end of June, and represented a typical example of the sort of coordination required to manage jointly the combined assets of the command.<sup>47</sup>

(S) Another aircraft in short supply was the CH-54 "Flying Crane." This shortage promised to be alleviated in CY 67 with the arrival of production models from a new procurement program. This program provided for deliveries of one aircraft per month from December 1966 through April 1967, then two per month through January 1968, then three per month until a total of 73 cranes had been delivered.<sup>48</sup>

(S) The USA OV-1 Mohawk also presented its problems. By August, four out of eight recently-delivered new aircraft had arrived in-country without the 150-gallon "drop tanks." Drop tanks are used for auxiliary fuel supply and permit up to three times the time on station otherwise possible, an important requirement for reconnaissance aircraft. In addition, the Army was experiencing delay in receipt of repair parts, and had uncovered instances of either lost or misplaced parts in the depot system.<sup>49</sup>

(S) Overall in-country assets of the O-1 (L-19) single-engine light airplane dropped significantly due to combat losses, a situation that was the subject of a J3 memorandum on 13 July. The losses derived from the unusually high exposure of these aircraft to enemy ground fire, for they were used by the USAF to direct air strikes and by the USA to direct artillery strikes. CONUSMACV assigned top priority to Forward Air Controllers (FAC's) and directed that both Services should arrange for joint use of O-1 assets until the situation improved.<sup>50</sup>

(C) More than anything else, these problems reflected the extensive and expanding importance of light aircraft for ground forces. Without exception, ground commanders seized upon their versatility and capitalized on their capabilities for tactical mobility and extended

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reconnaissance. This air-minded philosophy generated continual requirements for aircraft of all types and, in turn, strained to the breaking point supply and maintenance facilities. Many were the air operations officers who faced the hard choice between mission-essential requirements and the considerations of air safety and operational reliability.

(C) Communications equipment for ground forces presented difficulties at the start of the year. These occurred primarily because the command was under conversion from the "old family" to the "new family" of radios. The problems presented operational rather than logistical considerations, since primarily they concerned "netting" the old with the new as many organizations temporarily used some radios of each type. US units had priority for issue of the new radios; the 25th Inf Div was converted to the new family within 60 days after its arrival, and in most cases, units that deployed subsequently received their new equipment in CONUS. In a letter of 28 June, MACV J4 stated that the new AN/PRC-25 and AN/GRC-125 radios had become sufficiently available for issue to advisors.<sup>51</sup>

(C) Several conditions aggravated the overall Class II/IV situation. Numbers and types of component parts and repair parts were multiplied because the command possessed more than one model of the same end item; this was particularly true in the cases of vehicles and material handling equipment (MHE). Some units deployed with less than their full prescribed loads (PLL), and therefore placed sudden demands upon the supply system very soon after their arrival. Finally, the supply line itself was clogged with throughput problems, essentially concerning the port situation. Despite these problems, Class II/IV supply was moving toward both responsiveness and stability as the year entered its final quarter. Throughout the year, no component reported that any shortage in these areas was sufficiently serious to affect his combat operations, and only USARV had consistently reported items in the "critical" category.<sup>52</sup>

### Class III

(S) Class III supply was principally a problem of storage and transport, rather than a problem of availability. The buildup sharply increased demands for petroleum, oil, and lubricants (POL), and once again tested the precarious equilibrium between the logistical expansion and the force expansion. At the start of 1966, bulk POL storage encompassed permanent-type on-shore storage tanks, collapsible tanks, tanks on barges, and ocean-going tankers at off-shore anchor. Included as part of the on-shore capability were commercial facilities at Nha Be, which also were used by US forces, FVMAF, RVNAF, and other government agencies. In sum, these facilities represented approximately a total 15-day supply of bulk POL, which would support troop deployments scheduled through May. However, the high consumption rate could tolerate no slow-down or interruptions, for a rapid depletion of stocks, to the point of endangering support of combat operations, would result. There was an immediate requirement to build an additional 600,000 bbl storage capability and to improve tanker discharge facilities at port locations.<sup>53</sup>

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(S) The following is a summary of POL on hand as of January 1966; the figures do not include 15 days' supply in commercial tanks and in floating storage:<sup>54</sup>

<u>I CTZ</u>	<u>STOCK OBJECTIVE (DAYS)</u>	<u>ON HAND AVG (DAYS)</u>
AVGAS	30	10
JP-4	30	5
MOGAS	30	7
DIESEL	30	8

II, III, IV CTZ

AVGAS	45	10
JP-4	45	5
MOGAS	45	3
DIESEL	45	6

7th AIR FORCE

AVGAS	30	10
JP-4	30	4
MOGAS	NA	NA
DIESEL	NA	NA

(S) COMUSMACV, determined to prevent undue and unnecessary reliance on the commercial facilities at Nha Be, directed a study to determine what impact the complete loss of the Nha Be facilities would have on combat operations. This study concluded that dependence upon Nha Be had slackened materially; since MACV could ship directly to Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, Cam Ranh Bay, and Nha Be, total loss of Nha Be could be tolerated. However, Nha Be was critical for the Saigon/Cholon/Tan Son Nhut (TSN) area. Therefore, an HSTS T-2 tanker with 130,000 bbl of bulk POL was established at Cam Ranh Bay, which could be moved to the Nha Be area to support military requirements for up to five days; a second tanker could be provided from Da Nang if required. The study pointed out that dependence on Nha Be would decrease still further, as additional planned POL storage was constructed. The following construction was planned for the spring:<sup>55</sup>

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>SCHEDULED COMPLETION</u>
Saigon River to TSN	Pipeline	March
TSN	Storage 20,000 bbl	March
Bien Hoa	Storage 20,000 bbl	April
TSN	Storage 120,000 bbl	April
Vien Loi	Storage 50,000 bbl	April
Vung Tau	Tanker discharge	April
Vung Tau	Storage 19,000 bbl	April

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Some of this construction was not completed as scheduled. For example, the pipeline from a barge in the Saigon River to TSN was not opened until July. Also, consumption increased during the spring at a rate greater than forecast, with the result that stockage objectives improved only slightly. In May, the command was maintaining approximately a ten day supply of bulk POL, considering both shore and floating storage. This figure was similar to January's. However, the troop buildup had not forced a further incursion on POL stocks, and facilities under construction soon would increase storage substantially.<sup>56</sup>

(S) The POL consumption figures for 1966 are as indicated:<sup>57</sup>

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>CONSUMPTION</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>CONSUMPTION</u>
January	1,346,000 bbl	July	1,800,300 bbl
February	1,312,700	August	1,996,000
March	1,584,500	September	2,042,500
April	1,502,000	October	2,173,500
May	1,543,000	November	2,260,800
June	1,592,300	December	2,592,300

(S) The long-range objective was to eliminate off-shore storage entirely. This would release more tankers for resupply, decrease reliance on commercial tankers, and improve resupply rates. This objective, of course, depended upon the completion of on-shore tank farms. As of May, the on-shore capacity was roughly 692,000 bbls. By the end of 1966, the on-shore capacity was programmed for 1,586,000 bbl, which represented an increase of some 229 percent. At mid-year, Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay possessed the largest on-shore storage capacities, with facilities to store 223,000 bbl and 182,000 bbl respectively. All of the POL stockage areas required off-shore storage at this time to some extent.<sup>58</sup>

(C) Another aspect of POL supply which required concurrent improvement was off-shore discharge capability. At mid-year, the tanker-to-shore discharge capability stood at approximately 600 bbl per hour. Discharge facilities were programmed for improvement to 6,000 bbl per hour by the end of the year. This improved discharge rate would result from completion of pipelines and permanent pumping facilities.<sup>59</sup>

(C) A summary of capacities for each of the seven major POL stockage areas, as reflected by mid-year reports vs year-end programs, was as follows:

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<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>MID-YEAR</u>		<u>DISCHARGE</u>
	<u>ON-SHORE</u>	<u>OFF-SHORE</u>	
Da Nang	223,000 bbl	T-1 Tanker	400 bbl per hr
Chu Lai	40,000 bbl	T-1 Tanker	400 bbl per hr
Vung Tau	13,000 bbl	Barge Jetty	NA
Nha Trang	50,000 bbl	T-1 Tanker	700 bbl per hr
Phan Rang	55,000 bbl	T-1 Tanker	500 bbl per hr
Cam Ranh Bay	182,000 bbl	T-2 Tanker	700 bbl per hr
Qui Nhon	129,000 bbl	T-1 Tanker	700 bbl per hr

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>YEAR-END</u>		
	<u>ON-SHORE</u>	<u>OFF-SHORE</u>	
Da Nang	231,000 bbl	T-2 Tanker	5,000 bbl per hr Aug 66
Chu Lai	102,000 bbl	T-2 Tanker	9,300 bbl per hr Sep 66
Vung Tau	13,000 bbl	Barge Jetty	NA
Nha Trang	150,000 bbl	T-2 Tanker	2,000 bbl per hr Jul 66
Phan Rang	68,000 bbl	T-1 Tanker	2,000 bbl per hr Jun 66
Cam Ranh Bay	380,000 bbl	T-5 Tanker	2,200 bbl per hr May 66
Qui Nhon	188,000 bbl	T-1 Tanker	2,500 bbl per hr Jun 66

Dates shown in the lower table are the dates during which improved discharge capabilities became operational. Improvement of POL on-shore storage facilities was programmed through 30 June 1967. Capacities at Vung Tau and Cam Ranh Bay, for example, would approximately double their year-end reserve, to 300,000 bbl and 750,000 bbl respectively. Construction of the POL tank farms related directly to the changing shape of the combat situation. Da Nang, long the major logistical base for III MAF, and an installation dating from the earliest US troop commitment, had the most extensive POL facilities as of 30 June and would reach its planned capacity shortly after the first of the year at 405,000 bbl. On the other hand, Vung Tau, ranked last as POL depot in June 1966, was scheduled to rank with Da Nang and Qui Nhon by June 1967. This reflected the growing US interest in the III CTZ and its efforts to divert supply traffic from the Saigon area.<sup>60</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV's position toward improvement of POL storage and throughput was the same as his basic position in other areas of logistical interest. He desired a balanced expansion, and exerted his influence equally to prevent accumulation of unnecessary reserves and to expedite required facilities. In July COMUSMACV frankly advised CINCPAC that bulk POL storage needed to be brought into line and that he had established among all components a stockage objective of 30 days. Also in July, he supported a USARV request for accelerated deployment of the 643d Engr Co (Pipeline Construction), a unit needed for construction of the pipeline from Qui Nhon to An Khe. POL requirements for the An Khe-Pleiku area would triple by the end of the year and storage requirements would quintuple. The alternatives to early deployment of the company involved diversion of an Engineer construction battalion from other

PAGE 252 OF 272 PAGES

(Ch 1, 30 Jun 67)

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important tasks, employment of at least two medium truck companies to haul POL overland, or some curtailment of operations--all of which were unacceptable. These examples well illustrated the need to monitor continuously the many aspects of a single general area. As matters turned out, construction of the pipeline ultimately was delayed by a shortage of 6-inch pipe and pumping units, and in August JCS was investigating the shipment of 6-inch pipe from US reserves in France.<sup>61</sup>

(S) In general, throughout the year POL supply remained stable and satisfactory, with the exception of one critical period during February. At this time, diesel reserves sank to a very low level when one cargo arrived and was found to be contaminated, and when a second cargo did not arrive when scheduled; the command received emergency resupply from Subic Bay in this instance, and normal stocks were reconstituted by 5 March. Two policies largely precluded other temporary shortages. On 17 January COMUSMACV directed all US forces to maintain a ten-day level of all POL products either on hand or in organizational direct-support units. On 30 March, USARV asked USARPAC to have all brigades or larger units bring with them to RVN a 15-day supply of packaged POL products. These two procedures caused units to retain enough reserves to offset any temporary slowdowns in the supply line, and, in the case of newly deployed units, afforded insurance against the possible early interdiction of land LOC's. By spring, USARV had terminated its automatic PUSH of POL products--an expedited supply procedure, discussed subsequently, which had outgrown its usefulness in this area.<sup>62</sup>

Class V

(TS) Because of the political implications involved, the most explosive question in the supply field for 1966 was whether or not MACV experienced a shortage of ammunition, and if so, whether or not the shortage affected combat operations. This complicated question involves a complicated answer; reduced to one word, however, the answer was "yes." From the viewpoint of SECDEF, there is no shortage of a specific type of ordnance if the world-wide production and assets in place compare favorably with world-wide usage factors. From that level of management, the problem is one of logistics, rather than one of production. However, from the viewpoint of a battalion commander who desires types and volumes of ammunition which he cannot secure, whether the problem be one of supply or transportation the resulting condition is a shortage of ammunition. Localized shortages of this type did occur in 1966, requiring that more plentiful but less efficient types of ordnance be substituted for the less plentiful but more efficient. Aircraft flew from time to time with less than optimum loads, and occasionally with short loads--less than the amount of ordnance the aircraft could carry. Particularly in the field of air munitions, common practice was to trade available ordnance between the components which served to bridge stockage gaps that developed as critical munitions at times dropped far below necessary stockage objectives. The practice of substituting acceptable alternate munitions

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alleviated an immediate problem, but compounded the long-term problem, for as deliveries in-country continued at rates less than usage, one by one even the alternate munitions slipped to critical stockage levels.<sup>63</sup>

(S) On the other hand, like the rest of the logistical picture, all plans grew from a basic concept of equilibrium between force expansion and logistical expansion. A primary consideration in the plan for introduction of increased numbers of combat forces was that the so-called "base" would keep pace with the ever-increasing troop levels. To be sure, safety levels were built into the total equation, but from the start COMUSMACV recognized and anticipated that significant management problems would develop. He did not intend that so much emphasis should be directed toward logistical expansion that the logistical expansion itself should become self-consuming, and there was no time for a deliberate, before-the-fact development of extensive supply facilities. Consequently, any fair estimate of the ammunition supply situation must consider the basic plan. Here too, there must be a precarious equilibrium, with solutions to inevitable problems deriving from sound and responsive management. COMUSMACV's guideline was that shortages should not interfere with military objectives; they did not.<sup>64</sup>

(S) At no time were there any shortages of direct fire, flat trajectory munitions.<sup>65</sup> The suggestion that soldiers faced an enemy with less bullets than they needed, or that tanks and APC's were hamstrung by shortages of the heavier munitions, has no basis in fact. The shortages that did develop had two characteristics consistently. First, they tended either to be localized geographically, or were of short duration. Second, they involved exclusively the indirect fire munitions, and among these, primarily the air-delivered munitions. These shortages normally were responsive to substitute ordnance--an artillery projectile instead of a mortar projectile, or either a heavier or lighter general purpose bomb. Although occasional shortages of prime ordnance caused ground commanders to modify their concepts of some tactical operations, in no case was a major ground operation curtailed by such shortages. MACV did reduce somewhat its air and ground interdiction. Selective methods of targeting helped produce the highest possible return from the air ordnance available. And some limitations on the use of night illumination, from artillery pieces and mortars and by air-delivered flares, proved necessary. In making the point that military operations proceeded in 1966 according to plan, another very germane observation was that the judicious management of munitions is a necessary practice that has characterized other wars as well as this one; the problem was nothing new. A detailed treatment of specific munitions and the problems associated with them follows:

(S) On 6 December 1965 MACV moved to centralize the management of munitions. The J4 Ammunition Division was established on this date, and began operations on 3 January 1966. One of the first actions of the new organization was to develop a plan to afford mutual support among all the components in matters involving ammunition supply. This plan formed

PAGE 254 OF 872 PAGES

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the ultimate basis for the transfer of munitions between the components later in the year when the supply line tightened and stockage levels began to dwindle. It was published as MACV Directive 740-2 on 24 February and served three objectives: establishment of procedures for transfer of ammunitions between the components; reduction of the use of high priority transportation in ammunition resupply; and elimination of disparate stockage levels which might permit a shortage in one place and an excess elsewhere.<sup>67</sup>

(S) At the start of the year, seven items had been reported in serious short supply, and six of these were air munitions; the single exception was the illumination projectile for the 81-mm mortar. The six air munitions were the 40-mm grenade for launch from helicopters, the air-delivered 2.75-inch rockets, 20-mm HE cannon ammunition, the MK81 250-lb bomb, the MK82 500-lb bomb, and the M-117 750-lb bomb. On 23 January the illumination projectile for the 105-mm howitzer joined the shortage list. Reliance upon 105-mm illumination to compensate for shortages of the 81-mm illumination had drained the 105-mm reserves, a condition which occurred later in the year because of similar drawdowns of other types of munitions.<sup>68</sup>

(TS) In Washington on 11-12 January, DAF sponsored a USAF munitions allocation conference. It determined that available munitions would support 400 ARC LIGHT sorties per month through March, 450 through June, and 600 for the last six months of the year. The conference also estimated that approximately 3,000 STEEL TIGER, BARREL HOLL, and TIGER HOUND sorties could be mounted each month. Available munitions would permit an average load of 1.7 tons per sortie (2.1 in NVN and 1.55 in SVN/Laos). The conference allocated USAF munitions for the first quarter of GY 66 and projected allocations for the rest of the year. MACV J4 stated in January that "although allocations to PACAF and VNAF fell short of requirements, projection is being increased sufficiently to meet estimated future requirements of all munitions except 2.75-inch rocket motors." It did not work out that way. Ammunition problems continued to develop, and by the end of April the list of munitions officially listed as critical had expanded to thirteen--with every new listing an air munition.<sup>69</sup>

(TS) On 20 January the Air Force Advisory Group (AFGP) advised COMUSMACV that VNAF was running short of 500-lb bombs, 220/260-lb fragmentation bombs, and 100-lb general purpose bombs. By March the VNAF bomb shortage had grown acute; principal causes were insufficient stocks to begin with, untimely shipments, and diversion elsewhere of munitions enroute. CINCPAC informed JCS that VNAF had 73,000 bombs on hand or enroute, and that expenditure based upon a CSAF allocation of 31,500 per month would exhaust stocks by the end of April. He informed COMUSMACV that VNAF had the same priority for ordnance as other users in SEASIA, and that distribution of assets would be monitored closely to ensure

PAGE 255 OF 872 PAGES

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~~TOP SECRET~~

equitable distribution. VNAF needed a 60-day level in country. JCS assistance would be required to produce prompt shipments and reduce diversions until this level was achieved.<sup>70</sup>

(TS) By 1 March, air munitions were becoming critically short generally. The high explosive anti-personnel (HEAP) warhead for the 2.75-inch rocket was a particular problem. The command was some 17,692 fuzes short for the HEAP warhead, and no solution was possible immediately since production of fuzes could only be at the expense of production of complete rockets. Also among the newer problems were fire bombs; 7th AF reported it lacked the necessary components to assemble complete bombs and that recent shipments of the incendiaries had been arriving without all the necessary parts. 7th AF listed M904E2 nose fuzes as one of the critical items. MACV J4 bluntly told 7th AF that "emergency resupply is being used to cover inadequate supply programming procedures," but 7th AF responded that maintenance of adequate stock levels was virtually impossible in the face of existing munitions allocations and production lags.<sup>71</sup>

(TS) In Saigon on 3 April, Deputy SECDEF Vance received a briefing on the munitions situation. He was told that the munitions shortage was critical and that production would be unable to meet requirements before early 1967. Napalm was the only air munition in which there was a surplus. HQ USAF had been forced to allocate to its major air commands on the basis of existing inventories and production and as a result, bomb loads were being reduced and substitute munitions were being used. The Secretary was advised that only 73 percent of the required bomb assets, and only 33 percent of the required CBU-2 assets, were available.<sup>72</sup>

(TS) COMUSMACV informed CINCPAC and JCS on 8 April that he considered air munitions shortages an emergency situation seriously affecting air-strike capability in SEASIA. He said that all feasible intra-theatre actions to alleviate the situation had been taken. In the first quarter of CY 66, some 940 sorties had been used to distribute and re-distribute munitions. Aircraft were being held on ground rather than airborne alert. Between 4 and 7 April, some 233 strike sorties had been cancelled or not scheduled. To compound the problem, civil disturbances at Da Nang caused diversion of a ship, loaded with air munitions, to Qui Nhon, creating further delay in the distribution of badly-needed ammunition. CINCPAC gave temporary relief to the USAF munitions shortage at Da Nang by directing the transfer of some 2,400 bombs from the USN to the USAF.<sup>73</sup>

(TS) On 10 April CINCPAC directed that a report of sorties cancelled due to shortage of munitions be submitted directly to his headquarters. 7th AF reported that 44 ROLLING THUNDER, 32 STEEL TIGER, and 4 BARREL ROLL missions had been cancelled for this reason during the first ten days of the month. No in-country missions had been cancelled, but aircraft had been held on ground alert and 320 missions that normally would have been

PAGE 256 OF 872 PAGES

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

preplanned were not flown. During the period from 11 to 14 April, 515 in-country air strikes that otherwise would have been flown were not scheduled due to ordnance shortages.<sup>74</sup>

(TS) On 13 April CINCPAC requested a drastic reduction of radar-controlled bombing, road cratering, and other types of interdiction. COMUSMACV could not agree, stating that he felt it imperative to keep certain infiltration routes interdicted, especially Mu Gia Pass, and that the prevalent cloud cover in the spring of the year made radar-controlled bombing a must. CINCPAC agreed to let COMUSMACV bomb as he felt necessary.<sup>75</sup>

(TS) On 19 April CINCPAC informed COMUSMACV that it appeared the USN and USMC had enough munitions to perform on an austere basis, but that the USAF was having trouble because munitions were missing component parts and were, in general, being received in insufficient quantities to provide proper stockage levels. Some transfer between the Services still was possible, but CINCPAC did not consider this a sufficient action. He granted COMUSMACV authority to call on Yankee Station carriers to strike essential targets if necessary, and allocated 500 sorties from Yankee Station for attack of targets in Laos during the remainder of April.<sup>76</sup>

(TS) Meanwhile, COMUSMACV had developed a system of priorities for management of in-country air strikes by USAF. These were the six priorities:

- A--Support of units in contact.
- B--Support of major operations.
- C--Escort of convoys and trains.
- D1--Targets directly affecting the ground situation.
- D2--Lucrative, perishable targets.
- D3--Lucrative, static targets.

To conserve munitions, only requests for strikes against categories through priority D1 were to be honored; 24 aircraft were placed on 15 and 30-minute ground alert, but were to be scrambled only for immediate requests against lucrative targets or to support ground units in emergency situations. All other in-commission aircraft would be loaded and placed on backup ground alert, so that all aircraft would be standing some type of alert. The sorties reported by 7th AF as either cancelled or not scheduled during April were those which fell under priorities D2 and D3.<sup>77</sup>

(TS) Many of the actions taken by the several headquarters during April derived from DEPSECDEF Vance's visit to Saigon on 3 April, which resulted in an ammunition conference in Hawaii from 11 to 13 April, the agenda for which concerned the SEASIA munitions crisis. All parties concerned sent representatives to this conference, chaired by Assistant SECDEF Ignatius. While the conference was in session, news stories broke in CONUS concerning the air munitions shortage, and some of them suggested that the US had overextended itself in SEASIA. CJCS advised CINCPAC and COMUSMACV that while he favored producing the facts before proper authority,

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and earnestly sought optimum support of troops in combat, irresponsible news leaks might engender harmful attitudes in Congress, particularly with respect to further troop commitments. The CINCPAC conference adjourned after a thorough examination of the total munitions picture. Basically, six courses of action were determined upon: to develop realistic sortie plans by month, weapon, and Service; to provide operating stock levels; to increase WESTPAC stock by drawing down on CONUS stocks; to provide better management for production of bomb components; to establish a realistic pipeline; and to accelerate production.<sup>78</sup>

(S) In CONUS there were production bottlenecks. By September 1966, the Army had activated a total of nine munitions plants to accommodate the needs of the war, but until the activation of its munitions plant at St. Louis, only the National Presto plant at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, produced ammunition for the 105-mm howitzer. As will be apparent subsequently, this production limitation created a drawdown on reserves in CONUS and PACOM, a shortage of training ammunition outside of RVN, and ultimately a shortfall in-country. The example typifies the kind of problem encountered by all the Services as they moved to expand the munitions industry in support of RVN. In addition, there were occasional cases of quality-control difficulties, as in the case of bombs which arrived without properly-assembled components, and defective air-to-ground missiles which had to be returned to CONUS for rework.<sup>79</sup>

(S) In the early spring, while munitions were receiving the intensive interest of authorities at every level from MACV to Washington, another quite different aspect of the munitions situation required attention. This concerned the MAP. The decision to transfer the funding aspect of the MAP from the State Department to the military Services under the Defense Department was one aspect; a second aspect concerned the need to place Class V resupply for ground forces under one roof, a need which developed largely from the introduction of large numbers of Korean (ROK) troops—33,000 by September, with an end-strength forecast at approximately 45,000. On 3 March the MACV J4 held a conference which considered the transfer of MAP support to the 1st Log Comd. By the end of April the decision had been made to begin USARV Class V support of ROK forces on 1 September. III MAF support for ROK forces deployed permanently in I CTZ would be fixed by the dates of deployment.<sup>80</sup>

(TS) In summary, the first three months of 1966 brought serious munitions problems. From a tolerable munitions posture at the start of the year, there developed a run on air munitions and selected important shortages of ground munitions. Conferences concerning munitions difficulties had been held at Washington, Honolulu, and Saigon. Though several management tools were used to alleviate temporarily specific problems, the basic problems were those of production and transport, and solution to these problems would require time. It was apparent that the situation would become worse before it improved, and that the crisis would occur in the summer. Most of all, it was apparent that the crucial problem would involve air munitions.

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### Special Air Munitions Problems

(TS) In a personal message of 8 April, CJCS addressed the growing shortage of air munitions squarely. He authorized CINCPAC "to divert and commit to operations in support of combat in SEA for the use of any...component any appropriate air munitions resources in PACOM, regardless of ownership.... Authority specifically applies to reserves held in support of US Forces Korea...." Thus, the war reserve munitions stockpiled to blunt an attack from North Korea were officially released to meet a growing shortage in RVN.<sup>81</sup>

(S) On 18 May a message from CINCPAC advised that a "critical" reduction in air munitions would be reflected in forthcoming revised allocations. He stated that "...in many instances the allocations...for the items listed were less than required to satisfy CY 66 adjusted rates. The...shortfalls will further aggravate the CY 66 adjusted rates." The air munitions involved and the percentages by which they were reduced were as follows:

<u>MUNITION</u>	<u>REDUCTION</u>
M-54 500-lb Bomb HD	37%
M-59 1000-lb Bomb SAP	57%
MK84 2000-lb Bomb LD	26%
M-118 3000-lb Bomb GP	48%
MLU-10 Mine	45%
M-77 500-lb Bomb FIRE	27%
Bullpup-B Missile	43%
Zuni Rocket 5-foot	44%
2.75-inch Rocket (all types)	42%
MK12 Flare	51%
MK24 Flare	19%
M-79 1000-lb Bomb FIRE	27%

(TS) On 18 June COMUSMACV, who was then in Honolulu at CINCPAC headquarters, cabled his Chief of Staff that he had "discussed the bomb availability with CINCPAC. The situation is binding; he asked that we do all possible to conserve air munitions." At the end of the month CINCPAC added to the long list of critically short air munitions three more types of general purpose bombs: the MK83 1000-lb bomb, the MK84 2000-lb bomb, and the M-118 3000-lb bomb. This was an example of the long-term problem compounded, for this ordnance, employed extensively to ease the drain on the smaller and more flexible 250 and 500-lb bombs, had itself slipped to the shortage level.<sup>83</sup>

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(TS) Thus the status of air munitions reached its nadir at mid-year. In six months the list of ammunitions in short supply had grown from one to thirteen. It included nearly every type of conventional air ordnance, and the overall stockage levels in 7th Air Force had fallen to 15 days--against a 45 day objective. These were the air munitions concerned:

MK81 250-lb Bomb	M-61 20-mm Cannon
MK82 500-lb Bomb	2.75-inch Rocket HEAP
M-117 750-lb Bomb	2.75-inch Rocket WP
MK83 1000-lb Bomb	CBU-2 Dispenser Bombs
MK84 2000-lb Bomb	CBU-14 Dispenser Bombs
M-118 3000-lb Bomb	MK24 Flares
M-39 20-mm Cannon	

From this point the situation began to improve, slowly at first and then more perceptibly. The overall stockage levels in 7th Air Force climbed to 20 days by 15 July and to 30 days by 15 August. Improved production in CONUS and increased ammunition inventories in WESTPAC were having a welcome, if somewhat delayed, effect in RVN.<sup>84</sup>

#### 2.75-inch Rocket

(S) The first and most persistent air munition shortage was the 2.75-inch rocket. This weapon came in several configurations--HEAP, HEAT, HE fragmentation, and white phosphorous (WP) for incendiary effects and marking air strike locations. It was employed extensively by all Services on nearly every type of air vehicle, ranging from helicopters and light fixed-wing observation aircraft to jets. The USA used great quantities of this munition as aerial artillery; its 2d Bn 20th Arty (AM) was organized with armed helicopters instead of howitzers. The first such organization of its kind, it flew its weapons platform throughout II CTZ, and delivered payloads of 2.75-inch rockets in saturation quantities in support of forward areas. Predictably, shortages which occurred were not uniform. The USAF developed a shortage of the WP and HEAP warheads; the USA developed a shortage of the HE warheads; the USMC developed a shortage of the pods in which the rockets were carried; and all components experienced from time to time a shortage of rocket motors.

(S) On 6 April USARPAC asked USARV to transfer some of its WP assets to the 7th Air Force and within the next few weeks, the USA component was able to turn over some 15,000 rounds, helping to alleviate a near crisis. On 21 May CINCPACAF noted that USAF FAC's had attempted to use smoke grenades to mark targets for strike aircraft, but that this procedure was completely unsatisfactory. He stated that production of 10,000 WP warheads per month through December would be insufficient and indicated that a thirty percent increase would be required, citing a requirement for 12,780 WP warheads for December. On 15 May 7th AF

PAGE 260 OF 872 PAGES

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formally requested that the WP warhead be added to the list of critically-short munitions, even though the 2.75-inch rocket as a total commodity already was under intensive management at DOD; 28 May CINCPAC concurred with the request.<sup>85</sup>

(S) The HEAP warhead was another USAF problem. On 21 January CINCPACAF reported that the command had insufficient quantities of the munition "to provide 100 percent combat capability of current and projected forces." Expenditures of the HEAP warhead were 466,000 from March 1965 through February 1966, and PACAF had been substituting HE and HEAT warheads gradually to ease the growing shortage of the preferred HEAP. DOD was doing what it could to increase production, but the limiting factor was production of the rocket motor.<sup>86</sup>

(S) Whereas combined HE expenditures had been under 40,000 rounds per month during the 12-month period mentioned, PACAF estimated roughly 100,000 in March of 1966, gradually to increase to 150,000 during the last quarter of CY 66. Yet as of March 1966 there were only 51,260 HE, HEAT, and HEAP warheads in all of SEASIA, and 64,350 rocket motors. Estimated resupply was 60,000 rockets per month. In July the number of HE, HEAT, and HEAP warheads had increased some 10,000 to a figure of 61,834, but this was well below the stated PACAF requirement. In fact, CINCPACAF estimated his July requirements at 186,000 against an allocation of 65,400 for that month, rising to a requirement for 290,000 rounds during December against an allocation of 120,000. These figures nearly doubled the estimates which were made earlier in the year.<sup>87</sup>

(S) On 2 August the JCS advised that they had allocated to CINCPAC the total production of 2.75-inch munitions, but the August allocation for PACAF climbed only to 66,300 rounds. PACFLT, whose air forces faced similar problems, suffered a cutback to 39,400 rounds, including the allocation for the 1st Marine Air Wing. Overall in August, CINCPAC allocated some 180,000 rounds of 2.75-inch munitions throughout PACOM, against its stated requirement of 464,600. This approximated 40 percent of the PACOM need. The problem derived principally from slippage in the production of rocket motors. As early as 16 February, the Washington task force devoted to expediting shortage items noted that deliveries of the 2.75-inch rocket were falling behind schedule. In April CINCPAC had assumed control and future allocation responsibility for all PACOM assets, and on 22 May had slashed existing allocations by 42 percent. The slippage in production of rocket motors was the basis for the CINCPAC message of 17 August, which established for PACAF and PACFLT the allocations indicated.<sup>88</sup>

#### Bombs

(S) Between April and July, all of the commonly used fragmentation bombs fell into short supply. Initially, only the smaller general purpose bombs were critical items. These were more flexible items suitable

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for use with most aircraft and in a variety of situations, and they were in heavy demand. However, as more often the heavier ordnance was substituted against the larger area targets, the heavier bombs also became critical. Production continued to lag during the first half of the year. These bombs were considered critical as of July 1966:

MK81 250-lb Bomb	MK83 1000-lb Bomb
MK82 500-lb Bomb	MK84 2000-lb Bomb
M-117 750-lb Bomb	M-118 3000-lb Bomb

The smaller bombs were in particularly short supply. At the end of May CINCPAC reported that the MK81 production was only 27,000 per month against a requirement for 68,400; the MK82, 14,000 against a requirement for 100,700; and the M-117, 30,000 against a requirement for 47,000. By the end of the year, CINCPAC saw continued monthly shortfalls of 59,200 for the MK81, 34,600 for the MK82, and 21,200 for the M-117.<sup>89</sup>

(S) However, there were signs that improved production would materialize. On 14 July, SECNAV received a briefing at MACV headquarters. He was advised that the supply of bombs in-country stood at 20 days at the time, and that this supply should increase to 30 days by the end of the year. As of August, some 87,700 metric tons of air munitions were awaiting movement from CONUS ports. This figure was forecast to increase to 110,000 metric tons in September, 136,100 metric tons in October, and 160,400 metric tons in November.<sup>90</sup>

(S) There were problems other than production lags which contributed to the shortages. As COMUSMACV noted in an 8 July message to CINCPAC, bombs sometimes arrived in-country incompletely assembled. As a typical example, of 3,983 MK83 1,000-lb bombs which arrived in June, 1,030 came without any tail fins. Also, frequently bombs were offered for shipping, but remained at ports for extended periods awaiting ships to move them. As an example of this, a consignment of air munitions which included MK84 2,000-lb bombs was offered for shipment at Subic Bay in early July, but there were no ships immediately available. This problem occurred because of uniformly heavy demands on shipping throughout PACOM, and sometimes the components were forced to dip into their reserves while awaiting munitions deliveries. In June III MAF used some of its reserves of MK81, MK82, and MK83 bombs, and was obliged to reduce its sorties in support of the 7th AF in order to retain sufficient assets in support of III MAF operations. As was the case generally in the logistical field, the most difficult period for 1966 munitions supply occurred during the summer. Problems were solved by the substitution of plentiful munitions for those in short supply, by transfer of munitions between the components, by accepting temporary incursions into reserve stocks, and by selective targeting.<sup>91</sup>

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Other Air Munitions

(S) The MK24 air delivered flares were a much-used, much-needed, and very critical munition. They were employed by ground forces to illuminate the battle area, for harassment, and for perimeter security, and they were employed extensively for aerial reconnaissance at night and for night aerial photography. As stocks of the illumination projectiles fired by mortars and artillery became depleted, the demand for the air-delivered flare became ever more acute. They joined the list of critically short munitions in March. At this time MACV J4 placed the requirement for the USAF and VNAF at 117,000 per month, and noted that production was being expanded to 125,000 flares per month; this level would not be obtained until the end of the year, however, and even then could not be allocated exclusively to USAF and VNAF. J4 noted that consumption of the flares had increased from 39,680 to 62,510 in mid-February, and then again to 101,000 in mid-March; these figures contrasted with an estimated consumption rate of 20,000 flares per month which had been developed in September of 1965. COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC on 1 March that production could not meet requirements.<sup>92</sup>

(S) The Army position was unsatisfactory but not crucial. USARV possessed some 40,000 of the Mod 1 configuration which it could not use, but which would be suitable for the Air Force. USARV began a transfer of 21,000 of these flares, and on 18 March volunteered to transfer the other 19,000. USARV possessed some 12,000 of the favored Mod 3 configuration against its own stockage objective of 18,000; it expected to expend roughly 7,000 per month over the remaining ten months of the year. On 13 April, the task force in Washington reported that it had arranged further expansion of production of the Mod 3 MK24 flare, and outlined an upward revision of production which provided for 57,000 flares in the month of April, rising to 117,000 per month by September and 164,000 by December. Even so, it did not anticipate that production would meet demand until November 1966.<sup>93</sup>

(S) Ammunition for the 20-mm cannon in jet aircraft also fell into short supply. The M-39 cartridge was employed by the F-100, F-5, and B-57, while the M-61 cartridge was employed by the F-104, F-105, and F-4C. Combined expenditure of this ammunition was running well over 2,000,000 rounds per month during April. On 16 April CINCPACAF forecast a sharp increase in expenditures of these munitions, and attributed the shortfall in production to a shortage of metal parts required in the manufacture of the cartridges. He reported that the Air Force had been substituting 50 percent ball ammunition in its cannon loads in an effort to extend its stocks of high explosive incendiary ammunition; although he saw some relief from the shortages of M-39 20-mm, he saw no immediate relief from the shortages of M-61 and he asked continuous emphasis on accelerated production. On 23 April COMUSMACV concurred in these views. But the M-39 situation did not improve as forecast; on 20 July, PACAF reported 1,041,523 rounds

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on hand. CINCPAC's August estimates of the munition indicated a requirement in July for 2,330,000 rounds against an allocation of 700,000, and a requirement in December for 3,070,000 rounds against an allocation of 2,000,000. This meant a continued deficit in the monthly position for the munition, and a year-end deficit balance of over one million rounds. Thus, as 1966 entered its last calendar quarter, 20-mm ammunition remained under tight control, and the stated requirements remained substantially above allocations.<sup>94</sup>

(S) The 40-mm grenade was another critical air munition. This grenade, which was identical to the ground munition in head design but materially different in cartridge design, was employed from the UH-1 series of helicopters; fired from a circular mount on the nose of the helicopter which operated by belt feed, the grenades could be delivered at a rate of 200 rounds per minute for an effective range of 2,000 meters. This item was in world-wide short supply, and to increase stocks and reduce expenditures of this valuable munition, COMUSMACV recommended that DA reduce its authorized expenditure rate from 300 to 150 rounds per day, which would also reduce the stockage objective for the munition and remove it from special DOD management. At the start of the year, requirements were anticipated from roughly 153,000 rounds in February to 234,000 in June. Production was scheduled to increase nearly seven-fold during this same period, from 75,100 in February to 550,000 in June. By May, requirements were running at 199,000 rounds per month, and the allocation for that month had risen to 198,000. Allocations were scheduled to rise steadily to levels of 261,000 for September and October. Production, which had risen to 544,000 at this point, was now programmed for a further increase to 948,000 by September, but DA inexplicably reduced the July allocation of 40-mm grenades to 162,000 rounds. This action, coupled with a minor increase in requirements to 204,000 rounds, aggravated an otherwise improving condition and created a deficit forecast through November. This was a change for the worse from an earlier CINCPAC estimate which had concluded that requirements for 40-mm grenades would be met during July; CINCPAC asked for further DA review of its policy.<sup>95</sup>

(S) CBU-2 and CBU-14 Dispenser Bombs were other munitions that remained in unfavorable balance throughout the year. These were not critical munitions tactically, for several other munitions and weapons could be employed against similar targets with good effectiveness, but they were critical from the supply viewpoint. Mid-year estimates of the munition placed the CBU-2 at only 17 percent and the CBU-14 at 24 percent of requirements; year-end estimates were 05 and 28 percent respectively. These figures were based on "preferred mix," the optimum loads for aircraft committed to support of ground troops. A disadvantage of the CBU was its comparatively high dud rate. The CBU's were small grenades which were dropped to the ground from dispensers and designed to explode on contact. They were lethal and effective weapons, and had the capability to cover large areas. But the dud rate was high, and ground troops frequently found the small bombs lying unexploded in operational areas, volatile and fully armed.<sup>96</sup>

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(S) Finally, both PACAF and PACFLT experienced some shortage of missiles. The SHRIKE missile was being allocated as fast as production would permit. CINCPAC approved a PACAF request to dip into required stockage levels in order to maintain the approved monthly allocation, but denied a PACFLT request to increase its expenditure by a mere 120 missiles per month--an indication of the close management required for this munition. There were also problems with the SIDEWINDER and BULLPUP missiles. In some cases, these missiles were defective and had to be returned to CONUS for rework. However, they were being air-shipped to WESTPAC immediately upon successful completion of acceptance tests, and the problem, as in the case of SHRIKE, was principally one of close management. 97

(TS) In summary, supply of air munitions became alarming during the early months of the year, rose to crisis proportions in the spring and early summer, and required close management throughout the remainder of the year. Only napalm remained in plentiful supply. Every other air munition at some time and to some degree became a shortage.

#### Naval Munitions

(S) The USN air arm experienced many of the munitions shortages already noted, but the only USN-peculiar munition that consistently presented problems was gun ammunition for the 5-inch/38 and 5-inch/54 dual purpose guns. These high velocity rifles were employed primarily for shore bombardment, and with excellent effect. On 1 April PACFLT assets stood at 5-inch/38, 95,400 rounds; and at 5-inch/54, 17,900 rounds. At current usage rates, PACFLT predicted that assets in the 5-inch/38 ammunition would drop to 50,900 rounds by the end of the year, but foresaw a zero balance for the 5-inch/54 ammunition by the end of July. 98

(S) Requirements for this munition were divided into two categories: the first category consisted of operations and training stocks maintained at certain levels on board the vessels which would fire the ammunition; the second category consisted of "floating stocks" which represented the stocks maintained afloat in seaborne tenders. CINCPACFLT stated on 7 May that the "current and projected" PACFLT assets of the munition could not "sustain operations in SEASIA at the current tempo and concurrently maintain adequate stocks in combatants and supporting, underway replenishment ships. . ." PACFLT estimated that it required 131,700 and 39,600 rounds respectively, for the 5-inch/38 and 5-inch/54 in floating stockage; and for operations and training, 21,000 and 7,500 rounds respectively. 99

(S) On 11 May CINCPACFLT reported an overall decline in assets for the munition from the April figures. At this point, stocks of the 5-inch/38 stood at 85,400 and the 5-inch/54 stood at 13,450 rounds. CINCPACFLT pointed out that "lack of gun ammunition to cover coastal targets. . . will dictate an increased requirement for air-to-ground

PAGE 265 OF 872 PAGES

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munitions to cover these same targets, thereby aggravating that already critical situation." At this stage, EASTPAC shipfills had already drawn down to support WESTPAC requirements. CNO's estimates of world-wide assets of the munitions, comparing May with December, were as follows:

	<u>MAY</u>	<u>DECEMBER</u>
5-inch/38	292,000	216,000
5-inch/54	74,000	71,000

CINCPACFLT requested an increase in the current allocation, and an increase in funding for procurement and production.<sup>100</sup>

(S) By the end of June, improved stockage figures permitted CINCPACFLT to revise upward his year-end estimates. He now estimated for the 5-inch/38 a year-end position of 98,973 rounds, some 48,000 rounds above his April estimate. For the 5-inch/54, he saw a year-end position of 24,559, which in April he had predicted would be at zero balance. During August the situation improved significantly, and CINCPAC forecast a "get-well" date for the 5-inch/38 ammunition toward the end of that month. The CINCPAC estimate for balance between supply and demand for the 5-inch/54 was December. The encouraging progress of the 5-inch/38 situation prompted CINCPAC to consider removing this munition from the list of ordnance requiring special management.<sup>101</sup>

#### Ground Munitions

(S) At the start of the year, the only item of ground munitions in critical short supply was the illumination projectile for the 81-mm mortar. This projectile was used extensively by both RVNAF and US forces for battle-field illumination, security of hamlets and villages, night adjustment of artillery, harassment, interdiction, and to assist airborne FAC's to identify strike locations at night. Fired from the smooth bore medium mortar, the munition was suitable for employment by forces of all sizes, from any location in which the highly portable mortar might be emplaced; the demand for the base-ejected parachute flare was constant. In March CINCPAC estimated monthly requirements at 11,880 per month, the great bulk of these for use in RVN. There was no production of the munition at this time, but June production was programmed at 6,000 rounds. By June the monthly requirement had been revised upward to nearly 25,000 rounds, and the first allocations from new production were only 2,000. The July allocation rose slightly to 2,400 rounds against a requirement of 24,700, but the August allocation, reflecting the arrival of new production at the end of the pipeline, jumped to 30,000 rounds. These allocations, which were established by the Department of the Army, continued to rise to a year-end level of 37,000 rounds per month. MACV and CINCPAC estimates of December requirement came to 47,800, however, and the monthly position at the end of 1966 would be a minus 10,800 rounds, despite vastly improved deliveries.<sup>102</sup>

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(S) On 23 January, the illumination projectile for the 105-mm howitzer fell into critical short supply, a shortage hastened at least in part by growing demands for 105-mm illumination to compensate for shortages of the 81-mm. CINCPAC estimated that requirements would level off at 70,125 rounds per month during April, May, and June. Though during February some 29,000 rounds were acquired from war reserve stocks, assets continued to run between 12,000 and 20,000 rounds per month during the first six months of the year, an average monthly shortfall of between 50,000 and 60,000 rounds. However, as in the case of 81-mm illumination mid-summer arrivals of new production promised to alleviate the situation. Additionally, as availability of other types of illumination increased, usage of the 105-mm illumination dropped off, permitting a drastic downward revision of requirements. Whereas June estimates placed requirements for May and September at 50,000 and 86,000 respectively, August estimates reported a July requirement of 17,300 and a December requirement of 47,000. Since the allocation for July was 15,000 rounds, the deficit position for the month was minus only 2,300 rounds. A parity between supply and demand was forecast for December. 103

(S) The illumination round for the 4.2-inch mortar never became so critically short that it joined the crisis list at DOD. However, in late spring, USARV did find it necessary to establish an ASR for the munition in order to control the rate of its expenditure. Fortunately, 4.2-inch mortars primarily were weapons of the US infantry battalions, and there were no more than 12 tubes in the typical brigade. Nonetheless, by July stockage of the 4.2-inch illumination had sunk to just nine days, the low point of the cycle for this munition. 104

(S) The HE projectiles for the 4.2-inch mortar and the 105-mm howitzer were the basic munitions for the infantry battalions; as such, they were under the special monitorship of MACV. On 24 May MACV J4 determined that 105-mm HE and 4.2-inch HE allocated to USARV would not meet the command's requirements for the remainder of CY 66. During June, USARV imposed a tightly-controlled ASR to manage closely its dwindling supply of the two munitions. DA, meanwhile, directed the Army Materiel Command (AMC) to investigate the situation and to complete its recommendations by 21 June; possibilities included "re-programming and/or withdrawal of other theatre assets." On 1 July DA advised that 1,423,000 rounds of 105-mm HE were being shipped to RVN as quickly as possible. As a result, USARV terminated its ASR on the munition, but also investigated the possibility of calling forward its off-shore reserves in Okinawa and Japan. If USARV decided to take this action, reconstitution of stocks would be the responsibility of the USARPAC Inventory Control Point (ICP). USARPAC noted that the "off-shore reserves should be called forward to meet bona-fide emergencies," and recommended call forward of the 4.2-inch HE; it did not recommend drawdown of the 105-mm HE, in view of the recent DA action, but reported a "lack of any clear indication of future availability of 4.2-inch ammo." As of 30 July, in-country stockage of the 4.2-inch HE

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stood at 27 days, and the in-country stockage of the 105-mm HE stood at roughly the same figure. However, on 1 October the ASR on 105-mm HE was reestablished and remained in effect for the remainder of the year.<sup>105</sup>

(S) On 1 August, in a briefing for J4, JCS, the MACV J4 predicted that at existing usage rates, the supply of 4.2-inch HE would reach a zero balance during November 1966, and that the supply of 105-mm HE would reach a zero balance during January 1967. These figures, however, did not consider any possible transfers from theatre or CONUS stocks, and they did not consider ammunition which might be on the ground in ASP's below depot level. J4 explained that MACV considered ammunition issued as ammunition expended, and felt that it was unlikely that any substantial accumulation of either ammunition was developing at unit level; the figures, he noted, were based on current usage rates and could be extended by imposition of an arbitrary ASR, but such action would impose an undesired restriction on a munition critical to the conduct of ground operations.<sup>106</sup>

(S) During the month of August in analysis of surface munitions it was determined that 25 items were in either critical or short supply. This list was discussed with the team from the Army Ammunition Procurement and Supply Agency (AAPSA) in early September. At the CINCPAC Munitions Conference 3-5 October 1966 these items were further discussed. Six items were classified as "Critical Supply," and nineteen others were identified as "Short Supply." The status of all items remained as identified throughout the year. USARV imposed an ASR on most items to control expenditures. The following items were considered to be in Critical Supply:

- 5.56-mm Ball
- 60-mm Mortar HE
- 60-mm Mortar Illum
- 81-mm Mortar HE
- 81-mm Mortar Illum
- 105-mm How HE

The following items were considered to be in short supply:

- 5.56-mm Tracer
- 40-mm HE, M406
- 57-mm Tracer
- 60-mm Mortar, WP
- 81-mm Mortar, WP
- 105-mm How, Illum
- 4.2" Mortar, HE
- 4.2" Mortar, Illum
- Grenade, Frag, M26A1
- Mine, AP, M18

PAGE 268 OF 872 PAGES

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66-mm Rocket, LAW  
Sig, Illum, Grd, WS cluster, M15.9  
Sig, Illum, Grd, GS Para, M127  
Sig, Illum, Grd, GS Para, M19A1  
Sig, Illum, Grd, GS cluster, M125  
Sig, Smk, Grd, GS cluster, M125  
Sig, Illum, WS Para, M127  
Flare, Trip, M49  
Fuse, MTSQ, M564

(S) In summary, ammunition shortages involved air-delivered and indirect-fire munitions. They did not concern direct-fire munitions, and with the single exception of mortar ammunition, did not involve any of the weapons found in infantry battalions. They did not cause the curtailment of any major ground operations and did not interfere with the attainment of either tactical or strategic objectives. The most serious period occurred from 15 April to 15 July, during which production schedules were racing to catch rapidly-accelerated expenditures. The shortages tended to follow a pattern, characterized by the substitution of more plentiful munitions for the less plentiful, with the ultimate result that most weapons of a like category fell one by one into a shortage condition. The principal problem posed to MACV planners was to devise, in concert with higher headquarters, methods to bridge the production gap. In addition to substituting one munition for another, they transferred munitions between components, and the components transferred munitions between their own subordinate commands. In some cases, they controlled the expenditures by imposing an ASR, which served to regulate usage and eliminate unpredictable surges. In the case of air munitions, sorties were allocated so as to obtain the greatest possible return from ordnance expended, and a system of priorities served to insure that interdiction missions based on questionable intelligence gave way to missions in support of ground operations. Munitions management during this critical period was devoted to the premise that at no time must any ground operation wait for ammunition, whether delivered from the air or from the ground. In this respect it succeeded.

#### Expedited Supply Procedures

(C) Because of the lack of facilities in RVN and because of a world-wide shortage of combat service support units, combat forces were introduced into RVN in 1965 faster than the supporting logistical base could expand. COMUSMACV had decided in 1965, and he reiterated in 1966, that the maximum feasible buildup of combat units should proceed. This created a need to develop new and imaginative supply and distribution concepts, and a need for management techniques which could overcome deficiencies in physical facilities, numbers of personnel,

PAGE 269 OF 872 PAGES

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and equipment. As one means of compensating for shortfalls in combat service support, each of the services established one or more high-priority supply procedures to expedite the flow of critical items such as repair parts.

#### Automatic Resupply System

(C) In 1965, prior to the start of the US buildup, COMUSMACV had anticipated that the command would experience many supply shortages. He requested CINCPAC and JCS to insure that these shortages would be minimized by requiring units arriving in-country to be self-sustaining for a period of 180 days after arrival. He planned that this procedure would continue until stockage levels in-country became sufficiently large to permit prestocking of supplies prior to deployment of new units. To support COMUSMACV's requirement, CINCPAC developed a plan for a system which provided 180 days of automatic resupply for all classes except bulk POL, for support of deploying divisions, brigades, combat support, and combat service support unit force-packages. This system was called PUSH. Supplies were "pushed" to these units from CONUS, in 15-day increments, to sustain them until they began receiving supply in response to their own requisitions. Initially, all PUSH stocks were delivered directly to the supported unit. However, the unit normally had very limited storage capacities and, in addition, 1st Log Comd depots needed to determine the unit's stock usage factors. Therefore the policy was modified so that the first two 15-day increments went directly to the unit, but the following ten increments went to the supporting depot.<sup>107</sup>

(C) Several problems arose in the PUSH system. Occasionally cargo was mis-routed because the supported unit had changed locations after its initial arrival in-country. This situation was alleviated by the policy of sending the last ten PUSH increments to depots rather than to unit locations. Occasionally also, the PUSH increments were not consolidated in single cargoes, which resulted in delay, confusion, and accountability problems when the cargo was off-loaded. MACV J4 solved this problem by eliminating mixed cargoes as much as possible, and by insuring wherever possible that PUSH shipments were the subject of close coordination between the various shippers, the MACV Traffic Management Agency (TMA), and the PACOM Movements Priority Agency (PANPA). A related problem was that ration components were not balanced properly between the twelve increments; J4 brought this to the attention of the shippers, who corrected the difficulty.<sup>108</sup>

(C) By the end of March, the overall logistics posture in RVN had developed to the point that COMUSMACV requested CINCPAC to modify the original PUSH concept by eliminating several individual items from automatic resupply and reducing the number of days required for other items. More orderly arrival of tactical units permitted this

PAGE 270 OF 872 PAGES

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action. More lead time to procure the necessary supplies through normal requisitioning procedures was becoming available, and the slow development of ports and terminals was gradually permitting greater throughput. Class I resupply could be eliminated entirely whenever 120 days' advance notice of a unit's deployment could be provided. Class V PUSH could be eliminated whenever information on weapons densities could be provided between 120 and 180 days in advance of a deployment date. Modified PUSH procedures continued for Class II and IV, and for packaged Class III on a selective basis.<sup>109</sup>

USA Red Ball Express

(C) As an outgrowth of his 28-29 November 1965 visit to Saigon, SECDEF directed DA to establish a temporary method of expediting the flow of repair parts to remove USA equipment from deadline. The system that was developed was known as the Red Ball Express, named after the World War II operation. As a prerequisite for submission of a Red Ball requisition, a piece of equipment had to be deadlined with no parts available. Red Ball could not be used to fill Prescribed Load Lists (PLL) or Authorized Stockage Lists (ASL), which had to be filled through normal requisitions. All Red Ball requests were consolidated by 1st Log Comd and placed on machine records cards, which were hand-carried by a CONUS returnee to the Logistics Control Office, Pacific (LCO-P) in San Francisco. LCO-P processed the requisitions and forwarded them to the appropriate supply source, performed the necessary follow-up, received cargo, arranged for airlift, and accomplished the necessary documentation. Orders that LCO-P could not fill were given to USCONARC for fill from any available CONARC assets. A maximum of seven days from the time requirements were received at LCO-P was the maximum time for fill of Red Ball requisitions and delivery to Saigon. If all went well, the equipment would be deadlined for not more than nine days (two for processing and seven for filling).<sup>110</sup>

(C) Red Ball was most successful in removing aircraft from deadline. Some equipment, principally MHE, fell into deadline more rapidly than it could be removed. There was a slower rate of requisition fill for this equipment, as compared to the rate of fill for aircraft parts, and a more rapid rate of depletion of PLL's and ASL's. Red Ball's major contribution was that it prevented the deadline rate from going still higher. DA recognized that the only way to reduce the volume of parts going through Red Ball was to improve the ASL and PLL status in-country and, accordingly, began shipping parts to RVN over and above requisitioned amounts. Additionally, DA began building up Class II and IV stockages at Okinawa. These actions served to permit replenishment of PLL's and ASL's more rapidly, and over a period of time significantly improved fill at the forward end of the pipeline. Deadline rates were directly related to time required to fill requisitions, and improved PLL and ASL fill reduced deadline proportionately.<sup>111</sup>

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USAF Speed Through Air Resupply (STAR)

(C) Speed Through Air Resupply (STAR) was the primary logistic technique for USAF support of its units in RVN. Under this system a forward base in RVN requisitioned command-designated items (aircraft, vehicles, generators, photo equipment, survival gear, communications and electronic spare parts) from a single CONUS depot. Each weapon system or commodity group operated through one specified depot in CONUS; this depot received requisitions, provided funding, and initiated follow-up actions. The 7th AF and PACAF exercised command follow-up through a system called Not Operationally Ready Supply (NORS), and both commands maintained a NORS control office to monitor all STAR transactions. NORS parts moved from depot to user with an expeditious handling label, and in this manner were assured such handling throughout the entire USAF supply and transportation system. The STAR system worked well and experienced few problems. 112

USMC Red Ball Express

(C) FMFPAC and III MAF also operated a Red Ball Express. It operated differently from the USA system, but served essentially the same ends. USMC Red Ball was restricted to items which the unit commander designated as critical to the accomplishment of his mission, and which had been requisitioned under a priority-two Military Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedure (MILSTRIP) requisition. To qualify for Red Ball, the item had to be unavailable from other force assets, and unresponsive to tracer action after fifteen days on the MILSTRIP priority-two requisition. Once in the Red Ball channel, the item attained a status of continuous command interest, and it remained on Red Ball until supply requirements had been satisfied. All interested headquarters received information copies of messages which related to supply action and transportation routing of Red Ball items. Red Ball cargo was conspicuously marked and assigned priority one air transportation. The USMC Red Ball was successful for its purpose and was used to procure critical materiel excepting aircraft repair parts. The USN developed a system which met this latter requirement, based on its reports of Aircraft Out of Commission for Parts (AOCP) and Aircraft Not Fully Equipped (ANF). 113

USMC CRITIPAC

(C) CRITIPAC, which resembled in some respects the USA PUSH system, was an automatic resupply system which served certain high-usage items. Approximately 50 predominantly Class II and IV items were prepackaged and force-led to battalion-sized units every 30 days. Although the units selected the items to be included in their CRITIPAC, the composition of the packs tended to be fairly standard. This was a unique system in many ways; it served in particular the small unit, and the fact that it lacked the scope of PUSH proved one of its virtues. 114

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US Navy Casualty Report System (CASREPT)

(C) The Commander of Task Force 73 (CTF 73), as commander of the Seventh Fleet's Logistic Support Force, was responsible for providing maintenance support for the operational equipment of MARKET TIME (CTF 115) and GAME WARDEN (CTF 116) vessels. When one of these vessels suffered a casualty to operational equipment, it would submit a casualty report by message (CASREPT). This report was addressed for information to all USN area commanders and the technical bureau involved, indicating the extent of the casualty and the repair parts required. CTF 73, as COMSERVPAC's monitoring agent in the WESTPAC area, monitored all actions taken by the various supporting units until the casualty was corrected and the CASREPT settled.<sup>115</sup>

FLAGPOLE

(C) In August 1965, SECDEF established a DOD level management team to expedite crisis items to RVN. The team was called the Vietnam Expediting Task Force (VNETF), and was headed by Brig Gen H. D. McCown, USA, with members drawn from all Services. VNETF's mission was to: provide SECDEF prompt reports on any shortages in inventories of US military equipment and supplies; to monitor and assist in expediting emergency requests for materiel, equipment, supplies, manpower, and construction support; and to maintain full-time liaison with HQ MACV. Stated more simply, the mission was to solve logistical problems sufficiently crucial to affect directly the course of the war. In September 1965, CINCPAC insured that VNETF was not to become a channel for expediting requisitions already under high-priority management, nor was it to be used for other problems which, though serious, were not genuinely critical. Only the resource problems which would seriously degrade an operational capability to prosecute military operations would be reported.<sup>116</sup>

(S) The reporting system by which such problems would be reported was known as "Flag Pole." In a very short time, the Flag Pole list became the focal point for preliminary analysis of logistical progress; favorable or unfavorable prognosis of items on the Flag Pole list indicated definite trends. The "list of critically short munitions under intensive DOD management," mentioned previously, was part of the Flag Pole list, which also included such items as tactical voice-security equipment, an oil pipeline, radios, DeLong piers, construction funds, combat uniforms, helicopters, and an integrated wideband communications system--to name the more noteworthy.<sup>117</sup>

(C) The VNETF and its Flag Pole reporting system lasted almost exactly one year. The task force bridged an important gap during the first stages of the buildup, and during the period when the logistical establishment was still in initial development, served to centralize management of the more serious problems. Being located at OSD, it had

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the continuing attention of SECDEF and immediately at hand, the world wide resources of DOD as obvious and important assets. On 15 August 1966, SECDEF notified CINCPAC that VNETF was being disestablished and that Flag Pole reports to DOD would be discontinued as of that date. COMUSMACV felt that the system had served a worthwhile and necessary purpose, but believed that effective channels of communication and logistical procedures had been established with CINCPAC, JCS, and the components, and that remedial action could be taken whenever future problems occurred, without a need for VNETF assistance. <sup>118</sup>

#### HAWK Missile Parts

(C) DA established a special system to expedite supply of repair parts for USA HAWK units. The 79th Ord Det (GS) at TSN being the sole in-country source for HAWK parts, DA authorized the test of a special requisitioning channel to eliminate the "middle men" in the supply chain. Under this concept, the flow of requisitions was from the user to the 79th Ord Det, to the USA Missile Command, to the Rathcon Corporation, which manufactured the missile, in order to eliminate the various depots and headquarters that served primarily to delay the progress of requisitions. The 79th Ord Det initially had deployed with two complete battery sets of major items, and two complete 90-day battalion-size packages of repair parts. This stockage supported approximately 10,000 line items, and the detachment processed an average of 300 requisitions daily. The test of the special requisitioning channel proved effective, and it was placed into operation with but two modifications of the original concept: the use of air mail instead of teletype for the requisitions, as the messages were being unduly delayed by higher priority traffic, and the use of any available ship for movement of HAWK cargoes, instead of vessels specifically earmarked for the purpose. Regulations already specified that Class V cargoes must be segregated from general cargoes and moved separately, and it was therefore unnecessary to segregate further the HAWK cargoes in order to expedite discharge in RVN, which would tend to delay the total time for receipt. USMC HAWK units were supported through normal supply procedures, and USMC Red Ball was the normal procedure for emergency requisitions. However, the 79th Ord Det could and did provide HAWK parts to the USMC units from time to time on a reimbursable basis. <sup>119</sup>

#### Non-Standard End Items for the 1st Cav Div (AN)

(C) The 1st Cav Div (AN) required some 145 non-standard line items such as rappelling ladders, lightweight communications equipment, aircraft fueling equipment, jungle canopy landing platforms, and like items not found in the conventional infantry battalions. On 25 October 1965, special requisitioning procedures were established by USARV and USARPAC to provide timely procurement of these items. All requisitions for non-standard items were submitted to the US Army Support Command (USASC) in Qui Khon. If USASC could not fill the requisition, it passed it to the US Army Depot at Cam Ranh Bay, which either filled the requisition, or

PAGE 277 OF 822 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

passed it to LCO-P in San Francisco. If it took the latter action, the requisition bypassed other out-of-country USARPAC supply activities. LCO-P routed the requisition to the appropriate National Inventory Control Point (NICP), which assumed final responsibility for supply action and follow-up. When the requisition was filled, the end item was shipped from the NICP directly to USASC, Qui Nhon, where it was issued to the 1st Cav Div. Early in 1966 USARV requested the US Army Supply and Maintenance Command (USASMC) to procure and ship a 45-day stockage of repair parts for these non-standard items. Extended lead time was involved, but by the end of April the complete range of required parts had arrived in-country. <sup>120</sup>

#### Machine Accounting

(C) The components operated several electrical machine accounting units to assist requisitioning and maintenance of the required records. The USARV Data Center, under the operational control of the USARV Comptroller, provided staff supervision over all USARV data processing activities in RVN; most of its capability was devoted to support of the 12th Avn Gp. The 14th Inventory Control Center (ICC) was another USARV activity, but was organic to and under operational control of the 1st Log Comd. This data center operated the machine record accounts for all USARV stocks except those of the 12th Avn Gp, or essentially all USARV stocks except those for aircraft repair parts. It equipped and manned two facilities, one at Saigon and one at Cam Ranh Bay. The Saigon facility was fully operational at the start of the year and had a transceiver capability which permitted world-wide direct exchange of logistical information over the AUTODIN system; the Cam Ranh Bay facility became fully operational during September. The Aviation Material Management Center at TSN operated under the control of the 34th Avn Spt Gp. This activity worked very closely with the USARV Data Center. Equipped with 43 punch-card machines, its mission was the management of Army aircraft and aircraft spare parts. USAF operated an ADF system at TSN also, under the operational control of the 6250th Cbt Spt Gp. Transceivers for the system were located at TSN, Bien Hoa, and Da Nang; machine rooms were located at TSN, Cam Ranh Bay, Da Nang, and Nha Trang. Like the 14th ICC, this system was tied into AUTODIN, through the Phu Lan STRATCOM facility. III MAF used three data-processing platoons which operated in mobile vans; two platoons were located at Da Nang and the other at Chu Lai. These platoons did not have access to AUTODIN, but plans were being developed to establish this capability. <sup>121</sup>

#### Traffic Management Agency

(C) Recognizing the need for an organization to control in-country transportation resources, MACV in September 1965 established the Traffic Management Agency (TMA), which was manned by the 507th Trans Gp (Movement Control), under the operational control of COMUSMACV

PAGE 275 OF 822 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

with staff supervision by MACV J4. Its mission was to direct, control, and coordinate efficient and economical use of freight and passenger transportation involving movement of DOD personnel and cargo. The agency commander communicated directly on technical matters with the component commanders and their subordinate units, installations, and activities. TMA became the contact point for users of military highways, railways, inland and coastal waterways, and such troop carrier and cargo airlift transportation as the components made available. It arranged for movement and advised and assisted both shippers and receivers, to insure that all of the transport capability was used effectively. It operated the MACV Traffic Coordinating Office and coordinated with terminal operators to control movement into terminals. It was also the contact point for matters of mutual interest between the Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS) and the Military Airlift Command (MAC) pertaining to transportation support of MACV. 122

(C) By the middle of March, TMA was fully operational in all three transportation modes--land, sea, and air. It had set up district field offices for local coordination of transportation matters, and had begun collecting data concerning projected ship arrivals to insure that the number of ships in RVN waters was compatible with port capabilities. Although many other factors played a part in the reduction, TMA management efforts assisted an approximate 75 percent reduction in ships awaiting discharge during the first four months of 1966. To discharge its responsibility for highway regulation, TMA established highway regulation centers in Binh Dinh, Kontum, and Pleiku provinces--on Highways 1, 14, and 19--manning these centers jointly with US and ARVN personnel.

(C) The growing responsibilities of TMA resulted in its designation as a major subordinate command of USARV. On 7 March USARV released the 507th Trans Gp from the 1st Log Comd; on 9 March MACV redesignated the 507th formally as the MACV Transportation Management Agency, an activity of MACV J4. When DEPSECDEF Vance visited Saigon on 3 April, one of the bright points of his briefing was the record of TMA. COMUSMACV told the Secretary that TMA's centralized direction and control of transportation traffic had been a major factor in the increased overall efficiency of transportation operations. 123

#### MAINTENANCE

(C) MACV experienced significant maintenance problems during 1966. As noted in the discussion of ammunition shortages, the problems derived from several related conditions and generated a combined effect more serious than the proportionate effect of each of the conditions which contributed. Materiel handling equipment (MHE), used for off-loading of cargo at sea and aerial ports, was an excellent case in

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point. The need for regular and rapid throughput created a requirement for 24-hour port operations. Cranes, forklifts, and similar items therefore fell idle for only the briefest periods of mandatory maintenance. The repair parts supply for this type of equipment, however, was insufficient to sustain the high usage rates, and the situation was complicated further by a conglomeration of makes and models among which the available spare parts were not interchangeable. As the deadline of MHE increased, the operating time of the remaining MHE increased—and the deadline of MHE further increased. The obvious solution was three-fold: introduction of new equipment, standardization of existing equipment, and more repair parts. These answers involved procurement and then movement through an already clogged pipeline—a pipeline which, ironically, the equipment in question was needed to improve. The ultimate answer required time, so interim answers—such as controlled cannibalization—were devised. MACV experienced a "logistical lag," with implications similar to those of deficit spending. It posed major management challenges.

#### 7th Air Force

(S) Of the components, 7th AF enjoyed the fewest maintenance problems, both with respect to aircraft and ground equipment. Its percentages of operationally ready aircraft remained between 85 percent and 89 percent throughout the year, with the single exception of 1 September when the figure dropped to 84 percent. Considering that a portion of the not operationally ready (NOR) aircraft represented those which had sustained combat damage, these percentages were remarkable. Aircraft in the non-op category were classified as either "not operationally ready for reasons of supply" (NORS), or "not operationally ready for maintenance" (NORM). The percentages of aircraft classified in these two categories were similar throughout the year, and in some cases identical, indicating an equilibrium in the supply and maintenance equation and a steady, if not optimum, flow of repair parts. It should be noted, however, that the comparatively low density of helicopters in the 7th AF inventory simplified its overall maintenance problem. Also, the very fact that PACAF was its own provider of inter-continental airlift served to speed the supply of repair parts, and USAF operated its own efficient STAR supply system. Such direct assets were not available to the USA component, which possessed over 1,800 aircraft of its own by mid-year, most of which were helicopters.<sup>124</sup>

(S) USAF ground equipment was less a matter of maintenance than of supply. Whereas ground forces generally possessed their authorized amounts of major end items and experienced maintenance problems, the USAF generally was able to maintain its equipment acceptably, but consistently held less than its authorized levels. The following is a

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comparison of authorized major end items of ground equipment vs end items on hand, by quarter: <sup>125</sup>

<u>DATE</u>	<u>AUTHORIZED</u>	<u>ON HAND</u>
30 March 1966	5,539	3,269
30 June 1966	6,589	4,544
30 September 1966	7,963	5,310
31 December 1966	8,345	6,843

As can be seen from these figures, the "logistical lag" was running in the vicinity of six months; only by September did the in-country equipment levels generally coincide with the levels authorized as of March. These were composite figures and included general purpose vehicles, special purpose vehicles, MHE, and base maintenance equipment. Deadline rates for this equipment remained generally under ten percent, with the predictable exception of MHE. As of the end of the third quarter, all categories of Air Force ground equipment continued to reflect a downward trend in deadline rates. Even MHE had dropped to an acceptable level. At this point 7th AF possessed approximately 67 percent of its authorized equipment in these categories. <sup>126</sup>

### III MAF

(S) The Marine Air Wing (MAW) provided all types of air support for the ground forces of III MAF. Its aircraft inventory consisted of a combination of helicopters and airplanes employing piston, jet prop, and pure jet engines. Its primary fixed-wing inventory consisted of the AAC, AAE, F4B, RF8A, and the EF10B—although it also flew such airplanes as the converted C47 "magic dragons." Its primary rotary-wing inventory consisted of helicopters of the UH34, UH1, and CH37 series. The USMC, therefore, faced maintenance requirements in some respects more complex than those of the USAF; proportionately they had many more helicopters to support, in addition to their need, in common with the USAF, to maintain substantial numbers of tactical air fighter-bombers. Deadline rates for USMC aircraft were considerably higher than those of the USAF and compared generally with those of the USA. Throughout the year, the operational status of III MAF aircraft varied generally between 62 percent and 72 percent, an approximate figure which considers the total aircraft of all types against the total operational aircraft of all types. With few exceptions, more of the non-op aircraft were down for maintenance than were down for supply, reflecting, among other factors, shortages of personnel skilled in specific aspects of aircraft maintenance. A shortage of experienced maintenance and avionics personnel, for example, was a prime cause of increased NCSM rates for the F4B during August. <sup>127</sup>

PAGE 276 OF 873 PAGES

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(C) Maintenance of ground equipment was generally satisfactory in III MAF throughout the year, the command reporting that its problems concerned supply of repair parts more than maintenance itself. Following are some of the items which were in short supply and contributed to the deadline rate:

- 1) M-79 Sights.
- 2) LVT engines and suspension system components.
- 3) Drive sprockets for tanks.
- 4) M-14 Butt plate screws.
- 5) Delco Remy and Auto Lite generators for all types of vehicles.
- 6) Transmission for M-52, M-54, M-35, and M-38A1 trucks.
- 7) Wheel cylinders.
- 8) Automatic frequency control (AFC) units for certain transmitters.
- 9) Capacitors for infantry pack-type FM radios.
- 10) Starters and compressors for certain types of fork lifts.
- 11) Seals for certain types of tractors.
- 12) Voltage regulators and overspeed governors for power generators.

The Red Ball expedited supply system was being used to procure many of these items, and III MAF predicted that with Red Ball results, local procurement, and the receipt of new equipment, deadline figures would decrease significantly. As of 31 January, III MAF reported that "all repair parts have been requisitioned and outstanding obligations are held by the supply source." On 2 March, III MAF indicated that "a shortage of spare parts caused some items to remain unrepaired for an excessive period of time," but that "aggressive supply actions at all echelons" have "significantly" reduced this number. Despite this bromide, the fact was that a shortage of repair parts continued to inhibit the command's maintenance program. <sup>128</sup>

(C) In mid-May, gradual improvement of III MAF maintenance operations was frustrated by the I CTZ political crisis. Political unrest, strikes, and a general curtailment of operations interrupted both orderly resupply and evacuation of depot repairable equipment. By 25 May, the

PAGE 279 OF 822 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

situation began to stabilize, at which time port facilities and cargo operations resumed regular schedules. The curtailment lasted ten days. Arrival of required repair parts, evacuation of unserviceable equipment, and improved capabilities in-country combined to cause dramatic improvements in both communications/electronics and motor transport deadline rates for July; the former dropped from 19 percent to 11 percent during a thirty-day period, and the latter dropped from 17 percent to less than ten percent. 129

(C) A potentially serious problem developed, however, when one-third of the command's eight-inch howitzers were deadlined because of broken panoramic telescopes. The problem was with the bonding material in the telescope prism, which reacted to the "climatic conditions" and the "continuous firing of charge seven." The 3d FSR, in Okinawa, was the closest repair facility. The situation continued into August, but by the middle of that month III MAF received four of the M-100 panoramic telescopes, and the situation was relieved. 130

USN Component

(C) USN maintenance requirements involved support of logistical facilities at Da Nang and support of the MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN task forces. During January and February, the USN began construction of permanent bases to support MARKET TIME and temporary bases to support GAME WARDEN; the former facilities were located at Cat Lo, Cam Ranh Bay, and Qui Nhon, while the latter were at Can Tho and My Tho. The logistical staff which managed these assets was located with NAVSUPACT Saigon; it requisitioned, stored, and staged materiel also—principally for GAME WARDEN sites in the Delta. The first of the Advance Base Functional Components (ABFC) for the permanent MARKET TIME bases arrived at Cam Ranh Bay during February. It was necessary that these bases be completed and fully operational by November so that they could support extensive engine overhaul requirements which would exist by that time. The GAME WARDEN bases all were operational by 15 August, with exception of some communications equipment under installation at Long Xuyen and Sa Dec. 131

(C) The maintenance equipment at the MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN bases was extensive. The principal shortcomings were lift capability, engine overhaul stands, and mechanized power measuring equipment such as dynamometers. However, they had no drydock facilities in most instances and, particularly in the case of the MARKET TIME patrol boats, very little available off-station time. Consequently, in June the USN arranged to drydock eight USCG cutters (WPB) in commercial facilities at Bangkok where, during July and August, they underwent overhaul. The percentage of the patrol boats

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operational at the time was approximately 83 percent. Four percent were deadlined for maintenance, and 13 percent were deadlined for parts shortages. The principal items of equipment deadlined were radios, cranes, forklifts, and cargo trucks.<sup>132</sup>

(C) The most serious radio difficulty involved the AN/VRC-58—a high frequency, FM, single-sideband, voice and CW tactical radio used for ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore communications. Maintenance difficulties resulted primarily from shortages of repair parts. The problem first developed in March; priority two requisitions were placed with the Naval Supply Depot (NSD) at Subic Bay, and by the end of the month, the Navy arranged for a "contractor representative" at Subic whose mission was "resolution of the problem." Despite these measures, the situation with the AN/VRC-58 did not improve until late summer.<sup>133</sup>

(U) The picture for NAVFORV was one of generally adequate maintenance, but with certain areas of difficulty. There were shortages of certain repair parts, in large measure due to the changeover to USA support. These occurred during a period of expanding maintenance requirements, due to the increased scope of MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN operations and the establishment of detachments to support them. Deadline rates, however, generally compared with similar rates for like items among all Services and throughout RVN.

#### US Army Vietnam

(S) USARV operated nearly 2,000 aircraft of some 12 different types, the great majority of which were helicopters. The operational readiness of these aircraft varied between 61 percent and 77 percent throughout the year. In general, roughly two-thirds of the not-operationally-ready aircraft were NORM and the remaining one-third were NORS. The ratio is misleading, because a common practice in helicopter maintenance was to deadline aircraft deliberately during slack periods in order to fly as many as possible during operations. As was commonly the case in the other components and in most other areas of maintenance, the principal difficulty in maintaining the USA aircraft inventory was a shortage of repair parts. At the start of the year, over 40 percent of the Authorized Stockage List (ASL) for USA aircraft was at zero balance, although there were current requisitions outstanding on all items. The overall Class II and IV stockage level was at 28 days, against an objective of 45 days. An acute shortage of trained supply management personnel at the Aviation Materiel Management Center (AMMC) further complicated matters.<sup>134</sup>

(S) Major overhaul and rebuild posed both maintenance and operational problems. It was necessary to evacuate to CONUS helicopters which required major rebuild; this was time consuming, expensive, and

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denied the combat units the use of badly-needed helicopters for extended periods. To alleviate this problem, a converted seaplane tender, the USNS Corpus Christi Bay, was deployed to RVN and arrived at Cam Ranh Bay on 4 April. This ship was crewed by civilians; its work force was the 1st Trans Bn (Seaborne). This floating aviation maintenance facility had the necessary machine shops and technical library to provide industrial type maintenance. The facility augmented the shore facilities of USARV and operated under the control of the 1st Log Comd. Some examples of its technical maintenance problems were actuator malfunctions with the CH-47 hydraulic control system; excessive failure rates of OH-13 transmission drive quill assemblies; and improper lubrication of tail rotor drive shaft bearings on the UH-1.<sup>135</sup>

(S) Maintenance of the many hundreds of major end items in the USA combat and combat support units was a very complex matter. Expedited supply of critically short repair parts obviously was important, and the USA Red Ball Express operated well. As of 9 January it had been responsible for removing some 849 items from deadline. Even so, at the end of January CINCPAC noted that while 600 short tons of repair parts had been delivered through Red Ball, principal improvement was confined to aircraft deadline rates. Some 47 percent of the bulldozers in RVN and 44 percent of the MRE was deadline at this time. Proportionately more aircraft parts requisitions were being filled, and Prescribed Load List (PLL) and Authorized Stockage List (ASL) stocks which had come with units from CONUS were being exhausted. On 6 February USARV noted that since operations in RVN depended upon a rapid establishment of the required bases and LOC, such effort called for extraordinary use of equipment. Work was being performed on a double-shift basis, reducing available maintenance time, while climatic conditions contributed to excessive wear, premature breakdown, and high consumption of repair parts; some units had deployed with used equipment. There was no engineer heavy maintenance capability in the command at the time, and there were no maintenance floats. All these factors reduced the life expectancy of the equipment because it would not be repaired until it became completely inoperable. USARV estimated that under such conditions, equipment would require replacement in three to four years.<sup>136</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV agreed with the USARV estimate. Two engineer heavy maintenance companies were programmed, but were not expected to arrive in-country until near the end of the year. To resolve immediate problems, COMUSMACV on 1 March directed MACV J4 to program replacement items of equipment on the basis of an inadequate repair capability in-country. He also directed J4 to permit cannibalization of certain items. To relieve the maintenance load on in-country resources, USARV was authorized by USARPAC to evacuate all unserviceable repairables to the 2d Log Comd on Okinawa; this established an unlimited evacuation policy for USARV and precluded the accumulation of unserviceable junk. By April USARV reported that the overall maintenance status was improving and that out-of-country evacuation of major assemblies and end items for rebuild was an important contribution to the decline in the deadline rate.<sup>137</sup>

PAGE 282 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) Some of the maintenance problems that confronted USARV during the early months of the year were shortages of publications and outdated regulations; the need to expedite evacuation of damaged equipment for rebuild; spare parts stockage for the many makes and models of like items (especially MHE) in combat support units; the surprisingly short life of the 175-mm gun tube; and high deadline rates among all types of heavy equipment used to operate ports and unload ships. To help reduce the parts problem for many types of MHE and construction equipment, in February the Army Material Command (USAMC) began a standardization program for RVN. USARV furnished USAMC its "density listing" of equipment which needed replacement. Concurrently, programs for evacuation and cannibalization provided the needed temporary relief. By mid-summer, the USAMC program began to have its effect, as, for example, in August when the 40-ton cranes in-country were exchanged on a one-for-one basis.<sup>138</sup>

(S) During March, the 175-mm gun tubes in-country were redistributed, as an interim response to the alarming deadline rate resulting from worn-out tubes. The big guns were being used intensively, and frequently were fired for extended periods at maximum charge and maximum ranges. This practice shortened tube life drastically, but the heavy cannon offered a high intensity, accurate, long range, all-weather capability which commanders depended upon; the range capability of the 175-mm gun extended to 32,500 meters, which permitted the circular coverage of over 1,200 square miles. Requisitions for additional gun tubes were placed on Red Ball, and despite the weight of the 35-foot cannon, initial replacements were airlifted to RVN. The situation was alleviated with the arrival of a surface shipment in mid-March.<sup>139</sup>

(C) In July USARV began a new kind of deadline report. It was based on "selected" items of equipment which merited special management because they were mission-critical. The sample for the first report consisted of nine categories and 14,211 major end items possessed by units throughout RVN. The country-wide deadline in this sample was 2,246, or a percentage rate of 16 percent.<sup>140</sup>

(S) Lighterage, used to unload ships and transport cargo in support of port operations, posed continuous maintenance challenges. In May, the deadline rate for LCM's varied between 26 percent and 34 percent, even though the Army had contracted commercially for additional maintenance support. In mid-August, three of eight tug boats belonging to USASC Saigon were deadlined. In this case the tugs had been transferred from Korea, had arrived in poor condition, and required complete overhaul. The Army contracted with the Thai Engineering Company to perform this work.<sup>141</sup>

(S) To assist in improving maintenance in RVN and to ease the construction burden for new facilities, CINCPAC recommended to the JCS that floating repair facilities be obtained from the USN to meet the critical need to expand in-country repair capabilities immediately.

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 283 OF 872 PAGES

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An LSD was offered for a four-month period, beginning early in April, for repair of Army lighterage, as was an internal combustion engine repair ship, the USS Tutuila (ARG-4), which could be deployed from CONUS on 9 May for a period to be agreed upon between CINCPACFLT and CINCUSARPAC. Also proffered were a 400-ton-capacity pontoon drydock which could be made available toward the end of 1966 at a cost of \$335,000, and two house barges (APL), which could billet 650 port and maintenance personnel in close proximity to their work. The Tutuila was never used for the originally intended purpose, but was retained under control of CTF 73 for support of MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN operations. The other offers were accepted and employed, however, and joined the Corpus Christi Bay as maintenance or maintenance support assets owned by the USN and supporting USARV. <sup>142</sup>

#### THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(U) Over the years, on a world-wide basis, US military aid had developed as a component of the total foreign aid program, regardless of the country involved. The cost of military assistance was included as part of overall foreign aid appropriations, and consequently, procurement of military hardware became a function of the State Department. Since US military advisors were normally in-country to oversee the employment of this equipment, the Military Assistance Program (MAP) became a "military" operation at the user level. At other levels, however, MAP belonged to foreign aid, and decisions concerning funding and procurement were essentially decisions by State coordinated with DOD. This concept proved workable for countries which were upgrading their armed forces under a planned and regulated development program. In RVN, however, MAP had ceased to be a mere component of foreign aid, directed toward the orderly improvement of the nation's armed forces. It had become the dominant aspect of foreign aid, and in fact a supply line which supported a full scale war.

(S) By the end of 1966 the US and its FW allies had committed a nine-division force in RVN; a 12-division force by the end of 1967 appeared possible. This meant that the combined US-FWMAF ground combat power would exceed that of RVNAF, to say nothing of the heavy commitment of US air and naval power throughout the country. <sup>143</sup>

(C) This build-up dictated a reappraisal of MAP support of RVNAF by OSD. It was apparent that the MAP effort must be coordinated closely with the overall logistical effort, yet the RVNAF logistical system had to retain its basic integrity against the time when it would operate independently again. Also, there were USAID funds, some of which went to the Defense Ministry, which supported the RVN economy and had to be retained separately. Finally, FWMAF received some type of military assistance, however small or large, under separate military assistance

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Order Sec Army By IAG per

PAGE 284 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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arrangements, and these programs required adjustment in terms of the country's commitment in RVN. There were many country-peculiar items, ranging from rations to vehicles, for which procurement decisions were required. These considerations caused SECDEF to decide in December 1965 that the time had come to integrate MAP funding with the appropriations allocated to the several military departments. He directed the Joint Staff and the Services to develop logistical, programming, and funding policies, and established 31 March 1966 as the transfer date. <sup>144</sup>

(C) Plans for the transfer were discussed at the Honolulu Conference. COMUSMACV's views were that the transfer should not degrade the integrity of the RVNAF logistics system, and that the US should continue to hold RVNAF accountable for control and use of MAP equipment by retaining the requirement for title control. It was important that US advisors should have access to MAP management data, both to inform themselves and to keep their counterparts advised. Finally, COMUSMACV needed diversion authority over MAP-authority to divert and change the MAP in-country where necessary in the interest of flexibility and timely support. SECDEF had imposed a ceiling of \$540 million on RVN MAP for FY 66, but indicated that additional funds would be provided through DOD supplemental appropriations. He established a budget of \$633 million for FY 67.

(C) On 5 February JCS furnished a concept for the transfer of MAP which included COMUSMACV's stipulations. This concept included, among others, the following points of interest to COMUSMACV:

- 1) The Services' roles in the field of research, development, tests, and evaluation would remain unchanged.
- 2) Assistance-in-kind (AIK) from GVN would continue as a means of compensation for MACV support.
- 3) USAID economic support of GVN, including the portion which went to the Defense Ministry, would continue without change.
- 4) The transfer would not degrade US, RVNAF, or FVMAF during the transition period.
- 5) The Services would program, budget, and fund; JCS would obtain SECDEF approval for MAP support of both RVNAF and FVMAF.
- 6) Changes (in force structure, force composition, force levels, equipment) would be proposed by MACV and passed through CINCPAC to JCS for approval.
- 7) The RVNAF logistical system would continue without substantial change, and military department directives would not alter RVNAF supply procedures without concurrence from COMUSMACV.

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8) Redistributable, e.g., excess MAP property elsewhere, would be given top priority for meeting RVN requirements.

9) Programs of support requirements for RVN would continue to be submitted through unified command MAP channels until the military departments were fully capable of handling these functions.<sup>146</sup>

(C) On 27 February COMUSMACV informed CINCPAC that MACV would retain its current organizational structure and that no additional personnel would be required as a result of the transfer of MAP responsibility. Since the headquarters paralleled the RVNAF structure, it could draw directly from the RVNAF data required for planning, programming, and forwarding requirements. Once the components announced their requirements for Service funding, a reevaluation would be made and additional personnel might then be required; if so, COMUSMACV estimated that these requirements would occur in the programming, budgeting, supply accounting, and comptroller fields.<sup>147</sup>

(U) CINCPAC informed his component commanders and COMUSMACV on 6 March that in view of the short time remaining before the anticipated approval of the FY 66 supplemental appropriations, and in the absence of implementing directives from the military departments, CINCPAC would continue to process logistical support requirements for RVN until military department implementing procedures had been developed and concurred in by COMUSMACV. The individual Services presented their concepts during the latter half of March. However, these responses essentially were general in nature and did not outline the detailed procedures needed.<sup>148</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV updated the FY 67 MAP program and forwarded it to CINCPAC by the end of March. He revised the original estimate of \$437.4 million upward to \$852.5 million, an increase developed almost entirely from the decision to program additional ROK forces. This created a \$219.5 million shortfall when compared to the DOD budget. The breakout of MAP assets at the time of transfer was as shown:<sup>149</sup>

<u>FY66</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTAL VALUE</u>
Army	\$121.6 million	\$521.6 million
Navy	18.2 million	61.6 million
Air Force	71.2 million	139.8 million
Miscellany	19.2 million	68.8 million
TOTAL	\$230.2	\$791.8
<u>FY67</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>MACV REQUIREMENTS</u>
Army	\$384.7 million	\$392.4 million
Navy	29.6 million	40.2 million
Air Force	152.0 million	339.3 million
Miscellany	66.7 million	80.6 million
TOTAL	\$633.0	\$852.5

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(U) The President signed the FY 66 Supplemental Authorizations and Appropriations Act on 25 March, and effective with the close of business on that date, the Services assumed responsibility for support of RVNAF and FWMAF. It was not possible, however, to adjust MAP's complex administrative machinery so arbitrarily. MACV had been estimating MAP requirements, based on programmed force levels and experience obtained from the military operations themselves; these estimates had been furnished to DOD through joint military channels, at which time State's coordination with DOD took place. Under the new concept, MACV and PACOM, as joint headquarters, delegated their administrative roles to the components, but retained "command and control" at their respective echelons. The new schematic portrayed separate lines, representing the Services, passing through their respective headquarters to departmental level, and converging only upon reaching JCS. The Services, therefore, faced the task of devising new administrative machinery, or more correctly, integrating the MAP mission with existing administrative machinery which could perform the functions that were previously in the purview of intermediate joint headquarters. They were unable to accomplish this sizeable task immediately, and consequently CINCPAC and COMUSMACV developed an "interim" procedure that sought to provide transition and preserve continuity. Under this procedure, MACV forwarded to PACOM additions, deletions, and changes to the MAP program and furnished information copies to the components. The MAP format was retained for these submissions, which included both requirements for material and requirements for training; construction requirements, however, were submitted by the components through Service channels. CINCPAC continued to maintain the "data base," which was input for a computer program needed to manipulate the volume of complex information that affected MAP actions.

(U) By summer, the MACV staff had held numerous meetings with counterparts in the component headquarters in order to deal with specific problems encountered by each service. With the exception of DAF, the departments had provided little procedural guidance; DA, faced with the heaviest burden of MAP management, had been unable to formulate detailed procedures. Fortunately, MACV received a good volume of direct message traffic, both from DOD and the Services, which although long on generalities and short on particulars, did provide a basis for developing "specific approach routes." These approaches were passed to the components, and MACV assumed the role of advisor and coordinator. This atmosphere of fiscal limbo impelled the MACV Comptroller to observe that "on the eve of FY 67, the commands in Vietnam faced their funding and support responsibilities unencumbered by firm, detailed guidance, policy, or instruction." As of the end of 1966 the USA was the only Service that had provided final detailed procedures for Service-funded support of RVNAF/FWMAF. AR 795-10, International Logistics - Realignment of MAP RVN to Military Functions Appropriations, 23 August 1966, and USARPAC Regulation 795-10 were received and reviewed. Meetings were held in RVN with a USARPAC team to discuss implementation of their directive before it was published. USAF and USN continued to follow

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the interim procedures specified earlier. All of the in-country procedures, including the final USA procedures, are basically MAP procedures with minor modification. <sup>151</sup>

(U) MACV Directive 415-5 was published on 15 July, setting forth the responsibilities and procedures for continuing RVNAF and FWMAF construction under new procedures required by the transfer of MAP. The authorized, funded, but unexecuted portions of MAP construction programs had become a military responsibility on 25 March. These funds were transferred by the individual services through USN channels to the Officer-in-Charge of Construction (OICC) RVN, and the OICC then assumed responsibility for their use. This had the effect of placing all military construction (MILCON) under one roof. One Service--the USN--ran the MILCON program country-wide, including under this arrangement construction for RVNAF and FWMAF. US military advisors to RVNAF played a key role in setting up new construction. They passed judgment on RVNAF requests and were themselves responsible for submitting and justifying the paper work. The advisors submitted their DD Forms 1391 (with all needed inclosures) through their own Service channels, and at MACV level the components integrated these with other MILCON requests, for approval by the MACV Director of Construction. Once approved, the components forwarded MILCON requests to their respective departments in Washington. As soon as they received the Congressional appropriations, the departments transferred the MILCON funds through USN channels to the OICC. FWMAF needs were handled somewhat differently. A bilateral agreement existed between the US and each country participating in the war, determining the nature and amount of US assistance, including construction. In practice, FWMAF submitted construction requirements directly to the US component commander concerned, and these MILCON requests were consolidated, processed, and funded like all others. The absence of a US advisor at the beginning was the primary difference, although the terms of the several bilateral agreements were overriding. <sup>152</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV recognized that the transfer of MAP would require substantial transition time, and that there would be a shakedown period during which procedural questions would be resolved. COMUSMACV desired that in the absence of clear and workable new guidance, old and proven procedures--as outlined in the existing directives on the subject--would be followed. Regardless of what might be developed, no major changes would be imposed upon RVNAF internal operation--this was a matter about which COMUSMACV felt strongly and spoke frequently. The MACV MAP Director, as best able to observe the impact of the transition, would monitor the changeover, assure continued good support, and recommend any changes in the MACV JTD which he felt to be necessary. <sup>153</sup>

(U) By October MACV was able to publish formal guidance for the support of FWMAF. This took the form of MACV Directive 795-2, entitled "Logistic and Administrative Support of FWMAF," and established that direct US support of FWMAF would be forthcoming as required, but that

PAGE 288 OF 872 PAGES

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efforts would be extended, first, to assure that upon deployment the FVMAF units were as self-supporting as possible and, second, that after deployment as much GVN support as possible would be provided. Thus the US position, briefly stated, was that it was prepared to take up the slack. How much slack would depend upon "the capabilities of the specific allied contingent," the place in which the force was deployed, and the terms of the bilateral agreements. The directive also established that FVMAF support would be along Service counterpart lines. For example, FVMAF army elements would be supported by USARV, and FVMAF navy elements would be supported by NAVFORV; funding for this support would be assumed by the US component. 154

### THE CASE OF THE M-16 RIFLE

(C) In 1965 COMUSMACV had decided to equip US, RVNAF, and FVMAF ground forces with the Colt XM16E1 automatic rifle (5.56-mm). This rifle was a descendant of the AR-15, which initially the USAF had procured as the M-16; the difference between the two models were small and consisted primarily of minor modifications in the manufacture of the bolt assembly and the substitution of lighter, more durable materials for some of the moving parts. The USA ultimately adopted the XM16E1 as standard and dropped the "X" prefix from its nomenclature, and the M16E1 became popularly known as the M-16; this was not quite the same weapon, however, as the original M-16 introduced by the USAF.

(C) The M-16 offered some substantial advantages. Because it was an accurate, high-velocity automatic weapon, it could eliminate from ground force inventories the M-1 rifle, M-1 and M-2 carbines, M-14 rifle, Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), and submachine gun. This had obvious logistical implications, and from a tactical viewpoint, effectively placed an automatic weapon in the hands of every soldier. From the rifleman's viewpoint, here was a lightweight (less than six pounds), simple, maintainable weapon that functioned easily and resisted the corrosive effects of the jungle environment. The arguments for the M-16 were irresistible and the rifle quickly became the favorite of soldiers throughout RVN. 155

(S) JCS approved COMUSMACV's request for the M-16 and the supporting 5.56-mm ammunition. There were limited existing stocks of the M-16 in COMUS and on 10 January, JCS advised COMUSMACV that an initial contract for new production had been let. This new production provided for the following monthly deliveries:

May 1966	6,696	September 1966	16,000
June 1966	16,000	October 1966	16,000
July 1966	16,000	November 1966	11,000
August 1966	16,000	December 1966	10,000

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An additional 123,000 M-16's were included in the FY 66 Supplemental Authorization and Appropriations Act (signed by the President on 25 March), but these rifles were not available during 1966 because of limited production capabilities.<sup>156</sup>

(S) On 23 January, COMUSMACV estimated his initial requirement at 179,641 rifles, a figure computed from the number of US, RVNAF, and FVMAF rifle battalions in the field. Because of limitations on initial production, it was decided to place the rifle exclusively in the hands of the infantryman until sufficient production permitted its issue to other maneuver units; ultimately, combat support units were to be included. By 22 May, for example, USARV was prepared to extend issue of the M-16 to all personnel assigned to separate infantry brigades, the headquarters company of divisional infantry brigades, personnel in the deploying armored cavalry regiment, and selected individuals in certain combat support and security units. When, however, the USN on 3 August requested 3,675 M-16's from PACOM assets, MACV opposed the move. In this instance, PACFLT required some 10,710 M-16's to equip its Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCB) which were deployed with the USMC in I CTZ, but had a JCS allocation of only 7,035. The USN position was that since the CB's were deployed with the USMC and were supported by them, a complete issue of the M-16's would permit single-weapon ammunition and parts support. MACV nonconcurred because it considered the diversion a less efficient use of the limited production: USARV engineer and construction battalions were not programmed to receive the M-16 until August 1967, and the PACFLT requirement would, if approved, force an extension of the time required for issue of the M-16 to RVNAF infantry units--first quarter FY 68 was the MACV estimate. Such were the considerations which were imposed by the initial limited production.<sup>157</sup>

(S) In August 170 M-16 Rifles each were issued to the ROKFV, RVNAF (Marine Brigade), and PHILCAG for training purposes. In September M-16 issues consisted of 200 for the Australians, 20 for New Zealand, 728 for ROKFV, 465 to PHILCAG, and 217 to RVNAF (Marine Brigade). However, on 15 November CINCPAC deferred issuance of M-16 to non-US units until authorized by CINCPAC. This deferment was placed in effect due to the M-14 rifle shortage in COMUS. Pending the lifting of this deferment the remainder of MAP M-16 rifles were held in the custody of 1st Log Comd. These consisted of 13 earmarked for VNNC, 112 for ROKFV, and 1,430 for the RVN Airborne Division. On 1 December JCS revised the M-16 rifle production allocation for the remainder of FY 67. Non-US forces allocated M-16's were ROKA (12,926), ROENL (2,708), ARVN Airborne Division (3,073), and VNNC (4,828). These were in addition to rifles previously issued and those in-country which were earmarked for non-US forces. These rifles were expected to be issued prior to 30 June 1967.<sup>158</sup>

THIS PAGE REQUESTED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By AG per

PAGE 290 OF 872 PAGES ----- 830624 -----

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(Ch 1, 30 Jun 67)

(S) The issue of the M-16's to US units was supposed to generate a return of the M-14 rifles, which they replaced, to CONUS. COMUSMACV desired to use a portion of these assets for issue to RVNAF forces, but the DA position was that expansion of the training base in CONUS would force issue of old M-1 rifles if the M-14's were not returned. On 26 January, DA formally requested that all M-14's made excess by issue of the M-16 be returned to CONUS. COMUSMACV estimated that 9,434 would be available for return, but pointed out that this figure did not include III MAF excesses, since that command did not have the authority to declare its displaced M-14's excess to the needs of the USMC. Unfortunately, some USA units held M-14's at unit level even though they had received equivalent issue of the M-16, and on 20 June DA stated rather forcefully that M-14's would not be held at unit level, but would be turned in as the M-16's were issued. Even so, on 9 August DA advised that in addition to the pressures it was facing as a result of the expansion of the CONUS training base, a slippage in the FY 66 rebuild program had occurred and further aggravated the shortage of M-14's. At the time, CONUS requisitions were outstanding for 26,118 M-14's, and only 8,633 were available from the 9th Inf Div, which was converting to the M-16. But in RVN, noted DA, there were still (theoretically) 11,546 M-14 rifles that had become excess when M-16's were issued to the 1st and 25th Inf Divs; DA requested that "necessary action be taken" to return these and thus reduce the CONUS shortfall.<sup>159</sup>

(S) A final factor bearing on the conversion to M-16's was availability of the 5.56-mm ball ammunition. DA policy was that the rifles should be issued only to the extent that ammunition was available in the necessary quantities. All of the 5.56-mm ammunition production was allocated to RVN, except for a miniscule amount required for training and testing in CONUS. The JCS announced on 27 September that "production difficulties" had occurred, that it was establishing four priorities to govern distribution of the ammunition that was available, and that no ammunition would be earmarked for the fourth of these priorities without JCS approval. The four priorities were SEASIA, training, testing, and stockage objectives in places other than SEASIA. Fortunately, production was increasing steadily; the year-end production figures (in millions of rounds) compared to the monthly allocations of CINCPAC were:

	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>
Production	34.60	54.60	63.50	78.50	93.70	108.80
CINCPAC	38.77	49.53	58.37	71.64	84.68	99.53

From the above it can be seen that by March of 1967, approximately one billion rounds of M-16 ball ammunition would be available to CINCPAC on a monthly basis, the vast majority of this ammunition going to RVN.<sup>160</sup>

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Order See Army By TAG per

(Ch 1, 30 Jun 67)

----- 830624 -----

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THE MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND

(S) As overall force levels in RVN increased, the monthly volume of passenger traffic reached saturation proportions both at the Travis AFB aerial port of embarkation (APOE) and at the Tan Son Nhut (TSN) terminal at Saigon. The problem was further aggravated at the RVN end of the air channel by the correspondingly increased volume of air cargo from outside the country and both passenger and cargo traffic in-country; TSN was called the second busiest airport in the world after Chicago's O'Hare. During the summer, therefore, the USAF began considering various proposals to ease the pressures. USARPAC recommended establishment of a CONUS to Cam Ranh Bay passenger channel. The Military Airlift Command (MAC) was considering establishment of a CONUS to Da Nang passenger channel, and part of the MAC plan involved diversion of the Travis AFB passenger load to Norton AFB, also in California. CINCPAC supported passenger, cargo, and mail service to Da Nang at an early date, because this air channel would do most to reduce transshipment in RVN. Accordingly, CINCPACAF took under advisement all recommendations and began a survey of possible routes and available support facilities. Such matters as the estimated completion date for the Cam Ranh Bay jet-capable runway were studied. The survey was to be finished by 15 August and any corrections were to be furnished by 31 August. <sup>161</sup>

(S) DA, which required the great bulk of MAC support, reacted unfavorably, reporting that it could not rearrange its "personnel requisitioning procedures" in time to furnish MAC reliable passenger data prior to February 1967. The USA estimate of monthly passenger requirements at Cam Ranh Bay in CY 67 ranged from 4,000 to 13,000—figures which approximated 40 to 50 percent of the total USA in-country monthly passenger traffic. DA could not support Norton AFB as a possible CONUS APOE because Norton was too far from a USA personnel center such as Oakland Army Terminal. As an alternate possibility, DA requested consideration of McChord AFB, Washington, located next to Fort Lewis, which could function as a processing center for 12,000 personnel each month in each direction. <sup>162</sup>

(S) On 20 August MACV took the initiative by beginning an in-country study of additional air channel requirements and by announcing a conference between interested parties on 5 September. MACV intended to secure firm requirements from the components, review airfield and ground-support capabilities, and then to discuss possibilities with MAC. MACV also was considering Bien Hoa, site of a jet-capable airfield committed largely to tactical air support, as an addition to Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay, already under study. <sup>163</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV provided CINCPAC with recommendations in a message of 11 September. These recommendations were that a MAC CONUS-RVN passenger channel start on 1 November at Cam Ranh Bay and Bien Hoa,

PAGE 292 OF 372 PAGES

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830624

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that passenger service from Da Nang be deferred indefinitely, that unrestricted cargo service start at Cam Ranh Bay on 1 November, and that mail delivery at both Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang start on 1 November. Thus, the recommendations tied all actions to a 1 November start date, provided for passenger operations at three locations (to include TSN), and for certain additional cargo and mail operations. Aerial port facilities were not adequate at the new APOE's, but MACV felt that stop-gap measures would suffice until they could be provided. The inadequacies concerned receiving facilities, passenger accommodations, and a lack of trained personnel for processing the transients. However, these were problems that could be solved by completing the bulk of the processing at the units and moving the passenger to and from plane-side in busses. The passenger estimates for Cam Ranh Bay totalled 92,598 for the 14-month period from November 1966 through December 1967; the monthly figures began with a requirement for 440 spaces during November 1966 and increased monthly to a peak of 15,893 by September of 1967. At Bien Hoa, the total estimate was 187,068 for the same 14-month period; peak load of 29,488 spaces was forecast for December 1967. These, therefore, were substantial figures and promised considerable relief for TSN. 164

(C) Unfortunately, these plans were frustrated by the question of country clearance. Existing agreements with the GVN required that MAC charters enter RVN only at TSN for reasons having to do with customs and the interests of civilian air carriers. The subject was opened first on 20 July in connection with Turnkey contractors. At that time Commander 7th AF sought unrestricted entry at either Cam Ranh Bay or Tuy Hoa, primarily to expedite the movement of construction materials being used by the civilian contractors in the airfield upgrade program, but also to improve supply operations for RVNAF and FVMAF and to reduce intra-country airlift. His letter to the GVN Minister of Communications and Transport went unanswered for two months. By this time the MACV Conference concerning additional MAC passenger and cargo routes had adjourned with the recommendations mentioned. COMUSMACV therefore brought the matter to the attention of Ambassador Lodge in a memorandum of 26 September. COMUSMACV emphasized the need to reduce APOE congestion at TSN, release local aircraft from intra-country airlift missions, and improve supply operations generally. He asked the Ambassador to secure landing rights not only at Cam Ranh Bay and Bien Hoa, but also Qui Nhon, Tuy Hoa, Fleiku, Phu Cat, Nha Trang, and Phan Rang. 165

(C) The Ambassador addressed a letter to Premier Ky on 9 October, transmitting COMUSMACV's request. However, the Premier did not act on this letter, and on 11 November the Minister of Communications and Transport advised that the matter was one requiring cabinet approval. Confronted with this intransigence, Ambassador Lodge personally spoke to Premier Ky. "It is indispensable," he said, ". . . that the military airlift contract flights be authorized to land at airports other than Tan Son Nhut. These flights are used exclusively for Department of Defense material and personnel, civilian and military. They are an

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Order Sec Army By IAG per

830624

PAGE 293 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

integral part of our operations. At the moment, we expect a great deal of Christmas mail to come in for the soldiers on these planes. Failure of the Government to authorize these planes to land at these airports would be incomprehensible." The Ambassador left a copy of this statement with the Premier, who "appeared" to agree and to intend to give the necessary orders. By the end of November, Ky passed the word through intermediaries that the proposition was satisfactory, but official notification to GVN agencies concerned seemed stalled as completely as ever. The Deputy Ambassador decided, as of 21 November, that the US would go ahead with its plan on the basis of verbal permission from the GVN if no written action proved forthcoming, in effect confronting the GVN with the fact accomplished. By the end of 1966 no such written notification had been received.<sup>166</sup>

(C) MAC had begun a mail channel to Da Nang on 7 November, but diverted the flight to Okinawa in the absence of clearance. All other aspects of the increased air operations subsequently were held from implementation pending GVN approval. At the end of November, only military aircraft had the privilege of entering the country at locations other than TSN (for example, Da Nang). There was one obstruction to the carrier operation which did not concern the GVN. This was at Bien Hoa, where the FAA had withheld beginning of passenger operations because ammunition was piled around the parking apron. A storage area was being built for these munitions, and the ramp area was cleared early in December. Passenger service began at Bien Hoa on 1 January 1967.<sup>167</sup>

#### LINES OF COMMUNICATION

##### Railroads

(C) The Vietnamese National Railway System (VNRS) was a rail net connecting the city of Hue with Saigon along routes which paralleled the eastern coast. The VNRS, however, was a railroad in name only. Its tracks were in disrepair, its road beds unsafe in many places, its rights of way heavily interdicted by the Viet Cong, and its rolling stock antiquated and poorly maintained. Moreover, the few operable sections of the VNRS were of limited value since often they led merely from nowhere to nowhere. Restoration of the VNRS was a matter of concern both for the GVN and COMUSMACV, since a reliable national railway system would provide important economic and military advantages. However, the VNRS posed a perplexing problem in that it passed for extended distances through areas infested by the VC, who could demolish the track as fast as it could be repaired (faster, in some cases) and were skilled at causing train wrecks. The VNRS, therefore, became an undependable--and somewhat dangerous--mode of transport.

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PAGE 294 OF 822 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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(S) On 28 May MACV published a plan to rebuild the VNRS. The plan was based on the idea that, as friendly forces gradually secured areas through which the railroad passed, the track could be rebuilt and policed. The plan included a provision for constructing roads along the rights of way, parallel to the track, which could accommodate security patrols. The plan envisaged four phases:

PHASE I (thru 30 Jun 1966)

Planning only.

PHASE II (1 July - 31 Dec 1966)

I CTZ - Da Nang to Chu Lai  
II CTZ - Phu Cat to Qui Nhon  
Tuy Hoa to Ninh Hoa  
III CTZ - Bien Hoa to Cu Chi

PHASE III (1 Jan - 30 Jun 1967)

I CTZ - Dong Ha to Hue  
Chu Lai to Quang Ngai  
II CTZ - Bong Son to Phu Cat  
Qui Nhon to Tuy Hoa  
Phan Rang to III CTZ Boundary  
III CTZ - II CTZ Boundary to Xuan Loc

PHASE IV (1 Jul - 31 Dec 1967)

I CTZ - Baren to An Hoa  
Quang Ngai to II CTZ Boundary  
II CTZ - I CTZ Boundary to Bong Son  
III CTZ - Completed

As of 1 June 1966, the VNRS was operative from Hue to Da Nang, Ninh Hoa to Nga Ba, Nga Ba to Ba Ngoi, Nga Ba to Thap Cham, Thap Cham to Dalat, and Xuan Loc to Saigon. This was not much of a railroad system; it involved about 100 km between Hue and Da Nang, about 200 km in and around Cam Ranh Bay, and about 50 km to the northeast from Saigon. Nothing connected with anything else. The VNRS main line should have consisted of approximately 1,148 km of track. The restoration plan provided for reconstruction of roughly 690 km of this amount through Phase IV. This objective was in line with Goal Three of the Honolulu Conference: to increase the open roads and railroads from approximately 30 to approximately 50 percent.<sup>168</sup>

(C) Reconstruction plans depended fully on funding. USAID was responsible for mainline reconstruction, and the military components were responsible for spurs. No good estimates of military expenditures for

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830624

PAGE 295 OF 872 PAGES

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

spur construction were available, but USAID planned to spend \$7 million in FY 67 for mainline construction materials, and the GVN planned another \$4 million in piasters for contracting labor. 169

(C) It was not intended that the US should construct its own military railroad system in RVN. However, facilities (spurs) and equipment (rolling stock) for exclusively military use were planned in conjunction with VNRS once the national railroad became operational again. At that time the US would become a "customer" of the GVN-owned, commercially operated national railroad—and rent the use of its facilities. So it was frankly true that, in essence, the US would be paying to build it and then paying to use it. COMUSMACV observed that "slippage in funds" for this plan might extend the restoration beyond the CY 67 objective. 170

(C) During the last six months of 1966 the actual restoration of the VNRS did not move very far. However, the Joint MACV/USAID Railroad Coordinating Committee was formed, and this body met for the first time on 8 August and each month thereafter. It was established that the first and most important need was to connect Saigon and Cam Ranh Bay. On 26 October, SECSTATE advised the US Mission that he considered this reconstruction a matter of urgency. Finally, on 10 December Mr. L. C. Reynolds arrived from the State Department in Washington for a period of some 45 days temporary duty to provide technical assistance in the restoration plan. Reynolds had been in RVN previously from 1958 through 1965 as advisor to VNRS, and offered extensive experience in the field of railroad operations, in addition to knowing personally many of the Vietnamese connected with the VNRS organization. As the year ended, this is where the matter stood. 171

Ports

(C) The lack of reliable north-south rail and highway LOC's in RVN required that much of the resupply for US, RVNAF, and FVMAF troops be distributed by sea to coastal resupply points, thence transferred by highway, rail, or air to the receiving units. Wherever possible, deep-draft ships were loaded in CONUS or PACOM ports for direct discharge to the resupply ports. However, since only three deep-draft ports existed at the beginning of 1966—Da Nang (in-the-stream discharge only), Cam Ranh Bay (two piers), and Saigon (discussed separately in Annex C—The Saigon Port)—much of the resupply was accomplished by coastal shipping from the deep-draft ports. Plans had been formulated for upgrading ports in RVN to handle the predicted increase in military and civilian cargos. The ports, other than Saigon, which were utilized during 1966 will be discussed individually. In describing the performance of these ports, the figures are in short tons (S/T) of 2000 lbs: they indicate the cargo handled and do not represent the "port throughput" as defined in USA FM 55-15. 172

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PAGE 176 OF 572 PAGES

830624

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(S) Da Nang is the principal port in I CTZ. Approximately 99,000 US and FVMAF in I CTZ, plus MAP, USAID, and civilian requirements, must be supported through this port. The secondary shallow-draft ports of Chu Lai (55 statute miles south of Da Nang) and Hue (52 statute miles north of Da Nang) receive the bulk of their cargo as intra-coastal shipment from Da Nang. Similarly, cargo put ashore over-the-beach at other points in I CTZ usually emanates from Da Nang. Although located within a natural bay or cove, Da Nang harbor is not well protected. The deep-draft facilities, located nearest to the open sea, are especially subject to weather conditions. Even those facilities located on the river that flows into the bay are not fully protected from the effects of heavy seas, since high winds enter the port from the northeast during the monsoon season, causing swells which hamper ship unloading activities, and at times cause a complete halt in unloading. Another undesirable feature of this port is its location contiguous to congested built-up areas. Additionally, due to the lack of north-south land and rail LOC's or other deep-water ports in the northern portion of I CTZ, logistic stocks are concentrated at or near the Da Nang port. The political unrest and demonstrations experienced during May and June 1966 seriously retarded port operation. During this period some facilities were unable to operate on a continuous basis and throughput at these facilities was curtailed as much as 50 percent during the period of the turmoil.

(S) Intra-coastal shipment represented approximately 20 percent of the total requirement at Da Nang. Frequent intra-country movements, dictated by the tactical situation, involved both troop movement and logistic support. Since the bulk of the resupply tonnage for secondary ports in I CTZ was supported by intra-coastal shipment from Da Nang, tactical operations supported through these ports had a direct effect on the port of Da Nang. The completion of two deep-draft piers, two LST berths, a 300-foot wharf, and the increased manning at Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPACT) Da Nang during 1966, resulted in an increase of port performance from 88,184 S/T in January to 151,921 S/T in December. 173

(S) When the planned construction program is completed, the facilities in the Da Nang port will consist of three deep-draft piers capable of receiving six ships; nine LST ramps; five LCU ramps; 1600 feet of quay wall; and lighterage sites capable of receiving barges or small craft. These facilities will have a capacity of 250,000 S/T monthly during the monsoon season and about 320,000 during good weather. The port of Hue is supplied by transshipment of cargo from deep-draft ships at Da Nang. January 1966 performance, using the marginal facilities for landing craft then in use, was 485 S/T. The completion of LCU sites during the year and increased LCU assets improved discharge rates, until in December 7,050 S/T were handled. Plans for upgrading the Hue port, not approved at year's end, included an LST channel, six LST slips, a barge wharf, anchorage for C-2 cargo ships, and associated protective wharfs at a cost of \$26.4

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830624

PAGE 297 OF 872 PAGES

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million. Chu Lai is an LST port which was improved during the year by dredging a channel and turning basin, and construction of a four-ship LST ramp. The performance of the port increased from 18,275 S/T in January to 37,430 S/T in December.

(S) The II CTZ is served by one port complex—Cam Ranh Bay/Nha Trang—and by the ports of Qui Nhon, Phan Rang and Vung Ro. Although the ports of Cam Ranh and Nha Trang are located some 23 air miles apart, they form essentially a single port complex. These two ports are interconnected by land LOC's and are jointly managed by the US Army Support Command (USASC) Cam Ranh. Cam Ranh is by far the larger of the two, and the only one with a deep-draft capability; Nha Trang is, in essence, a subsidiary facility to the port of Cam Ranh. Cam Ranh is a relatively new port designed for both lighterage and deep-draft operations. Cargo for the support of approximately 82,000 US/FWMAF in the southern half of the II CTZ pass through the port of Cam Ranh. This port is located within a natural bay whose surrounding land mass provides considerable protection. However, during three months of the monsoon season, the effects of adverse weather conditions in the form of high winds, heavy rains, and water turbulence have a measureable effect on port activities. 72,936 S/T of cargo was handled by Cam Ranh in January 1966. During the year a 300-foot barge wharf, a permanent LST ramp, two DeLong cargo piers, and a DeLong ammunition pier were completed, increasing the performance of the port to 152,807 S/T in December. The port construction program which will be completed in 1967 will provide the Cam Ranh Port with five deep-water piers capable of receiving ten ships; eight LST ramps; a marginal wharf; and 1700 feet of sheet pile wharf capable of receiving barges and small craft. The total facility capacity will be approximately 244,000 S/T monthly during the monsoon season, and approximately 271,000 S/T during the dry season.

(S) Nha Trang provides the bulk of support for approximately 20,000 US and FWMAF troops located in that support area. It is an exposed port located just south of the city of Nha Trang. Its only protection is the large Hon Tre (Tre Island) lying about ten kilometers off shore. There are no deep-draft facilities at Nha Trang, but deep-draft vessels are off-loaded there by lighterage and over-the-beach operations. Facilities constructed in 1966 consisted of four temporary LST ramps and four barge points, which increased performance from 9,678 S/T to 21,506 S/T. The four temporary LST ramps are scheduled to be replaced by three permanent LST ramps, which will provide a total port capacity of 36,000 S/T per month.

(S) Qui Nhon is a lighterage and deep-draft port located approximately 265 statute miles north of Saigon and 175 statute miles south of Da Nang. The Qui Nhon port is the only deep-draft port available to support the northern half of the II CTZ. Because of the lack of other deep water ports, and limited land LOC's, logistic stocks are initially concentrated at or near the Qui Nhon port area. As of 31 December 1966,

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PAGE 298 OF 872 PAGES

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8-30624

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approximately ten percent of total port capacity was used for intra-coastal shipments. The political unrest and demonstrations experienced during May and June 1966 caused some loss of productivity, but did not seriously retard port operations. Qui Nhon is a protected port; during the four months of the monsoon season, even though port facilities are located within a natural bay, the effects of heavy seas cause a water turbulence which hampers operations within the port. Similarly, high winds and heavy rains reduce the port capacity. The composite total of these adverse weather conditions during the monsoon period represents a ten percent loss of the port facility cargo-discharge capacity. Improvements during 1966, which resulted in increased performance from 59,360 S/T to 113,476 S/T, were the completion of one DeLong pier complex providing four deep-draft berths, and the dredging of a channel and approaches to permit access by deep-draft vessels. When the proposed construction program is completed in June 1967, the port will be further improved by addition of a sheet pile wharf, a small boat landing ramp, and four permanent LST ramps. The total capacity will be approximately 161,000 S/T monthly during the monsoon season and approximately 179,000 S/T monthly during good weather.

(S) Phan Rang, just south of Cam Ranh Bay, supports the airfield there and consists of over-the-beach offloading sites and a POL submerged pipeline facility; it receives its cargo from Cam Ranh Bay. Because of increased cargo offerings, cargo handled increased from 5,523 S/T in January to 19,174 S/T in December. Vung Ro was originally developed to support the Tuy Hoa airfield. In January 12,800 S/T of cargo was moved over-the-beach, or through the interim contractor port in the Da Rang River. The beach facilities would not be suitable during the northeast monsoon and the utility of the contractor's port during that period was doubtful. Operation JOHN PAUL JONES in mid-July cleared the area of VC and prompted re-evaluation of Vung Ro as a deep-draft port to support the airfield complex. An expeditionary port was constructed in September, consisting of a Navy cube finger pier for barges, two LST ramps, hardstand, and a connecting road to Route 1. In December a COMUSMACV recommendation to CINCPAC was favorably indorsed to JCS for development of Vung Ro into a permanent deep-draft port; a decision was pending at year's end. Existing facilities handled 16,072 S/T of cargo in December, and the completion of one DeLong pier projected for January 1967 would provide the 640 S/T per day desired capability.<sup>174</sup>

(S) The Saigon port complex consisting of Saigon, Newport, Vung Tau, and Nha Be supports the III and IV CTZ's. In III CTZ inland LOC's move cargo to the users, while the IV CTZ Delta area must depend mainly on water and air LOC. Saigon and Newport are discussed in detail in Annex C--The Saigon Port. Vung Tau facilities were initially limited to barge and shallow-draft operations which produced a performance of 6,153 S/T in January. An LST ramp and two barge landings in use by December had increased the cargo handled to 26,840 S/T in that month. Nha Be is located on the Saigon River south of Saigon and is primarily

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an ammunition-handling facility, consisting of deep-draft moorings and 13 lighterage unloading sites. Port performance increased from 25,638 S/T in January to 48,055 S/T in December.

#### The Aerial LOC

(U) The final, vital links in support of military operations in the RVN were the aerial LOC's. An appreciation of the importance of these vital links derives from several factors. Directly contributing to the importance of aerial LOC's was the topography and the military character of the operations conducted in the RVN. The railroad net in-country was confined and definitely oriented along the seaboard because of the terrain and population centers. Regardless of this inherent limitation, CY 66 proved that because of inability to maintain the point-to-point security required, the railroad net utilization would be restricted to essentially spur-line operations in the secured areas. The RVN road and highway network was not quite as restricted topographically as the railroads, but again the problem of security was paramount and the maintenance problem even more difficult. The character of military operations contributing to the importance of aerial LOC's stemmed from the non-existence of a defined battleline and unit rear boundaries. In a fluid military situation, mobility was the prime requisite, and rapid response could be accomplished only through a constantly expanding network of airfields. Air LOC's were adaptable to unit operations without battlelines. A 2.5 or 3.5 thousand-foot C-123 or C-130 aircraft-capable field could be brought into operation long before a road could be constructed. At the same time an appreciable economy in utilization of construction battalions (CB) was achieved. This is not to say that airfield construction and upgrading in CY 66 was an expedient and easily-accomplished solution to the deterrent problems of topography and military operational characteristics. For example, an appreciation of the scope of the CY 66 effort can be gained by noting that in July 1966 there were 243 listed airfields in the RVN; this number reached a total of 282 by the end of the year. Further evidence of the scope of the airfield upgrading was the geographic area involved. Airfields stretched from little An Thoi airfield on Phu Quoc Island off the SW coast to the abandoned Gio Linh airfield in Gio Linh District, which is only 2½ km from the DMZ.

(U) Interaction between the SEASIA forces buildup and airfield construction reciprocally affected both areas. The buildup was sometimes contingent upon construction capability and progress; conversely, construction progress and location of effort were often predicated upon and demanded by the buildup program. COMUSMACV found his attention focused upon the establishment or upgrading of airfields to accept tactical-support aircraft up to and including the C-130.

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830624

PAGE 300 OF 872 PAGES

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(U) The airfield upgrading program pivoted around the fluid military and political situation. Since airfields were desired at all the feasible sites, it was the military and political situation that was the deciding factor in determining the construction priority sequence. Problems interrelated to the upgrading consisted of airfield deterioration because of over-use, the shifting of construction material as the priority needs shifted, manufacturing deficiencies of specific types of airfield matting, shortages of the preferred types of airfield matting, and limitations in quantity of both construction battalions and construction materials. Notwithstanding all of this, airfield construction in the RVN measured up to expectations and provided an enviable record when measured against the problems surmounted.

(S) Decision carryovers from CY 65 projected themselves into CY 66 and served to initiate the decisions it was found necessary to make. A COMUSMACV decision early in December 1965 serves well to exemplify a major problem area of airfield construction. At that time a list of 12 airfields in sequential priority was furnished to CG USARV for development as C-130 capable. COMUSMACV added that these priorities, "have been changed as a result of recent changes in concept of operations and unit deployment dates."<sup>175</sup>

(TS) SECDEF Brown and COMUSMACV shared the same opinion at the outset of CY 66. They agreed that "the construction problem and port problems were matters of concern." Concerning the interrelated port problem, COMUSMACV explained:

In view of the construction of an artificial port which would be established to supply the airfield, I made the decision that construction at Tuy Hoa airfield would be indefinitely postponed. We would concentrate instead our construction efforts on the Qui Nhon port and develop the port at Hue.<sup>176</sup>

(S) During February airfield construction focused upon upgrading Cam Ranh's airfield design. In the middle of the month COMUSMACV decided to shift rock-crushing and earth-moving equipment to support facilities construction at Cam Ranh, and then reshift the equipment about 1 June to accomplish the redesign of the runways sufficient for C-130 operations before the rainy season. The redesign would upgrade the Cam Ranh runway from 150 feet wide and medium thickness base to 200 feet wide and an 18-inch thick base.

(S) The upgrading construction came under centralized administrative control in May, because of the prior lack of coordination of the entire program. Through a coordinated effort MACV, USARV and 7th AF developed a master plan for upgrading airfields as directed by COMUSMACV. This approach was required primarily to insure the

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availability of adequate air logistic support for forthcoming tactical operations throughout the RVN. At the initial meeting of the coordinating group, two primary decisions were reached: that the primary requirement was for C-130 airfields, and that an all-weather capability of 60 C-130 sorties/ten-hour day was required (this level would support a division-size force in a tactical operation). By 27 May the group had completed a proposed five-step master plan to accomplish the necessary upgrading, and a proposed MACV directive establishing a Joint Airfield Evaluation Committee. 177

(S) The first week in June COMUSMACV was presented the five-step master plan and a priority listing of 40 C-130 airfields requiring upgrading. After approving the master plan, COMUSMACV established the following guidelines: two areas had first priority in upgrading--Fleiku/Kontum/Darlac and Binh Long/Phuoc Long--to be accomplished in July-September; airfields in I CTZ and II CTZ coastal regions had second priority; III CTZ airfields not covered in priority one and IV CTZ airfields had third priority. COMUSMACV directed that the arrival in-country of engineer battalions from incoming troop units, ROK included, be expedited to assist the upgrading effort. Every upgraded airfield, he decided would include the Low Altitude Parachute Extraction System (LAPES) capability. By 16 July the Joint Airfield Evaluation Committee had established the ten first-priority airfields; in their priority order; these were Kontum, Plei Me East, Ben Blech, Song Be, Loc Ninh, Tak Xa, Dong Ha, Quang Ngai, Khe Sanh, and An Hoa. Because of a shortage of airfield matting, the committee decided that only three fields (Kontum, Plei Me East, and Loc Ninh) would be upgraded immediately. At the same meeting the committee established the second survey priority listing: Oasis, An Loc, Bu Dop, Duc Phong, Phan Thiet, Cong Son, Ban Me Thuot, Cheo Reo, and Tan An. Four days later CG III MAF requested that Kham Duc and Gia Vuoc be added to the list. Thus by mid-year the upgrading program had achieved a degree of coordination, but this did not solve the more mundane problems. 178

(S) The upgrading of airfields, especially to take C-130 aircraft, continued. Toward the end of March CINCPAC had identified the expeditionary airfields to be upgraded by utilizing AM-2 matting. These were Cam Ranh Bay, Phan Rang, and Phu Cat (Qui Nhon); Khon Kaen was initially to receive a runway built to permanent pavement standards. By mid-June COMUSMACV's guidance brought about a listing of ten airfields for upgrading in July, August and September. Further complicating the upgrading program was the fact that the overtaxation of air transportation was bringing about airfield deterioration. C-130's weighing 130,000 to 135,000 lbs, with high landing impact and maximum braking action, caused runway surfacing problems before the desired 5,000 sorties were reached. The MBAL steel matting was especially troublesome; the MX-10 matting was found to be superior due to its light weight, and it was cheaper than MBAL or T-17 membrane,

PAGE 302 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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while at the same time sustaining the 5,000 sorties goal. It was finally resolved to use AM-2 and MX-19 matting for runways and MSAL for taxiways and parking. The T-17 membrane was used principally for C-123 airfields. 179

(S) The progress of construction efforts at the Cheo Reo and An Khe airfields in II CTZ are an exemplification of the trials and tribulations encountered at other sites throughout the year. In mid-March both an ARVN engineer battalion and a US engineer company moved into the Cheo Reo airfield site. The ARVN battalion was assigned to construct a new C-130 capable runway adjacent to the existing runway. The US company was to complete a hasty C-130 airstrip by rehabilitating the old strip and enlarging parking aprons, while work was underway by the ARVN battalion on a more permanent facility. This joint effort was considered essential because the expected completion date of the main runway would not meet the deadline demanded by anticipated operational requirements. The company completed its assigned task in April but the hasty airfield steadily deteriorated under heavy operational traffic. By 15 July the poor condition of the pierced steel planking (PSP) on the runway required that the airfield be closed to all C-130 traffic except that used for support of tactical emergency operations. 180

(S) The problems encountered in the An Khe construction effort were slightly different but of no less a serious nature. After the airfield became operational, the blowing of tires on C-130 aircraft landing on the An Khe PSP became critical by April. Some temporary solution became an urgent matter, since closing the runway for asphaltic surfacing would impose an unacceptable completion date. In April the worst portion of the runway received a new PSP surfacing, but by June the same condition reoccurred at an unacceptable level. A solution arrived at was to shift the C-130 traffic to the adjacent T-17 membrane-covered Camp Radcliffe strip in July. Since a C-130 capability had to be maintained at the site, AM-2 matting was diverted from Phu Cat on an interim basis until the completion of the asphaltic runway allowed its return to the original destination. By August 1966, Camp Radcliffe was completed and operating satisfactorily. 181

(S) The sequence of events related to the upgrading at Dong Ha airfield in I CTZ exemplified the changing military situation's impact upon construction activities. Dong Ha was one of the initial ten airfields selected for upgrading to C-130 capability. COMUSMACV became vitally interested in this particular site in July because of its tie-in with Operation TALLY HO. After a MACV survey on 20 July, COMUSMACV directed that upgrading begin immediately. The construction was to include LAFES, T-17 membrane taxiways, and Peneprims (a dust palliative) runway shoulders. At the end of the month, COMUSMACV directed that the runway be surfaced with MSAL matting and that an alternate airfield for Dong Ha be selected for upgrading. In order to satisfy the MSAL matting requirement, the material scheduled for delivery to Kontum in mid-August had to be diverted to Dong Ha. After the first aircraft landing on the new runway suffered cut tires, the installation of matting was terminated and all installed matting was

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removed. By mid-September, COMUSMACV determined that AM-2 matting should be utilized at Dong Ha. After considering Quang Tri as the Dong Ha alternate, that site was rejected in favor of the Khe Sanh site. The upgrading of Khe Sanh began in late August, but after the experiences with the deficient MBAL matting at Dong Ha, the alternate site was also surfaced with AM-2 matting. Khe Sanh became operational on 12 October as the alternate airfield in the Dong Ha area, while Dong Ha itself became operational five days earlier.<sup>182</sup>

(S) In July Chu Lai, Dong Ha, and Phu Cat bulked large in the construction program. COMUSMACV recommended the construction of a crosswind runway at Chu Lai, utilizing AM-2 matting. The MACV Airfield Evaluation Committee selected and gave priority listing to 12 airfields on 16 July. In addition, CG USARV accomplished surveys in II and III CTZ's, while COMNAVFORV did the same in I CTZ. CINCPAC informed JCS that the original plan for expeditionary airfields in RVN was based on obtaining an operating capability in a minimum time period. This had been adhered to in the case of Cam Ranh Bay and Phan Rang, but now the criteria were an indefinite operational usage and 150-foot runways and 75-foot taxiway minimums, which reflected an increase of 50 percent. CINCPAC pointed out that this reduced the advantage of nominal additional construction time.<sup>183</sup>

(S) Airfield upgrading received heavy emphasis in August. Reflecting the increased construction activity, CG II FFORCEV submitted 20 airfields on 12 August for upgrading, with the comment that these "reflect desired priority of construction." In the same vein, COMUSMACV and COMNAVFORV agreed upon ten airfields to be upgraded by the end of September, with first priority given to Dong Ha, Khe Sanh An HQ, and Quang Ngai. COMNAVFORV had been following the established guidelines throughout the year but in August indicated that he would like to have a representative on MACV's Airfield Evaluation Committee, even though COMNAVFORV's responsibility was focused in the I CTZ. At the end of the month, COMUSMACV directed the immediate upgrade of Khe Sanh to C-130 capability, to include the use of steel matting with priority second only to Dong Ha. By the middle of September the Director of Construction was able to provide the more preferred AM-2 matting for both Dong Ha and Khe Sanh. COMUSMACV observed: "We may run into some trouble in upgrading the airfield at Khe Sanh since the enemy could well react if they observed the construction activity on the airfield. It would be decidedly to the enemy's interest to disrupt our efforts to upgrade this field to take sustained C-130 traffic."<sup>184</sup>

(S) The airfields in I CTZ were receiving special attention during September. COMUSMACV pointed out that an "AM-2 runway will be desirable if not essential during the northeast monsoon season." In the middle of the month the Khe Sanh construction appeared behind schedule, because no bunker or revetment material was on the site, the necessary air transportable dozer was still at Cam Ranh Bay, and the

PAGE 304 OF 373 PAGES

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CB's were on site but unable to start work until materials arrived. The first week in October, however, found COMUSMACV optimistically observing that, "the construction of Khe Sanh airfield. . . seems to be ahead of schedule at the moment." At the same time his meeting with CG III MAF brought forth the suggestion that they consider a second airfield somewhere between Hue and Quang Tri, which would give a little more depth to the battlefield. While touring with SECDEF McNamara in mid-October, COMUSMACV noted: "Both Khe Sanh and Dong Ha airfields are now all weather C-130 capable, and covered with aluminum matting. I am greatly relieved to have these airfields completed before the northeast monsoon season comes in full force."<sup>185</sup>

(S) A corollary problem area was that of airfield maintenance, and the large number of airfields in RVN expanded the scope of this problem. COMUSMACV pointed out that "there are now more than 200 airfields used in varying degrees by US military fixed-wing aircraft in RVN." The maintenance constraints included limited numbers of engineering troops, lack of available construction material, materials being allocated to the highest tactical priorities, and engineering troops available being employed in tactical operations construction. On 3 November COMUSMACV listed 62 airfields requiring upgrading to C-130 capability; 24 of these fields were to be accomplished during the balance of FY 67. COMUSMACV elaborated: "The estimated total requirement of 62 fields continues to be realistic. It can be expected, however, that many changes in specific names or locations of requirements will occur as will the priority and order of construction as some airfields are added and others dropped due to a changing tactical situation." In II CTZ, CG I FFORCEV had already pointed out that tactical operations and rapid deployment of airmobile forces over a 31,000 square mile area influenced by enemy situation, terrain, and weather, made it necessary to possess the capability to construct, on short notice, all-weather airfields anywhere within the zone.<sup>186</sup>

(S) As CY 66 ended, the upgrading program was progressing slowly because of the unavailability of MSAL matting. Even in November it was realized that requirements dictated that the balance of in-country assets would have to be utilized for the upgrade of II CTZ airfields (English and Oasis). The recommended priority list for C-130 capability included 15 airfields in December: Lai Khe, English, Dau Tieng, Soui Da, Ple Djering, Tra Bi, Oasis, Cong Son, Phu Lai, Dong Tre, Phuoc Vinh, Phu Tuc, Quan Loi, Song Mao, and Plei Trar. An overall total of 65 airfields was required to support currently planned or projected operations. These 65 were identified by three categories: forward deployment, logistical unit base, and tactical unit base. Included in the listing were those fields projected for completion by the end of FY 67. At the end of 1966 An Hoa, Duc Pho, and Quang Ngai had been completed as C-130 capable airfields; these were in addition to the completed programs at Dong Ha and Khe Sanh.<sup>187</sup>

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PAGE 705 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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## COMMUNICATIONS

(U) Future military analysts writing of the counterinsurgency environment of RVN will undoubtedly point out several major factors in the military make-up of successful prosecution of this type of warfare. Air-mobility, fire support from ground, sea, and air; effective logistics; and accurate and timely intelligence, will all be seen as key areas. Impinging upon all of these, a major and occasionally limiting factor was communications. As is true of any facet of warfare, communications needs imply communications problems. In the counterinsurgency milieu the communications experts have had many problems to solve. The astounding rapidity of manpower buildup; the hitherto un-battletested air mobility of the maneuver units; the fact that "we don't own the real estate," giving rise to installations in insecure areas; the varying terrain, mountainous on one hand and jungle-covered in another; the high noise-level of tropical areas; the need for management as well as operational and maintenance responsibility among the several Services--these were some of the problems faced. The wonder is, perhaps, that they were solved at all.

### Tactical Systems

(C) In 1965 the supply of a tactical communications system had to coincide with the rapid buildup, and the problem continued throughout 1966 as the manpower doubled. During 1966 the in-country assets included the following radios: AN/PRC-8, 9 and 10; AN/GRC-3 through 8 family; AN/PRC-25; AN/GRC-125; AN/ARC-44 and AN/ARC-54; AN/VRC-12 series; AN/GRC-89 and AN/VRC-34; AN/PRC-74; AN/GRC-106 and AN/PRC-93 (KWN-2A).

- 1) During the year the AN/PRC-25 and AN/GRC-125 replaced the AN/PRC-8, 9 and 10 as well as the AN/VRC-10.
- 2) The AN/PRC-74 and AN/GRC-106 began to replace the AN/GRC-87, AN/VRC-34 as well as the AN/PRC-93.
- 3) The AN/ARC-54 also replaced many of the older AN/ARC-44's.
- 4) The AN/VRC-12 series (to include the VRC-46, 47 and 49) became a much used vehicular mounted radio and also replaced the AN/VRC-10.

(C) Throughout 1966 the new series of FM radios (AN/PRC-25 series, AN/VRC-12 series and AN/ARC-54) were distributed to units in the field and showed several advantages:

- 1) More frequencies could be used, since these radios could be tuned to every 50 KHZ instead of the 100 KHZ of the older sets.

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PAGE 306 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

8-306-24

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

2) the sets have a wider frequency range, covering 30-75.95 MHz. The AN/ARC-54 has a frequency range of 30-69.95 MHz.

3) The AN/PRC-25 series and AN/VRC-12 series as well as the AN/ARC-54 have retransmission capabilities.

4) The new series of radios are pretuned on each 50 KHZ, as compared to manual tuning of the older series of radios. The pretuned frequencies allow quicker changing of frequencies.

5) The new series of radios are also much simpler to use and require less operator training.

6) The new series of radios are module configured, thus allowing for quicker, easier, and wider repair at maintenance facilities.<sup>188</sup>

(C) During 1966 the new AM (SSB) radios AN/PRC-74 (2-11.99 MHz) and AN/GRC-106 (2-30 MHz) began to replace the older AN/GRC-87 and AN/VRC-34 as well as the AN/PRC-93. The AN/PRC-74 is a manpack radio and allows for long range patrol capabilities. The AN/PRC-74 can be used at base station, but the AN/GRC-106 has been found better suited for this type of employment.<sup>189</sup>

(C) By August 1966 a new type of squad radio was coming in-country to replace the current PRC-6. This was the PRT-4/PRR-9, which would allow a receiver to be operated independently of the transmitter and could be placed on a trooper's helmet for small-unit one-way communication. The need for just such lightweight tactical equipment had been pointed out by USARV on 10 March, when they requested that all Army combat units in RVN be provided with light-weight tactical, airmobile communications equipment such as had earlier been issued to the 1st Cav Div. By August 1966 the VRC-12 family had been proved in the field and was working well, as were the PRC-25 sets. The PRT-4/PRR-9 units were also being tested and during November all USA and III MAF units, except some support and service elements had converted. As back-up for the tactical equipment, many non-military Collins KWM-2A transceivers had been obtained. These were SSB sets covering the heavily-used 2-30 MC range, but with adequate power, especially with the 3OL-1 amplifier, to supply effective long and short range communication. Additional contingency communications could be obtained through use of the AFRS radio and TV stations, the various MARS stations and the radio and TV-configured Blue Eagle airplanes.<sup>190</sup>

(C) In addition, varized tactical (light) troposcatter equipment was being brought steadily in-country, as well as varized tactical very high frequency (VHF) and varized tactical microwave (MW) equipment, to expand the Southeast Asia Wideband System (SEAWBS).<sup>191</sup>

(C) The long lines systems provided the basic communication channels for support of the bulk of primary command, control, administrative and logistic communication requirements to and within RVN and constituted

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

PAGE 307 OF 372 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

a significant portion of the SEAWBS. At the beginning of 1966 there were several long lines systems to and within RVN to include:

- 1) Back Porch, a heavy troposcatter system interconnecting Vung Tau, Saigon, Nha Trang, Pleiku, Qui Nhon, and Da Nang in RVN and Warin in Thailand. At Nha Trang the system interfaced with the Wet Wash Cable System.
- 2) Cross Bow, a light tropo system which provided alternate routing and backup capacity for the Back Porch system.
- 3) Southern Toll, a GVN Postes and Telecommunications (P&T) microwave system which provided circuit extensions from the SEAWBS into the Delta area of RVN.
- 4) Syncom, a synchronous-communication satellite link providing two channels between Saigon and Hawaii.
- 5) Wet Wash, a high quality 60 channel cable system between Nha Trang and the Philippines.

With the exception of a limited number of channels on the Southern Toll System, no commercial circuits were leased for long lines communication requirements.<sup>192</sup>

(C) Throughout 1966 communications facilities were utilized to the maximum. In May it was reported that available long lines assets were "inadequate" to perform all validated requirements; in July "minimum essential communication requirements were met," while in August, "marginal improvements were made in meeting essential communications requirements." Some progress was made in upgrading existing systems and installing new facilities.<sup>193</sup>

#### Integrated Wideband Communications System (IWCS)

(C) As early as October 1965 the Defense Communications Agency (DCA) had been tasked to develop a plan for the upgrade of the SEASIA long lines system, which had become inadequate to support US contingency plans, into an IWCS which would provide numerous channels of communication for both tactical and strategic use on a highly-reliable basis. The IWCS would include the use of multichannel tropospheric scatter systems and both line-of-sight and diffraction microwave systems. The plan to integrate the several long-lines systems in SEASIA into a single system and to increase the communications capacity of the entire system was developed by DCA and was approved in principle in April 1965 by SECDEF. A formal approval was signed 4 August 1965

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

-----830624-----

PAGE 308 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

and contracts were awarded on 5 September to Philco for the Thailand portion, and Page Communications Engineers, Inc. for the RVN portion, for construction and implementation of the IWCS project. US Army Strategic Communications Command (USASTRATCOM) was designated as the system operator. The contractor estimate for completion of the IWCS, identified within DA as Telecommunications Program Objective (TPO) 53-65, was 1 August 1966. An additional upgrade to the IWCS was proposed by CINCPAC on 11 October 1965.<sup>194</sup>

(S) On 16 December 1965 COMUSMACV submitted two Flag Pole items on the IWCS. The accelerated pace of the NVA/VC infiltration made essential the upgrades recommended by CINCPAC and acceleration of the construction schedule. CINCPAC's and COMUSMACV's requests to upgrade and expand IWCS was approved by SECDEF and an obligation authority was granted on 20 January 1966. Funding was completed on 27 January and amendments to the Philco and Page contracts were finalized on 1 February by the US Army Materiel Command (AMC). On 4 February DA informed COMUSMACV that funds for upgrading IWCS had been included in the FY 66 Supplemental Budget. \$141.5 million had been funded for SEASIA communications with \$96.3 million to support IWCS. There was a shortfall in funds available for work already contracted. \$25 million was programmed to cover this deficit, while \$71.3 million was programmed for the additional construction requested by CINCPAC and COMUSMACV.<sup>195</sup>

(C) In February trouble was experienced in obtaining reliable communications via the troposcatter equipment between Vung Tau and Green Hill (Thailand), owing to atmospheric propagation degradation at certain seasons (see section on "Time Block 2"). COMUSMACV recommended reappraisal and possible amendment of the approved 4,39L Cable System Project to provide for a cable link between Vung Tau, RVN and Sattahip, Thailand. The rationale was that a submarine cable would provide twice as many circuits, provide better quality, require less maintenance, and be less susceptible to interception, interference, jamming or destruction. However, such a cable would cost five times as much as a troposcatter link and would take much longer to install.<sup>196</sup>

(S) In March COMUSMACV and CINCPAC informed JCS that the IWCS, as then approved and funded, would require further expansion to support planned operations and the increase in deployed forces. In RVN, expanded operations in the Delta and additional force deployments to the central and northern regions would increase user demands. Eleven additional IWCS links would be required to serve new bases or release tactical equipment in the Delta area. To serve the Saigon area, five new IWCS links would be required, and for central and northern RVN, nine new links would be required. In addition, 12 trunk upgrades were required to serve the increases mentioned, and to support the increasing troop population at existing bases. These upgrades were in the form of additional channels.<sup>197</sup>

THIS PAGE RECLASSIFIED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 309 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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(S) Similar upgrading was requested for Thailand IWCS subscribers. It was recognized that the expanded capability proposed could not be completed in 1966, but it would be possible to install many of the MW links during the year, thus freeing some tactical equipment for other uses. Also, costs could be saved if the desired expansion were taken into consideration during current construction. CINCPAC recommended on 9 March that JCS validate the expansion of the IWCS system to permit tasking the appropriate Services for preparation of the necessary TPO's. In a message of 23 April, COMUSMACV concurred in the CINCPAC estimate for upgrade of the IWCS, with only minor changes in the number of requested channels. DCA had requested and had been given a statement of priority for installation of the new systems. On 7 May COMUSMACV reported that "the rapidity of the force buildup which began in June 65 in SEA quickly exceeded a corresponding communications buildup. Fixed communications facilities now lag this buildup by approximately twelve months."<sup>198</sup>

(S) On 8 July COMUSMACV sent CINCPAC a mid-year status report, stating, inter alia, that IWCS had been validated for additional communications requirements, by CINCPAC, in February, and that JCS in turn had validated these requirements and forwarded them to OSD for approval. "All concerned are awaiting OSD approval," COMUSMACV reported. Meanwhile, slippages had been encountered in the implementation, owing to various problems associated with transportation, production, construction priorities, and strikes."<sup>199</sup>

(S) On 29 July COMUSMACV once again submitted his communications requirements to CINCPAC. There were inadequate long lines channels to meet circuit requirements for incoming combat units which constituted a "serious commo shortfall which is of great concern to this command." Moreover, organic tactical signal equipment was being used in long lines roles, but would have to be released as soon as possible to support highly mobile and flexible combat operations during "the next few critical months." COMUSMACV again stated that this was an urgent operational requirement, asked for immediate and positive action and ended with "request your full support." This upgrade was approved by SECDEF on 2 August 1966. Construction of IWCS sites as approved proceeded on a priority basis throughout 1966. Delays were encountered due to non-availability of equipment and the limited test and the quality-assurance capability of the contractor. An ambush of contractor personnel in November also contributed. During December 1966 two of the 20 Phase I IWCS links were put in service and the remaining 18 links were expected to be operational by June 1967. All 28 links of Phase II of the IWCS were expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year.<sup>200</sup>

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By IAG per

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PAGE 310 OF 872 PAGES

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Project 439L

(C) In April 1965 COMUSMACV had recommended to CINCPAC that DCA explore the feasibility of a coastal submarine cable as a long-range solution to long lines communications problems. DCA recommended the cable in November 1965 and on 17 December DEPSECDEF Vance had approved funding for the cable. The TPO was approved on 12 February 1966. During the period of planning, a representative of Underseas Cable Corporation briefed MACJ6 officers on the corporation's capability of providing submarine cable and mobile, van-mounted terminal equipment. On 3 November 1965 COMUSMACV, in a message to CINCPAC, urged that the submarine cable be considered in conjunction with the actions then underway to expand and upgrade the IWCS. COMUSMACV expressed concern over the vulnerability of the troposcatter communications sites in RVN and suggested that the cable would be a method of providing additional communications over a system which would be relatively secure from destruction by hostile action. On 24 November CINCPAC validated the MACV requirement for a coastal submarine cable, and on 17 December JCS explained that funding for the cable had been approved before the fact by SECDEF, for presentation in January 1966 to Congress for inclusion in the FY 66 supplemental budget.<sup>201</sup>

(C) Preliminary land survey work was completed on 29 April 1966 and contractor estimates at that time were that the first three links would be completed 10 November 1966 and the last three on 31 March 1967. Surveys of cable landing sites, beach approaches, and cable undersea routes were completed during the first week of May 1966. On 3 May CINCPAC J6 was briefed on the results of the site surveys and signed the site concurrence drawings. On 19 May COMUSMACV reaffirmed the MACV requirement for a September 1966 operational date for the first three cable links. The coastal cable would consist of six links as follows, in order of priority; Vung Tau-Nha Trang, Nha Trang-Qui Nhon, Qui Nhon-Da Nang, Vung Tau-Sattahip (Thailand), Qui Nhon-Cam Ranh Bay and Cam Ranh Bay-Vung Tau. Each link would be capable of 60 voice channels and would be interconnected to the IWCS system. Construction of shore terminal points commenced in October 1966; at year's end sites at Da Nang and Sattahip were completed, and other sites were proceeding on schedule except for Cam Ranh Bay. The entire cable system was projected to be operational by June 67.<sup>202</sup>

SEAITACS

(C) The Southeast Asia Integrated Tactical Air Control System (SEAITACS) was a concept developed and promulgated by CINCPAC on 15 February 1966, from a plan approved for implementation by JCS on 7 January. The plan had arisen as the result of a conference held by CINCPAC on 2

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

PAGE 311 OF 872 PAGES  
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

August 1965, and provided for integration of all SEASIA tactical air control facilities provided by MAP and US component Services, under the direct control of the Commander 7th AF. Addition of new facilities and bases and modernization of existing facilities were included in the plan. The plan identified four separate but related elements:

- 1) Tactical Air Control Complex.
- 2) Direct Air Support Elements
- 3) Aircraft Control and Warning Elements.
- 4) Air Traffic Control Element.

Communications circuits in support of the SEAITACS plan were reported on 14 July 1966 as being "very austere" and "will of necessity remain so until completion of the IWCS."<sup>203</sup>

#### Project Talk Quick

(C) In April 1965 CINCPAC submitted his secure voice requirements to JCS. The DCA was directed to prepare a plan to satisfy these requirements; the immediate needs in SEASIA made it necessary that an interim plan be prepared. This interim plan was designated Project Talk Quick, and was an expedited measure to provide secure voice communications to a limited number of subscribers within PACOM, with a target completion date of 1 October 1965. The system was to be compatible with a plan to provide secure voice on a world-wide basis. In SEASIA there would be 24 wideband subscribers in the Saigon/TSN area, seven narrowband subscribers in other parts of RVN, and nine narrowband subscribers in Thailand and Laos. The plan called for a switch at TSN to switch wideband subscribers between each other and wideband subscribers to narrowband subscribers. All subscribers would have access to the PACOM secure voice system via the overseas switch (OSS) located at Phu Lam. The wideband portion of the system was turned over to subscribers on 15 November 1965. The overseas secure voice system providing service between Hawaii and Saigon/TSN became operational, and was turned over to the use of subscribers, on 1 January 1966. The overseas secure voice system was hampered because of a time delay in removing echo suppressors from circuits in the Philippines for each overseas call. To improve the system, echo suppressors were installed at the Phu Lam OSS on 4 April 1966. The suppressors in the Philippines were then removed permanently.<sup>204</sup>

(C) The narrowband portion of Project Talk Quick was delayed pending procurement and installation of signalling and conditioning equipment. Installation commenced on 4 April and was completed in

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 312 OF 872 PAGES Order Sec Army By TAG per

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

830624

~~SECRET~~

June; the Thailand/Laos portion of Project Talk Quick was brought into the system in May. Plans were made to add 16 additional up-country subscribers to the system, in an expansion known as Talk Quick Bravo. A major improvement in the system would be realized when an AN/FTC-31 four-wire dial central office was installed in Saigon. Such a system was planned for installation on or about 1 September, but the site location at the new MACV headquarters would not be developed sufficiently to permit installation until December 1966--a date that would slip further with the decision to build the new MACV headquarters at TSN. The new system would provide for a total of 76 subscribers in the Saigon/TSN area. Testing and acceptance of the Talk Quick system commenced on 20 April and was completed on 30 June, at which time seven up-country narrowband subscriber terminals became operational and were turned over for use of the subscribers. 205

(S) On 1 June COMUSMACV answered a JCS and CINCPAC inquiry as to improvements in operational effectiveness of combat forces resulting from introduction of secure voice capabilities. COMUSMACV reported that secure voice communication was gaining wide acceptance by commanders and key staff personnel. Secure voice was a more desirable system than the use of codes or on-line printer systems, he felt, because it was more responsive in imparting immediate and timely results. Information could be discussed and amplified, thus insuring common understanding, and coordination was speeded. Finally, the Talk Quick system was most responsive to operational needs. Information involving operations, downed aircraft, intelligence reports, VC incidents, and political situation reports passed over the system. An ARC LIGHT strike had been cancelled, for example after the aircraft were airborne. 206

#### Satellite Communications--Pacific

(C) On 5 January 1966 DCA promulgated a plan for expansion of SEASIA communication by use of satellites, to satisfy an urgent requirement for alternate communication paths. The satellites would be used to provide high reliability wideband circuits. A portion of the required channels would be provided by the Initial Defense Communications Satellite System (IDCSS) and the remainder by leasing channels from Communications Satellite Corporation (CSC). As of 13 July six IDCSS ground stations were programmed for Pacific Area, to be equipped with AN/NSC-46 air-transportable, vanized link terminal equipments. Two were to be located in RVN, one at Nha Trang and the other at TSN. Two terminals were to be in Hawaii and one each in Okinawa and Clark AFB. CSC ground stations would be located in Hawaii, Guam/PI, Japan and Thailand. Implementation of the plan for expansion of SEASIA communications by use of satellites was to be accomplished in four stages:

1) Deployment of AN/NSC-46 terminals by January 1967. This would provide two high-quality, voice-equivalent circuits between any two

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED PAGE 313 OF 872 PAGES  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

-----8306-24-----

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

of the terminals, with a total of four circuits to be available initially between RVN and Hawaii.

2) Lease of surplus CSC channels in early 1967 to provide 10 each high quality channels from Hawaii to CSC terminals located in Thailand, Japan and Guam/PI.

3) Upgrading of IDCSS capacity by modification of terminal equipments in two stages: from initial two to five voice-equivalent circuits in January 1967, and from five to eleven voice-equivalent circuits by July 1967.

4) Provision of commercial terminals in Thailand and Guam/PI to upgrade capabilities to 60 channels each terminal by mid-1968.

The first seven of 19 planned IDCSS satellites were launched from Vandenberg AFB, California on 16 June 1966. The ground terminal equipment arrived at Nha Trang and Ba Quec in October, were installed, and R&D testing conducted through December. A second launch was scheduled for early 1967.<sup>207</sup>

#### Radio Frequency Allocations

(C) One of the problems facing MACV communications was that of crowded frequencies. By international regulations, adhered to by the USG and the GVN, the frequencies are a country's natural resources. As such MACV J6 was obligated to petition the GVN for all frequency assignments. However, authority to parcel out frequencies was delegated by GVN to the Director General of P&T. In 1966 this was being done on a frequency-by-frequency basis, since the two to 12 MC bands and the 20 to 100 MC bands were fully utilized. The parceling, however, led to a conflict in assignment between MACV J6 and JGS J6. MACV J6 recognized P&T as GVN's frequency-coordination center and used frequencies only after receiving approval for them; however, JGS J6 merely informed P&T of the frequencies that they were using. In case of conflicting assignments, P&T listed the frequencies as shared, rather than informing the JGS J6 that the frequency was not clear. In addition, there was a delay in clearing frequencies with P&T of about one to two weeks; the delay in clearing with JGS J6 usually took more than a month.<sup>208</sup>

(C) By usual standards, an infantry division should have 116 tactical FM frequencies. In 1966, only 84 frequencies were assigned for all US troops in-country. There were, however, a few frequencies that became unused from time to time, but there was no contingency frequency area, except that of the SEASIA contingency frequencies.

THIS PAGE REGRATED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 314 OF 372 PAGES

830624

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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Despite the crowding and heavy use of frequencies, there were no international repercussions. One reason for the lack of international interference was that local assignment authority for HF frequencies was limited to 500 watts. HF assignment authority for over 500 watts was retained at CINCPAC and area wide coordination was accomplished prior to assignment. Skip conditions in the VHF range did not cause noticeable interference. Frequencies in the range starting at 27 MC were permitted assignment on a local basis, regardless of power. 209

(C) The problem of interference, intentional or unintentional, has always been troublesome, since the earliest days of radio communication. In the crowded bands of RVN, without continuous "policing," the problem could become acute. Unintentional interference could be caused by propagation conditions, poor tuning of transmitters, or mistaken setting of transmitting frequencies, among other causes. Intentional interference is another matter; this could range from enemy jamming (which, in 1966, was not a problem) to an attempt by the enemy to deceive (which the VC tried on many occasions) and to the so-called "bootlegging" of a frequency channel (which happened rarely in 1966). The problem of locating interference, intentional or unintentional, is a matter of locating the source of the radio frequency interference (RFI). As late as August 1966, MAC J6 did not have an RFI unit in-country responsive to its needs. On a favor-by-favor basis, assistance in RFI tracking was supplied by 7th BRU or the USAF Security Service, with results that ranged from "inadequate to poor." An electromagnetic compatibility team was assigned to temporary duty in RVN for approximately 60 days in early 1966. The team was highly effective in locating transmitters that had caused unintentional interference. Permanent assignment of that team or a similar one to be under operational control of MACV was requested.

(C) Conservation of frequency space can be accomplished by proper management and operational methods. One important lesson learned by MACV J6 is that any joint staff should have a frequency manager, and that proper emphasis should be placed on frequency assignment from the beginning. 210

(C) A satisfactory solution to the problem of congestion on the FM frequencies was found in the conversion (by replacement) of US wide-band equipments with the new family of FM equipment having a capability of using only 50 KC instead of 100 KC bandwidth. This provided an additional 566 channels for exclusive US use. MACV J6 frequency management also paid close attention to terrain and propagation conditions, in connection with equipments and output power, so that the same frequency could be shared by two separate units on a non-interfering basis. The institution of this management method is another lesson learned that could be passed on to future joint staffs in other areas of the world. And, since the host government owns the spectrum, another lesson learned, in frequency management liaison, is that rapport with the host government is most important. 211

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

PAGE 315 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

## Propagation Problems - Time Block 2

(FOUO) On 24 November 1965, MAJW6 promulgated a notice on a propagation problem identified as Time Block 2. During the winter months, a condition exists which tends to degrade the troposcatter system in SEASIA from November through April. During this time block, atmospheric conditions are such that the probability of troposcatter radio signals escaping through the ionosphere instead of being reflected back to earth becomes greater. This condition can cause excessive noise levels and might also cause either long-term or short-term signal fading. MACVJ6 noted that in mid-December 1964, signal levels had dropped to abnormally low values. In January 1965, signal intensities were weak for several hours each day, seriously deteriorating voice communications and causing unacceptable service to many teletype subscribers. A complete loss of communications between Saigon and Nha Trang was experienced for a period of 19 hours. The answer, MACVJ6 suggested, is not only to upgrade the systems, which was being carried out through 1966, but the contingency planning of alternate means of communications during any future total loss of troposcatter communications. <sup>212</sup>

(C) The low part of the sunspot cycle may have been a help rather than a hindrance in 1966, since certain frequencies that lend themselves to skip conditions, hence the chance of international crowding of frequency channels would be short-haul frequencies without an ionospheric reflection. The problem of high noise-level in a tropical environment was one that "you have to learn to live with." Although the five decibels of tropical noise level could be augmented by lightning storms, such storms were not reported to be a problem on the operating level. The long-haul HF SSB communications were interrupted during sunspot flares (such as the MARS circuits) but this was not a problem of a large nature. Despite propagation problems, communications "got through" by reason of the buildup of sophisticated communications systems which were of "good quality," although they did not meet DCA standards. MACVJ6 planning of in-country and out-of-country communications was based on the factors of real time communications, redundancy and restoration of circuits on a priority basis, which would offset propagation problems. <sup>213</sup>

## Security of Installations - Use of Civilians

(S) The civil disturbances in April and May 1966 (See Chapter VIII), particularly in the Da Nang area, focused command attention on a potential problem of operating and maintaining fixed-plant communications facilities with non-combatants. The evacuation of all non-combatants from Da Nang was not necessary, but if it had been, essential communications terminals might have become inoperable. Many

PAGE 316 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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civilian employees remained on site during the disturbances, but it was doubtful that they would be willing to remain during periods of intense combat. Facilities that relied upon civilian contractors included the troposcatter radio sites in the IWCS, certain emergency radio nets, the Decca Company navigation system, the interim Autodin terminals and relays, and some electrical power generating sites. About 250 civilians (150 US and 100 other FW and RVN personnel) were employed in these facilities. On 26 April COMUSMACV requested CINCPAC to replace contract technicians with military personnel as soon as possible, and to provide adequate incentives for essential technicians to remain on site during emergencies. 214

(S) Replying to COMUSMACV on 28 June, USASTRATCOM stated that the serious situation in relying upon civilian contractor personnel for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of the IWCS was recognized. CONUS training of military personnel for such O&M, it was pointed out, would be predicated upon establishment of a training facility at the USASCS. As an interim measure, area contractors were tasked with the operation of an on-the-job training (OJT) program. This OJT, however, would be inadequate to provide fully competent O&M personnel, since it was based on the assumption that they would have been trained in CONUS before arrival in-country. Installation of a CONUS training facility was scheduled for completion date of 31 October 1966. The output of the facility between August 1966 and August 1967 would be only 243 technicians; however, and some contractor O&M personnel would still be required. Adequate incentives, it was believed, were provided contractor personnel, to include PX and commissary privileges, medical care, use of military postal facilities, and equivalent-grade club privileges. Also, monetary compensation, the responsibility of individual contractors, included a considerable overseas wage differential and individual contract-completion bonuses. 215

(S) CINCPACAF had meanwhile (on 10 May) pointed out that the USAF did not have O&M capability without contractor assistance. In order to attain O&M capability, OJT would have to be established. Full military manning on a continuing basis would be severely limited after October, stated CINCPACAF, owing to rotation of trained personnel, but "past operating experience has indicated no serious morale problem by using a shift of mixed civilian-military at the same geographical location. Recommend this policy be continued. Air Force pro-pay is authorized for all personnel currently utilized in these systems." DCA-SAM, in an evaluation report of 29 July, also pointed out that only two of 12 assigned military personnel possessed the experience required in technical control operations of the SEAWES. 216

(C) Remote, costly installations in unsecured areas would seemingly present a problem. Yet during 1966 none of these installations had been attacked. MACV J6 officers hazarded a guess that perhaps the VC

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG por

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PAGE 317 OF 872 PAGES

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

thought they would have a built-in communications system without cost, once the US troops moved out. The Washington Daily News suggested a different, somewhat sinister, reason. Two channels of a new MW system, it was reported, had been assigned to the exclusive use of the RVN military command, but were also being used by the VC, and, the News quoted Electronics magazine, "with the tacit approval of American Forces." The News article went on to say that US officials felt it better to allow the enemy to use the system than to take a chance on having them destroy it. 217

## TV and Radio in RVN

### Television

(C) During the visit of SECDEF in November 1965, the decision was made to introduce television to RVN, both as a morale factor for US forces and as a psywar tool for GVN. The development of the program was to consist of three phases: initial telecasting for two hours daily, utilizing airborne facilities to begin within three months; telecasting from studio facilities in Saigon for 40 hours per week within three to nine months; and development of a seven-station system for a 55-hour telecasting week, to be complete within nine to twelve months. The system was to have two channels and be a dual facility for use by both the US and GVN. The initial portion of the project utilizing the airborne facilities was given the name of Project Jenny. 218

(C) On 3 January 1966, GVN authorized the US to establish TV stations at Saigon, Can Tho, Da Nang, Hue, Nha Trang, Qui Nhon, Pleiku, Ban Me Thuet, and Quang Ngai to serve morale purposes for US troops. At the same time the USG agreed to assist GVN in establishing its own TV capability by providing advice, technical assistance, and equipment. TV sets for US military personnel would be sold through exchange facilities. Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) would be responsible for the US-operated channel, and would provide the bulk of assistance for the GVN channel, but it was considered desirable that the support of the GVN channel appear to come through the Joint US Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO). This would be possible with the use of two channels. To avoid dual contracts, and to permit joint use of some facilities, DOD would build both broadcasting facilities and be responsible for the installation of equipment. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) would reimburse DOD for those facilities used exclusively in support of GVN. 219

(C) To minimize the problem of training repairmen and providing spare parts, it was desirable that all TV sets provided to the GVN be of one make. Therefore, USAID requested MACV assistance on a reimbursable basis for provision of the initial 2,000 sets for civilian

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 318 OF 872 PAGES

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distribution and for maintenance capability. USAID estimated that 3,500 sets would be distributed to hamlets in RVN. GVN planned to sell sets to private individuals as a revenue-producing medium after all community sets had been distributed. COMUSMACV was quite concerned lest sets sold through the Exchange system reach the black market and negate the efforts of GVN; stringent ration controls were placed on the sale of TV sets to personnel authorized Exchange privileges. After the DOD/USAID/State decision to introduce TV into RVN, MAF funded for 500 23-inch TV sets to be distributed to RVNAF units. The sets were received on 14 January 1966, and were distributed and installed prior to 20 January. The MACV Signal Advisory Division requested and obtained six months of concurrent spare parts, technical manuals, 300 antenna kits, field maintenance equipment, and authority for a five-man maintenance and instruction team. A mobile training team was requested from DA to retrain ARVN electronic specialists as TV repairmen to serve as cadre for developing an in-country training capability. <sup>220</sup>

(4) On 12 January SECDEF instructed AMC to procure six mobile TV broadcasting vans through a sole-source contract with RCA. The sole-source contract was to insure minimum stockage requirements and maximum interchangeability of spare parts. The vans were to be ready as follows: two on 1 July 1966, one on 1 October 1966, two on 1 January 1967, and one on 1 April 1967. One year's supply of high-mortality repair parts would be deployed with each van. <sup>221</sup>

(5) Initial broadcasting utilizing airborne facilities was scheduled to commence on the eve of the traditional TET holidays, 20 January. However, poor conditioning, transmitter, antenna, and aircraft engine problems delayed the initial broadcast, which finally began on 7 February. Depot level test equipment had not been received, but the use of maintenance floats permitted uninterrupted reception for RVNAF viewers. <sup>222</sup>

(6) Plans for construction of AFRTS facilities in Saigon were approved in February, and on 15 March \$640,000 was released to OICC from DA. Official GVN authority to build a ground TV station in Saigon was received in April, and work began immediately. The target date for building completion was 1 September, and for broadcasting, 15 October. A tentative site for the GVN facility was being studied at Can Tho. <sup>223</sup>

(7) The two C-121 aircraft used to support Project Jenny were provided and crewed by the Oceanographic Air Survey Unit, Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, Maryland. This unit provided a third C-121 equipped only for radio broadcasts. The Project Jenny aircraft could also provide other valuable communications assistance to MACV. COMUSMACV informed his component commanders that these aircraft could be used for airborne communications relay, airborne command and control using two on-line crypto circuits, psywar broadcast, and other missions. The one aircraft, rigged only for heavy radio broadcasting, could prove especially valuable without reducing the effectiveness of the TV broadcasting mission of the other two.

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED PAGE 319 OF 872 PAGES  
Order Sec Army By IAG per

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COMUSMACV announced that he desired maximum utilization of the aircraft's capabilities. Both 7th AF and MACSOG expressed requirements for the aircraft as Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Centers. A VC attack on TSN on 13 April damaged both TV aircraft extensively, but the crews were able to effect repairs on one in time to permit uninterrupted broadcasting on the two-hours per day, five-day per week schedule. COMUSMACV congratulated the unit on the fact that from the start of the broadcasting on 7 February through 16 April, no scheduled flights had been cancelled. <sup>224</sup>

(C) In May three TV tower footings were poured for the large TV installation in Saigon, and on 10 June the studio building had progressed up to the second level, with the transmitter building construction starting about the same time. On 18 May MACV J6 forwarded a DF to MACDC to issue construction directives for site development and installation of seven mobile TV stations, to be located at Da Nang, Chu Lai, Qui Nhon, An Khe, Pleiku, Nha Trang (on Hon Met Island), and Can Tho, with completion dates ranging from 15 September 1966 to 15 April 1967. <sup>225</sup>

(C) The Saigon TV antenna departed CONUS on 28 June aboard USNS Bowling Green, top-loaded to facilitate quick off-loading. The TV tower, 400 feet in height and self-supporting, was delivered to the Saigon site in August, and contract was let by OICC to the Trylon Company for erection, with starting date of 1 September. The transmitter building was completed during August and two mobile TV units arrived in country, the one for Da Nang on 30 August and the one for Qui Nhon on 31 August. The Saigon TV station was scheduled to be 25 KW in power and the mobile stations (varized) four KW. The Qui Nhon station was opened by COMUSMACV in a ceremony on 25 September. The Da Nang station became operational 22 October, with CG III MAF officiating, followed by Saigon on 25 October. Prime Minister Ky and COMUSMACV participated in opening ceremonies for the Saigon station and cornerstone-laying ceremonies for the GVN station on 31 October. <sup>226</sup>

#### Radio

(C) The AFRS radio broadcasting system in RVN was originally designed in 1962, and at that time concentrated in one percent of the area of RVN. With the buildup, AFRS no longer met the requirement for radio service. On 5 February 1966, SECDEF approved a MACV radio plan which provided for three 50 KW, two 10 KW and three 250 watt stations to cover RVN. The Saigon and Da Nang stations were scheduled to be operational in October 1966. All other stations were to be operational by the end of FY 67. On 3 August 1966, real estate negotiations were going on for location of the Saigon and Da Nang transmitter and antenna sites. The Saigon antenna was to be a non-directional system consisting of one tower, while the Da Nang

PAGE 320 OF 872 PAGES

~~SECRET~~

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830624

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installation would be a two-tower directional array.<sup>227</sup>

(C) In August 1965, after three years of effort to obtain permission of the GVN to establish MARS radio stations in RVN, COMUSMACV requested the US Embassy in Saigon to pursue the matter. Approval was officially requested in an Embassy note of 12 November 1965, after a favorable series of discussions with GVN officials. Formal agreement was given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 25 November 1965. All military services quickly set up stations and by 25 December 1965, 13 stations were operational. During 1966, MARS stations in Vietnam increased to 37 approved and 36 operational. A total of 297,322 messages were handled by MARS operators. A major contribution to morale was the phone-patch service provided to hospitals.<sup>228</sup>

#### Footnotes

1. See the 1965 MACV History (TS) for a discussion of decisions to increase US force levels in RVN. See also CINCPAC CY 66 Capabilities Programs (TS), Vols I thru III, Hq CINCPAC, 12 Feb 66, and CINCPAC CY 66/67 Requirements/Capabilities Programs (TS), Vols I thru III, Hq CINCPAC, 20 Oct 66. (U)
2. Msg (C), SECDEF, 3736, 110031Z Feb 66.
3. CINCPAC CY 66 Capabilities Programs (TS), Vol I, Hq CINCPAC, 12 Feb 66.
4. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 22 Jan 66.
5. MFR (TS), MACOCC, 10 Mar 66, Subj: MACV Commander's Conference, 20 Feb 66 (U).
6. MFR (S), MACJO2, SNOOL45, 16 Feb 66, Subj: Management of Measures to Overcome Logistics Shortfalls (U).
7. Draft Briefing (S), MACJ4, 22 Apr 66, Subj: Joint Logistic Support Concept (U).
8. MFR (S), MACJO2, SNOOL45, 16 Feb 66, Subj: Management of Measures to Overcome Logistics Shortfalls (U).
9. Draft Briefing (S), MACJ4, 22 Apr 66, Subj: Joint Logistic Support Concept (U).
10. Support of USMACV advisory elements was found excellent during a series of country-wide interviews conducted by military historians during July 1966. However, the excellence of this support derived as much from locally-developed working arrangements with other nearby forces as from the supply policies of MACV.

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 321 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

830624

# UNCLASSIFIED

11. Draft Briefing (S), MACJ4, 22 Apr 66, Subj: Joint Logistic Support Concept (U). COMUSMACV felt strongly about the need to retain the integrity of the RVNAF logistical system. See section on MAP.
12. Ibid.
13. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 1 May 66; Briefing (TS), for Lt Gen Myer, J4, JCS, 1 Aug 66.
14. CINCPAC CC Telecon Item 055/66 (TS), 11 Jul 66, Subj: SECDEF-CINCPAC 1 July Conference (U); MFR (S); MACJO3, 16 Jul 66, Subj: Briefings-- Long Range Stationing Plan (U).
15. Msg (S), CINCPAC, 181811Z Aug 66, Subj: Additional NMCBS (U).
16. USMACV Command History (TS), 1965.
17. Msg (S), CINCUSARPAC 9749, 7 May 66, Subj: Responsive Log Spt for Combined Ops in RVN (U); For a discussion of Class V supply procedures, see sections on Class V and Expedited Supply Procedures.
18. Msg (C), COMUSMACV, MACJ4, 09214, 23 Mar 66, Subj: Responsive Logistic Support for Combined Operations in RVN (U).
19. Msg (S), CINCUSARPAC 9749, 7 May 66, Subj: Responsive Log Spt for Combined Ops in RVN (U).
20. Ibid.
21. Briefing (U), MACJ4, Nov 65, Subj: Transfer of HSAS Functions (U).
22. Staff visit to Chu Lai and Da Nang TACR, III MAF by Maj J. W. Duncan, USMC, 4-8 May 66.
23. Reports (S), Operations of III MAF in Vietnam, Jan, Feb, and Mar 66 (U).
24. Ibid.
25. Supplemental Data Sheet (U), MACJ42, 22 Mar 66, Subj: Expedited Supply Procedures (U).
26. Ibid.
27. Briefing (U), MACJ4, Nov 65, Subj: Transfer of HSAS Functions (U).
28. Msg (U), COMUSMACV, 36619, 15 Oct 65, Subj: Transfer of HSAS Functions (U); Ltr (U), MACJ42-MS, 7 Jul 66, Subj: HSAS Transfer of Functions (U).

# UNCLASSIFIED

29. Msg (U), COMUSMACV, 02056, 21 Jan 66, Subj: Transfer of Fiscal Functions HSAS (U).
30. Interview (U), Lt Col Brandewie, MACJ4, by Capt Greene, MHB, 19 May 66, Subj: Transfer of HSAS Functions (U); DF (C), MACJ42-MS, 8 May 66, Subj: Transfer of HEDSUPFACT Functions (U); Ltr (U), MACJ42-MS, 7 Jul 66, Subj: HSAS Transfer of Functions (U).
31. Daily Staff Conference, COMUSMACV (S), 13 May 66; Ltr (U), MACJ1, 21 Mar 66, Subj: Hq Area Command (U).
32. Msg (S), COMUSMACV, MACJ4, 18002 26 May 66, Subj: Stockage Objectives (U).
33. Msg (S), CINCPACFLT, 292244Z Jun 66, Subj: Stockage Objectives (U); Msg (S), COMNAVFORV, 271202Z Jun 66, Same Subj.
34. Msg (S), COMUSMACV, MACJ42-FL 18798, 1 Jun 66, Subj: Commanders' Conference 1600 Hours 30 May 66 (U); Msg (S), COMUSMACV, MACJ00 25842, 27 Jul 66, Subj: Stockage Objectives Within RVN (U).
35. Msg (C), COMUSMACV, MACJ42-FL 25851, 27 Jul 66, Subj: Stockage Objectives in RVN (U).
36. Memo (C), MACJ03, 25 May 66, Subj: Possible Realignment of Logistics Functions (U).
37. Ibid.
38. Ltr (S), USARV AVD-PO, 29 Jun 66, Subj: Possible Realignment of Logistics Functions (U).
39. Ltr (C), MACJ43-FM, 16 Jul 66, Subj: Realignment of Logistics Functions (U); Briefing (TS), for Lt Gen Myer, J4, JCS, 1 Aug 66.
40. Briefing (S), 11 Jan 66, for COMUSMACV, Subj: Logistics Briefing (U); Msg (U), COMUSMACV, MACJ4 16757, 16 May 66, Subj: Discharge of Reefer Vessels (U).
41. Msg (S), CINCPACFLT, 300613Z Jun 66, Subj: LOGSUM No. 25 (U); Msg (S), CINCPACFLT, 150441Z Jul 66, Subj: LOGSUM No. 27 (U).
42. Ltr (S), MACJ45, 15 Aug 66, Subj: LOGSUM (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 29; MCNEVAL Jun 66 (S), MACJ31, 30 Jul 66
43. Ltr (S), MACJ45, 15 Aug 66, Subj: LOGSUM (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 29; Msg (S), COMNAVFORV, 271202Z Jun 66, Subj: Stockage Objectives; Msg (S), MACJ, 180022, 26 May 66, Subj: Stockage Objectives; Msg (S), CINCUS-ARPAC, GPLO-MM 17376, 5 Aug 66, Subj: Stockage Objectives Within RVN (U).

# UNCLASSIFIED

44. Msg (S), CG III MAF, 101238Z Jul 66, Subj: LOGSUM No. 27 Period Ending 300800 Jun 66 (U).
45. Briefings (S), 11 Jan and 25 Feb 66, for COMUSMACV, Subj: Logistics Briefing (U).
46. Ltr (S), USARV AVC-DH, 1 Jul 66, Subj: Operational Reports on Lessons Learned for Period 1 Jan 66 - 30 Apr 66; Msg (S), CINCSARPAC, 14536, 2 Jul 66, Subj: CH-47 Availability (U).
47. Msg (S), CINCPAC, 180142Z May 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Msg (S), JCS, 5690, 30 Jun 66, Subj: Flag Pole Item F-1 (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 240211Z Jun 66, Subj: Flag Pole Item F-1 (U).
48. DF (S), MACJ312, n.d., Subj: CH-54 (Flying Crane) Aircraft (U).
49. Ltr (C), MACJ21, 11 Aug 66, Subj: Logistic Support OV-1 Army Aviation Units (U).
50. MFR (S), MACJ03, 13 Jul 66, Subj: Conference--Situation in I CTZ (U).
51. Interview (U), Maj E. S. Korpel, 25th Inf Div G3 by Cpt Muhlenfeld of MHB, May 66, Subj: Communications in Infantry Brigades (U); Ltr (U), MACJ42-MS, 28 Jun 66, Subj: Radio Sets AN/PRC-25 and AN/GRC-125 (U).
52. MONEVAL January 1966 (S), MACJ341, 28 Feb 66; Ltr (S), MACJ45, 15 Aug 66, Subj: LOGSUM (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 29.
53. Briefing (S), 11 Jan 66, for COMUSMACV, Subj: Logistics Briefing; Msg (TS), COMUSMACV 01466, 15 Jan 66, Subj: Security of Nha Be (U).
54. Ibid.
55. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV 01466, 15 Jan 66, Subj: Security of Nha Be (U).
56. DF (S), MACJ4, 20 Aug 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report--ACofS, J4 (U).
57. These figures are taken from the monthly historical reports rendered by MACJ4, an example of which is the previous reference.
58. Msg (C), COMUSMACV, MACJ4 16019, 9 May 66, Subj: Comparison of Costs of POL by Tankers to Coastal Locations (U).
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.

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61. Msg (S), COMUSMACV, 25842, 27 Jul 66, Subj: Stockage Objectives Within RVN (U); Msg (S), COMUSMACV, 24045, 13 Jul 66, Subj: Engr Co (Pipe-line Const) for RVN (U); Briefing (TS), 1 Aug 66, for Lt Gen Myer, J4, JCS (U).
62. DF (S), MACJ4, 20 Mar 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report--ACofS, J4 (U); Msg (S), COMUSMACV, 01662, 17 Jan 66, Subj: MACV Emergency POL Supply Plan (U); Msg (S), CG USARV, 51229, 30 Mar 66, Subj: Accompanying Supply of Packaged Class III (U).
63. This point is well illustrated by the air munitions situation. On 1 January there were six air munitions in the critically short category. By the end of April, the number of critically short air munitions had doubled because of this problem. (TS)
64. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefings (TS), January-April 1966 (U).
65. An exception to this statement is the 5.56-mm ammunition for the Colt XM16E1 rifle. Issue of the rifle itself was controlled by the ammunition ASR, a condition which developed because of insufficient lead time to expand the ammunition production line. This subject is covered in the section dealing with the M-16. (S)
66. Msg (TS), CINCPAC, 130353Z Apr 66, Subj: Aircraft Munitions Expenditures (U); Msg (S), COMUSMACV 05036, 16 Feb 66, Subj: MK24 Flares (U).
67. DF (TS), MACJ4, 19 Feb and 20 Mar 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report.
68. Msg (S), COMUSMACV 06555, 1 Mar 66, Subj: Critical Air Munitions (U); DF (TS), MACJ4, 19 Feb 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report.
69. Msg (TS), CINCPAC, 040037Z Feb 66; DF (TS), MACJ4, 19 Feb 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report; Msg (S), CINCPAC, 050021Z May 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U).
70. Msg (S), COMUSMACV 00159, 20 Jan 66, Subj: VNAF Munitions (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 122300Z Mar 66, Subj: Air Munitions for VNAF (U).
71. Msg (S), COMUSMACV 06555, 1 Mar 66, Subj: Critical Air Munitions (U); Msg (TS), COMUSMACV, MAC3748, 8 Jul 66, Subj: Back Channel from General Westmoreland to Admiral Sharp (S); Msg (S), COMUSMACV 06754, 3 Mar 66, Subj: Emergency Resupply (U); Msg (S), 2AD (7AF) DM35734, 6 Mar 66, Same Subj:
72. Briefing (TS), 3 Apr 66, for DEPSECDEF, Subj: Munitions Shortages (U).
73. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV 12200, 8 Apr 66, Subj: USAF A/C Munitions Shortages in SEA (TS); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 190945Z Apr 66, Subj: Transfer of Ammunition (U).

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 325 OF 872 PAGES

~~TOP SECRET~~

-----830624-----

~~TOP SECRET~~

74. Msg (S), CINCPAC, 100040Z Apr 66, Subj: Combat Sorties Cancelled Due to Ordnance Shortage (S); Msg (S), 7AF 0617, 121218Z Apr 66, Same Subj; Msg (S), 7AF 06500, 141441Z Apr 66, Same Subj.
75. Msg (TS), CINCPAC, 130353Z Apr 66, Subj: Aircraft Munitions Expenditures (U); Msg (TS), COMUSMACV 13308, 171110Z Apr 66, Subj: Radar Controlled Bombing (U); Msg (TS), CINCPAC, 171350Z Apr 66, Subj: B66/Fighter Radar Buddy Bombing (U).
76. Msg (TS), CINCPAC, 150319Z Apr 66.
77. Msg (S), COMUSMACV, MAC3092, 18 Apr 66, Subj: Ref Telecon and CINCPAC Msg 100040Z Apr (Back Channel) (S).
78. DF (TS), MACJ4, 19 May 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report; Msg (TS), SECDEF 8036, 081853Z Apr 66, Subj: USAF A/C Munitions Shortages in SEA (TS); Msg (TS), CJCS 1974, 13 Apr 66 (Personal from Gen Wheeler).
79. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV MAC3748, 081630Z Jul 66, Subj: Back Channel from Gen Westmoreland to Adm Sharp (S); Msg (S), CINCPACFLT, 142121Z Aug 66, Subj: LOGSUM No. 29 (U); Army Times, Sep 66..
80. DF (S), MACJ4, 24 Apr 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report; Briefing (TS), 1 Aug 66, for Lt Gen Myer, J4, JCS (U).
81. Msg (TS), JCS 8037, 081946Z Apr 66, Subj: Aircraft Munitions Shortages in SEA (TS); Msg (TS), JCS 8558, 142345Z Apr 66, Subj: Aircraft Munitions Shortages in SEA (TS).
82. Msg (S), CINCPAC, 222135Z May 66, Subj: CY 66 Air Munitions (U).
83. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV, HWAL838, 18 Jun 66, Subj: ARC LIGHT (From Gen Westmoreland to Maj Gen Resson) (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 172040Z Aug 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U).
84. Msg (S), COMUSMACV 22486, 302037Z Jun 66, Subj: Logistics Summary (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 26 (U); Msg (S), COMUSMACV, 24364, 151200Z Jul 66, Subj: Logistics Summary (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 27 (U); Ltr (S), MACJ42-MS, 30 Jul 66, Subj: LOGSUM (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 28 (U).
85. Msg (S), CINCPAC 092226Z Jun 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Msg (S), CINCPACAF, CS54239, 210319Z May 66, Subj: Shortage of 2.75-inch Completed Rounds with Motor and WP Heads Flag Pole G-12 (S); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 280447Z May 66, Subj: 2.75-inch Rocket with Warhead, Smk, WP (U).
86. Msg (S), CINCPAC, 092237Z Mar 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U).

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

-----830624-----

PAGE 326 OF 372 PAGES

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

87. Msg (S), CINCPACAF, CS54411, 200549Z Jul 66, Subj: Flag Pole Report for July 66 (U).
88. Msg (S), JCS 8137, 021755Z Aug 66, Subj: Status of Flag Pole Items B-9 and G-12 (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 240800Z May 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 092237Z Mar 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 222135Z May 66, Subj: CY 66 Air Munitions (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 172227Z Aug 66, Subj: CY 66 Aircraft Munitions Allocations-Chg No. 3 (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 172228Z Aug 66, Subj: CY 66 Aircraft Munitions Allocations-Chg No. 6 (U).
89. Msg (S), CINCPAC, 172040Z Aug 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 240800Z May 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U).
90. Briefing (TS), 14 Jul 66, for Hon Paul H. Nitze, SECNAV (U); Msg (S), JCS, SASM 7099, 192145Z Jul 66, Subj: Expedited Movement of Air Munitions to RVN (U).
91. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV MAC3748, 081630Z Jul 66, Subj: Back Channel from Gen Westmoreland to Adm Sharp (S); Msg (S), COMUSMACV 20546, 160045Z Jun 66, Subj: Logistics Summary (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 25 (U).
92. Msg (S), CINCPAC, 262242Z Mar 66, Subj: MK24 Flares Flag Pole G-6 (U); Ltr (S), MACJ4, SN382, 24 Mar 66, Subj: MK24 Flares (U); Msg (S), CINCPACAF VC54089, 121935Z Mar 66, Subj: Shortage of MK24 Mod 3 Flares to meet Operational Requirements (S).
93. Msg (S), CINCPAC 5726, 182310Z Mar 66, Subj: PACAF Flag Pole Report (U); Memo (S), VNETF, 13 Apr 66, for SECDEF, Subj: Status report on Flag Pole Items E-1, E-2, and G-6 (U).
94. Msg (S), CINCPACAF, CS54146, 160253Z Apr 66, Subj: Flag Pole Items (U); Msg (S), CINCPACAF, CS54411, 200549Z Jul 66, Subj: Flag Pole Report for July 66 (U); Msg (S), COMUSMACV, MACJ42-AM, 280502Z Apr 66, Subj: Flag Pole Items (U).
95. Msg (S), CINCPAC, 060021Z Aug 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Supplemental Data Sheet (C), MACJ42, n.d., Subj: Ammunition Supply of US Army Vietnam (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 092237Z Mar 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 092226Z Jun 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U).
96. Msg (S), CINCPAC 080347Z Jul 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Personal experience of Cpt W. H. Mühlenfeld, MHB, 25th Inf Div.
97. Msg (S), CINCPAC, 172227Z Aug 66, Subj: CY 66 Aircraft Munitions Allocations--Chg No. 3 (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC 172228Z Aug 66, Subj: CY 66 Aircraft Munitions Allocations--Chg No 6 (U); Msg (S), CINCPACFLT, 142121Z Aug 66, Subj: LOGSUM No. 29 (U).

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 327 OF 872 PAGES

~~SECRET~~

-----830624-----

UNCLASSIFIED

98. Msg (S), CINCPACFLT, 072228Z May 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U).
99. Ibid.
100. Msg (S), CINCPAC 112040Z May 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Msg (S), CNO, 262148Z May 66, Subj: Report No. 2, Flag Pole Item F-2 (U).
101. Msg (S), CINCPACFLT, 272121Z Jun 66, Subj: Flag Pole (CINCPAC RCS 400-5) (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC 060021Z Aug 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U).
102. DF (S), MACJ4, 19 Feb 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report; Msg (S), CINCPAC, 092237Z Mar 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 092226Z Jun 66, Same Subj; Msg (S), CINCPAC, 060021Z Aug 66, Same Subj.
103. DF (S), MACJ4, 19 Feb 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report; Msg (S), CINCPAC 092237Z Mar 66, Subj: Flag Pole (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC, 060021Z Aug 66, Same Subj.
104. Msg (S), COMUSMACV, 20546, 160045Z Jun 66, Subj: Logistics Summary (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 25 (U); Ltr (S), MACJ42-MS, 30 Jul 66, Subj: LOGSUM (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 28 (U).
105. Msg (S), COMUSMACV 18690, 312301Z May 66, Subj: Logistics Summary (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 24 (U); DF (S), MACJ4, 19 Jun 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report; DF (S), MACJ4, 20 Jul 66, Subj: Monthly Historical Report; Msg (S), DA 772251, 012108Z Jul 66; Msg (S), CINCPACUSARPAC 14661, 060504Z Jul 66, Subj: 105-mm How HE Ammo (U); Msg (S), COMUSMACV 24364, 151200Z Jul 66, Subj: Logistics Summary (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 27 (U); Msg (S), CINCPACUSARPAC 14985, 090426Z Jul 66, Subj: USARV Class V Offshore Reserve (U); Msg (S), CINCPACUSARPAC 16139, 230016Z Jul 66, Subj: Offshore Reserve (U); Ltr (S), MACJ42-MS, 30 Jul 66, Subj: LOGSUM (RCS-LOGSUM) No. 28 (U); DF (S), MACJ44, 23 Mar 67, Subj: Draft 1966 USMACV Command History.
106. Briefing (TS), 1 Aug 66, for Lt Gen Myer, J4, JCS (U).
107. Briefing Summary (S), MACJ4, 10 Sep 65, Subj: PUSH (U).
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- Order Sec Army By :AG per

830624

PAGE 330 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 332 OF 572 PAGES

UNCLASSIFIED

(Ch 1, 30 Jun 67)

# UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 333 OF 872 PAGES

UNCLASSIFIED

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830624

PAGE 335 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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PAGE 336 OF 772 PAGES

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CHAPTER V

MILITARY OPERATIONS--THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

THE STRATEGY

(U) The broad goals of US national policy are best stated in the following quotes from President Johnson's State of the Union Message on 13 January 1966:

Last year the nature of the war in Vietnam changed again. Swiftly increasing numbers of armed men from the North crossed the border to join forces already in the South. Attack and terror increased, spurred and encouraged by the belief the United States lacked the will to continue and that victory was near.

Despite our desire to limit conflict, it was necessary to act: to hold back the mounting aggression--to give courage to the people of the South--and to make our firmness clear to the North. Thus we began limited air action against military targets in North Vietnam--and increased our fighting force to its present strength of 190,000 men.

These moves have not ended the aggression but they have prevented its success. The aims of the enemy have been put out of reach by the skill and bravery of Americans and their Allies--and by the enduring courage of the South Vietnamese who lost eight men last year for every one of ours.

The enemy is no longer close to victory. Time is no longer on his side. There is no cause to doubt the American commitment.

Our decision to stand firm has been matched by our desire for peace.

\* \* \*

Until peace comes, or if it does not come, our course is clear. We will act as we must to help protect the independence of the valiant people of South Vietnam. We will strive to limit conflict,

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for we wish neither increased destruction nor increased danger.

But we will give our fighting men what they must have: every gun, every dollar, and every decision--whatever the cost and whatever the challenge.

And we will continue to help the people of South Vietnam care for those ravaged by battle, create progress in the villages, and carry forward the healing hopes of peace as best they can amidst the uncertain terrors of war.

(S) To carry out these broad objectives and their implementation by JCS, CINCPAC developed strategic guidance for PACOM forces involved in the conduct of the war in SEASIA--an area involving RVN, NVN, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. Recognizing the inseparable political, economic, sociological, and military factors, CINCPAC strategy in essence provided for a discriminating application of military force at the principle source of enemy support--NVN. In defining the strategic objectives, CINCPAC maintained that the first objective must be a stable and independent non-communist government in RVN, functioning in a secure environment. The military strategy was derived directly from this objective. First was the selective destruction of the NVN war capability; second, protection of the South Vietnamese people; third, liberation of selected areas dominated by the VC; and fourth, destruction of major enemy base areas in RVN.

(TS) To accomplish this strategy, CINCPAC conceived a series of military tasks to be executed concurrently as applicable. Among these tasks were operations in the Mekong Delta; air strikes against enemy ports; power plants and fuel complexes; various operations against enemy LOC's in NVN and Laos; and preparations for mining ports, inland waterways, and the coastal waters of NVN. One related CINCPAC objective was to deter the Chinese Communists from any direct intervention in SEASIA. In his concept of ground operations, CINCPAC stated that there must be an active defense of the major political, economic, food producing, and population centers of RVN; these were needed to feed the people, deny food to the enemy, bolster the economy, and cause the enemy to import or fight for his food. The concept went on to mention the other CINCPAC operations outside of RVN which contributed to the overall strategy. The operations in Thailand and Laos and the sea-based forces were part of the single concept. Psychological warfare operations were especially emphasized.<sup>1</sup>

(TS) COMUSMACV, in implementing this concept of strategy, stated his own guidance for the conduct of operations by the RVNAF, US forces, and FWMAF's during 1966:

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED PAGE 339 OF 872 PAGES  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

~~TOP SECRET~~

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We must go on the offensive against the VC and PAVN (NVA) Main Force units now rapidly building up in South Vietnam. Our operations must be oriented toward the destruction of these forces and we must undertake an effective war of attrition against them. We have not yet adequately exploited our great advantage in mobility and firepower . . . . Major commands are expected to undertake operations which will find, fix and destroy VC forces by sustained and aggressive action . . . . The principle of economy of force will be employed in securing critical bases and installations and the attendant principle of mass will be employed in attacking and destroying enemy forces.<sup>2</sup>

(S) To accomplish the assigned mission a combined US/RVNAF Campaign Plan, AB-141, was promulgated on 31 December 1965, listing objectives, concepts, tasks, methods, and means for execution. This Combined Campaign Plan spelled out in specific terms the military and political objectives and how they were to be achieved. With this plan of action, together with intense personal command attention to the enactment of its provisions, 1966 began with high hopes that effective VC/NVA resistance could be seriously degraded by the end of the year.

(S) The basic objectives of the campaign for 1966 were to clear, secure, and assist in the economic development of the heavily populated areas around Saigon, in the Mekong Delta, and in selected portions of the coastal plain. Along with the basic objectives, the defense of significant outlying political centers was to be achieved by undertaking search and destroy operations in the surrounding areas against major VC/NVA forces. In this connection the RVNAF would be responsible for defense of governmental centers, control and protection of rice and salt producing areas, and the conduct of clearing and securing operations in selected high priority areas. US and FVMAF were responsible for the security of their base areas, clearing in the vicinity of these areas, and assisting the RVNAF in the control and protection of the rice harvest and salt-producing areas. All friendly forces were to conduct operations against VC forces in heretofore "safe haven" areas and bases.<sup>3</sup>

(S) The main task of US, RVNAF and FVMAF were as follows:

- 1) Establish and defend major bases.
- 2) Defend governmental centers and secure resources.
- 3) Open and secure certain main roads, railroads and waterways.

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PAGE 346 OF 772 PAGES

~~TOP SECRET~~

830624

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- 4) Mount sustained ground and air operations against VC forces and bases.
- 5) Frustrate VC strategy.
- 6) Provide security for expansion of GVN control.
- 7) Interdict VC land and water routes of infiltration.
- 8) Provide combat and logistics air support.

In executing these tasks, all operations of friendly forces would be conducted through centralized direction, but decentralized execution. Certain operations were to be directed by JGS, RVNAF and by COMUSMACV through the issuance of periodic operation schedules. Individual Corps Commanders and senior US/FWMAF tactical commanders were to conduct such additional operations as were needed in accordance with assigned tasks, one of which was to bring certain areas of the country under secure GVN control. The mission of subordinate commands was to conduct coordinated operations in their respective zones; to hold all military, political, and population centers; to locate and destroy VC forces; to clear, secure, and assist in the development of specified objective areas. First priority of effort was to be given to the national objectives, with second priority to be given to the CTZ objectives.<sup>4</sup>

(S) On 2 February COMUSMACV reminded major subordinate commanders that the guidance established for January and February was valid for planning operations in March and April, and expanded this by adding:

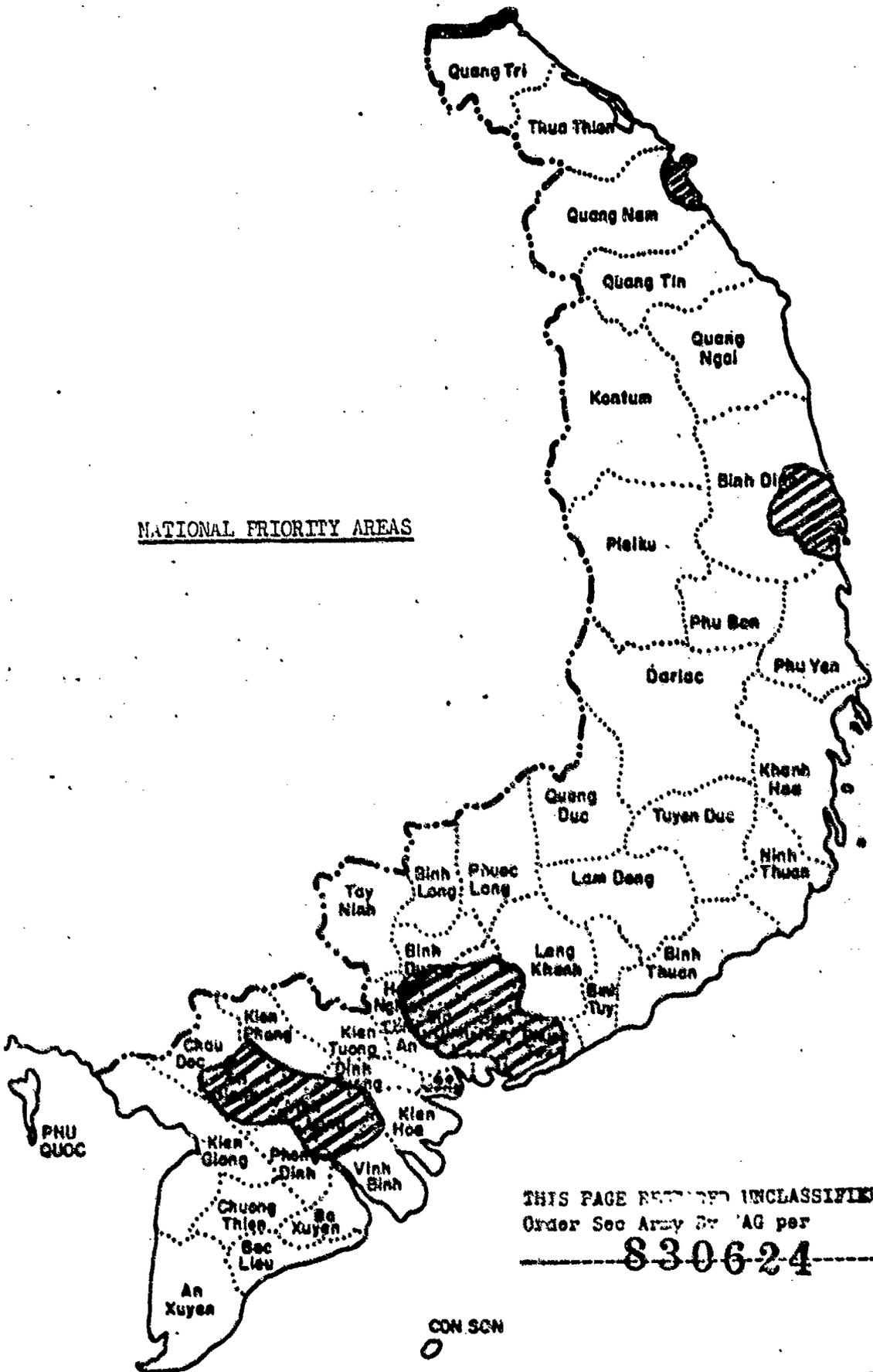
Additional forces are becoming available in each CTZ. With these added forces, we must take the offensive in operations of greater magnitude and duration. Greater effort must be applied to the gaining of more accurate intelligence on the general location of enemy formations. Aggressive reconnaissance, employing all available resources, must then find and stay with these enemy units until our forces can be deployed to fix and destroy them. Sufficient resources and time should be concentrated on important targets to insure, insofar as possible, their complete destruction. Ready reserves must be available to exploit opportunities even if this requires the standing down of local operations. Imaginative tactical plans making full use of deception and flexible enough to accommodate expansion or curtailment of operations must be developed. Full use must be made of our superior mobility and firepower in the implementation of

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PAGE 34 / OF 872 PAGES

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these plans. Major subordinate commanders will insure the security of critical installations and LOC's, base areas, and national priority areas of rural construction.<sup>5</sup>

(S) To accomplish these missions the US, GVN, and FWMAF had 195 maneuver battalions (45 US/FWMAF and 150 RVNAF) with a projected buildup during the year to 264 battalions (102 US/FWMAF and 162 RVNAF), plus more than 700 RF companies, more than 3,600 PF platoons, and almost 200 CIDG companies. To oppose this friendly force the VC/NVA could field an estimated 129 battalions in early spring, with an estimated buildup to 155 battalions by the end of the year. This comparison of strength was computed to indicate that the FWMAF had an approximate 3:1 ratio over the VC/NVA. This ratio was lower than estimated requirements for friendly vs enemy strength in a counterinsurgency situation, and much lower than the ratio the British/Malayan forces had enjoyed over the communists in Malaya. However, MACV and RVNAF had at their disposal over 3,000 aircraft of all types (approximately 1,700 of them being helicopters), medium and heavy artillery battalions in sizeable numbers, and other modern and appropriate weaponry to carry the fight devastatingly to the enemy.<sup>6</sup>

(S) On 21 April COMUSMACV amplified the concept of operation for the southwest monsoon season in Planning Directive 3-66. This directive recognized that, traditionally, the rainy season of the southwest monsoon had been accepted as favoring enemy operations, a supposition based largely on the fact that rainy weather had an inhibiting effect on the use of modern transportation and close air support. The directive, reflecting COMUSMACV's desire to dispel this myth, pointed out that the effect of weather was not the same everywhere and did not amount to total paralysis of movement. At the very worst, friendly forces should have a mobility equal to that of the enemy, and even this low point was unlikely to occur. COMUSMACV's directive concluded that the challenge of the monsoon season was to plan and conduct operations in which handicaps imposed by the weather were accepted realistically, yet during which friendly forces would continue to reap the maximum possible advantage from the mechanical equipment and superior firepower. Failure to recognize the handicaps of the weather would offer opportunities to the enemy; failure to recognize the continuing, although sometimes reduced, advantages of US technological superiority, would lead to lost opportunities. Directive 3-66 further emphasized clearing and securing operations and the necessity to clear the VC infrastructure from the village as well as to keep LOC's open. Among the primary tasks listed in the directive were the defense of US military facilities and the denial of rice and salt to the enemy.<sup>7</sup>

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PAGE 343 OF 372 PAGES

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(TS) COMUSMACV's strategy for the southwest monsoon season was confirmed by an evaluation of the situation at the beginning of the monsoon season, which he described to CINCPAC:

The enemy had greatly increased his combat structure during the preceding year mainly through deployment of NVA units. The morale of VC units was only fair. The morale of NVA units was good. The expanded enemy combat structure had not been completely filled out despite local recruiting. Attrition through illness and combat losses had been high. The enemy had a replacement system and would continue his infiltration to offset his losses. The enemy had established logistical bases in Laos and Cambodia. Because of the US air interdiction program the enemy logistical buildup fell short of goals by as much as 50 percent; however, the enemy did have a logistical ability to support a limited objective campaign in a number of areas.<sup>8</sup>

(TS) On 31 May, in a meeting with senior commanders at Hq I FFORCEV in Nha Trang, COMUSMACV expanded his directives and guidance pertaining to the southwest monsoon season. He stated that the enemy had approximately two divisions located in the general area of Chu Long and one division poised in the panhandle of Laos; he felt that the enemy would detouch from these general areas across the border into the highlands with the principal objective of annihilating US units. COMUSMACV further indicated that the highlands offered the enemy the greatest opportunity for a victory of strategic significance, and that the enemy recognized the hazards of committing his units on the east coast during the southwest monsoon season when and where the weather was favorable for the employment of close air support. To counter this threat, COMUSMACV indicated, friendly forces had to assume a posture from which they were capable of executing rapid spoiling attacks whenever the enemy presented himself. COMUSMACV felt that the enemy's logistical system was relatively inflexible and his communications marginal. Spoiling attacks could be effectively employed to prevent the enemy from having the time and opportunity which he required to make elaborate preparations for attacks. Further, when the enemy regrouped after friendly attacks, friendly forces had to be prepared to strike the enemy again. COMUSMACV stated that he was thinking in terms of a five-month campaign and issued the following guidance:

- 1) Increase the use of B-52's on targets in the highlands.
- 2) Consider giving the same anti-malaria medication then being given to the US 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, to the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div.

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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3) Insure that US forces had an excellent medical posture in the Fleiku area, in view of the heavy action which could occur there.

4) Engineers were to use periods of good weather to improve airfields in the highlands, and were to work on improving methods of emplacing T-17 membrane so that airfields would be useable during heavy rains.<sup>9</sup>

(TS) In June CINCPAC modified, to a degree, his earlier guidance for the war in RVN. The CINCPAC concept consisted of the mission to be accomplished, the objectives to be achieved, and the tasks to be executed with respect to RVN, NVN, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand, and the strategy to be pursued. The PACOM mission was to assist the government and armed forces of RVN to defeat externally directed and supported communist subversion and aggression, and to attain and independent non-communist GVN functioning in a secure environment. The CINCPAC concept visualized four objectives to be accomplished: to make it as difficult and as costly as possible for NVN to continue effectively to support the VC, and to cause NVN to stop its direction of the VC insurgency; to extend RVN's dominion, direction, and control over its territory; to defeat the VC and NVN forces in RVN, and to force their withdrawal; to deter Communist China from direct intervention in SEASIA and elsewhere; and to defeat any such intervention if it did occur. Common to accomplishing all objectives was the task of building, maintaining, securing, and defending bases, ports, airfields, and communication centers, and supporting LOC's at key locations along the coast, in the Delta, and elsewhere in RVN as necessary. The strategy involved selective destruction of NVN war-supporting and war-making capabilities as well as widespread destruction, disruption, harassment and attrition of military support facilities, operations, and movement, and restricting access of NVA/VC forces to the coasts and land borders of RVN through effective land, sea, and air interdiction operations; protection of the people of RVN from externally directed and supported communist subversion and oppression; defeat of the VC/NVA forces in RVN and withdrawal of NVA forces; destruction of major enemy base areas in RVN, Laos, and along the RVN/Cambodian border; and liberation of selected areas dominated by the VC.

(TS) The CINCPAC strategy visualized retention of the initiative by US, RVNAF and FVMAF through the tactical offensive. US forces were seen reinforcing and operating with RVNAF and FVMAF as well as conducting unilateral operations. US military operations were to be aimed at creating the operational environment and opportunity for GVN to gain control and establish security of the main food-producing areas and population centers. RVNAF capability to conduct clearing and securing operations was to be increased through greater advisory and assistance efforts, by providing combat and close air support, and through the benefits to be derived from participation in coordinated operations.

PAGE 345 OF 872 PAGES

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US/FWMAF and RVNAF sustained and coordinated operations were to be conducted with increased effort in the highlands, and along the western RVN border. In order to conserve airlift, maximum use was to be made of surface LOC's. Joint riverine operations were prescribed in the Delta and on other inland waterways. US air operations were to be conducted against the enemy in RVN to support US forces and RVNAF as well as to gather intelligence, provide airlift, and to conduct psychological warfare operations. Naval forces were tasked to destroy or otherwise immobilize confirmed and designated enemy seaborne traffic, detect and restrict enemy seaborne infiltration traffic; participate in amphibious operations; conduct offensive mining and mine countermeasures operations; and to conduct shore bombardment in NVN as well as in RVN, and to provide naval gunfire support as required. 10

(TS) On 5 June another MACV Commanders' Conference was held at Nha Trang. The major topic of this conference was again the strategy for the southwest monsoon season. At the outset, COMUSMACV stated that the period of the southwest monsoon would be the most critical of the war and that the enemy was laboring under the illusion that the monsoon would give him a big advantage. He felt the enemy had to commit his sizeable investment to a major campaign during the monsoon season. COMUSMACV felt that the enemy would probably start this campaign in July and August and would try to exploit the political turmoil in I CTZ to attack north of the Hai Van Pass and in the vicinity of the Do Xa base. COMUSMACV reiterated that the enemy might be able to achieve tactical successes along the coast, but that only the highlands or the northern provinces provided the opportunity for strategic successes. Against this threat, the US would have the advantage of airpower, aided by relatively good weather in I CTZ. In II CTZ the strategy was for ROK and ARVN units to secure vital installations on the coast while US forces implemented a concept of forward deployment by pushing toward the Laotian and Cambodian borders from Kontum, Pleiku and Darlac Provinces. This concept was to result in early warning and frustration of enemy plans for a "Dien Bien Phu." The strategy required elusiveness on the part of US units in order to make it impossible for the enemy to plan for the destruction of a major US unit. COMUSMACV reemphasized the need for retaining the initiative, stating that only a minimum number of troops should be tied to security missions and that the order of the day was sustained combat.

(S) On 27 June COMUSMACV described what he thought to be the VC strategy, terming it "strategic mobility." He pointed out that the VC and NVA had sizeable units distributed throughout the country. Lacking the mobility and supply sources available to friendly forces, the enemy leadership appeared to have adopted this strategy as one which permitted them to engage the maximum number of friendly troops. Up to that time the VC had not pressed a country-wide offensive, and COMUSMACV attributed this failure to Allied tactical mobility, the

PAGE 346 OF 872 PAGES

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seeking out and destroying of enemy base camps and supply depots. This had kept the VC off balance and prevented the organization of any large offensive. COMUSMACV observed that the enemy appeared to be following blindly Mao's doctrine and that since they were in stage three they were either unwilling or unable to revert to stage two, despite the severe losses sustained.<sup>12</sup>

(TS) In describing the US military posture in RVN, COMUSMACV drew an analogy to the stance of a boxer who jabbed with his left hand to keep the enemy off balance, while retaining his right hand to protect vital areas and to strike a knockout blow when the opportunity presented itself. He noted that whenever a boxer used his right hand he exposed himself to counterattack, and thus he used it sparingly and at the right time. On the other hand, a complete security posture was not good because this allowed the opponent to strike at will. COMUSMACV stated that US forces had to observe a very careful balance between the use of the right and the left hand, employing the right hand for only limited periods of time (72 hours) before bringing it back to a defensive posture. Stated differently, the principles of mass and economy of force were extremely important in this kind of warfare. One of the major problems for friendly forces was that they did not have sufficient forces to trap the enemy. This made it necessary to thin out the security forces and at times to accept calculated risks in order to strike a heavy blow at the enemy.<sup>13</sup>

(TS) On 1 July, at a conference between CINCPAC and SECDEF, the six goals for 1966 established by the Honolulu Conference were reviewed and a progress appraisal made. These goals, and CINCPAC's evaluation of progress, were as follows:

1) "Attrit, by year's end, VC/NVA forces at a rate as high as their capability to put men into the field." CINCPAC felt that this goal would not be achieved because of the enemy's demonstrated ability to increase his forces despite losses.

2) "Increase the percentage of VC/NVA base areas denied the VC from 10-20 percent to 40-50 percent." CINCPAC felt that this goal could be met if required forces were allocated to the task. If this were done, however, the accomplishment of other goals such as enemy attrition might be adversely affected.

3) "Increase the critical roads and railroads open from 30 percent to 50 percent." CINCPAC felt that with political stability this goal could be reached unless the VC/NVA forces markedly increased their interdiction effort.

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PAGE 347 OF 822 PAGES

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4) "Increase the population in secure areas from 50 percent to 60 percent." CINCPAC thought this goal would be achieved.

5) "Pacify the four selected high priority areas, increasing the pacified population in these areas by 235,000." CINCPAC felt that this objective was ahead of schedule and it appeared that the goal would be achieved.

6) "Ensure the defense of all military bases, political and population centers and the food producing areas under government control as of 8 February 1967." CINCPAC stated that this goal would be achieved.<sup>14</sup>

(TS) On 5 September CINCPAC published his military strategy to accomplish US objectives for RVN. Involved were three inter-dependent undertakings which together constituted an integrated concept for the conduct of military operations against NVN and in Laos and RVN. In the north, the concept was to take the war to the enemy by unremitting but selective application of air and naval power. Military installations and industrial facilities which supported the aggression in the south would be attacked, and movement into, within, and out of NVN would be impeded. The relentless application of force was designed to curtail progressively NVN's war-making capacity; to force on NVN major replenishment, repair, and construction efforts; to impair NVN's support and direction of the Pathet Lao; to disrupt the movement of men and material through Laos and over all land and water LOC's into RVN; and to reduce progressively Hanoi's capability to support and direct military operations in RVN. In the south the strategy called for seeking out and destroying communist forces and infrastructure by expanded offensive military operations. US and other FW forces, in conjunction with RVNAF, would attack enemy main forces and interdict enemy LOC's on land, along the coast, and on the inland waterway. In achieving this objective, existing military bases would be expanded as necessary. Secure areas would be enlarged, emphasizing the National Priority Areas. Reconnaissance operations into enemy areas would be increased and intelligence collection improved. The concept envisioned intensified bombardment of enemy base areas and increased ground follow-up. Area control would be wrested from the enemy and enemy forces would be broken up into small bands chiefly concerned with their own existence.

(TS) The third CINCPAC-directed undertaking was nation building. The objectives here were to extend the secure areas of RVN by military operations and to assist the GVN in building an independent, viable non-communist society by coordinating civic actions with military operations. Military operations would provide a steady improvement in security throughout the country, thereby permitting extension of government and creating an environment in which the civil aspects of Revolutionary Development could proceed. The GVN RD Program was cited as essential to the attainment of Free World goals in RVN. US forces

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would support vigorously and participate in this program in such areas as logistics, sanitation, medical care, construction, and resources and population control. Military personnel with special skills would assist in political, economic, and social development programs. Every effort would be made to encourage and assist GVN to assume progressively the responsibility for all aspects of nation building.<sup>15</sup>

(S) The essential concept of operations in support of Revolutionary Development was to use US forces as a shield for holding off the VC/NVA main forces, while ARVN, RF, and PF performed the delicate and somewhat tedious task of pacification and revolutionary development. In a briefing to the Mission Council on 8 August, MACV J3 stated that in the 1967 Combined Campaign Plan, then being developed, it was proposed to assign ARVN the primary mission of providing direct support to RD, and US/FWMAF forces the primary mission of destroying VC/NVA main forces and base areas. COMUSMACV and Chief JCS agreed that in I, II and III CTZ's, ARVN would devote at least 50 percent of its effort directly to support of the RD program. In IV CTZ, it was agreed that ARVN still would have to devote 75 percent of its efforts to offensive operations. For 1967, instead of selecting Corps priority areas for RD, areas were to be selected for priority of military operations for follow-on RD. These operations were to be conducted by US/FWMAF forces to locate and destroy enemy forces and base areas, and were not in direct support of RD. As might have been expected, there was some reluctance on the part of a portion of ARVN leadership to assume the RD task. There were psychological pressures applied, in some cases, for ARVN to win victories and make newspaper headlines. COMUSMACV realized this fact, and agreed that the RVNAF Airborne, Ranger, and Marine battalions should be employed constantly on search and destroy operations. From time to time ARVN battalions, likewise, could be so employed, but not for long periods, since it would be necessary for them to return to the area they had secured. As 1966 drew to its close, and ARVN, in fact, began to assume responsibility for support of RD, COMUSMACV emphasized the vital importance of RD to ARVN leadership. A period of indoctrination was necessary to educate the leadership and to retain the troops in the importance and need for the role they were assuming. In the view of COMUSMACV this was "the number one problem facing ARVN."<sup>16</sup>

(S) In replying to correspondence from the Chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, COMUSMACV reviewed the war effort and discussed future requirements. He noted that the reasonable, yet predictable, buildup in VC and NVA capabilities was significant; the enemy had demonstrated deliberate resolve to move from Phase II (general warfare) to Phase III (conventional warfare), and had expanded his organization into the framework of seven divisions

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PAGE 349 OF 272 PAGES

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in order to support that resolve. There was evidence that three more enemy divisions would materialize in succeeding months. Also noteworthy was the enemy's resorting to increased use of sanctuaries in adjacent territory. The US/FW response to the enemy's activities was well known: a progressively more powerful ground-sea-air team, attended by an extensive and highly responsive logistic structure, had been deployed against the enemy since the spring of 1965. Serious losses had been inflicted upon the enemy on the field of battle, and his attempts to initiate major offensives had been frustrated, while his LOC's had been interdicted by sea and air operations. Nevertheless, the enemy had intensified his efforts to sustain his buildup in RVN. The interdiction campaign had been unable to retard appreciably the infiltration of personnel. While some evidence suggested lowered enemy morale, yet there had been no significant diminishing of the effectiveness of his leadership, nor of his resolve to continue the struggle. In a word, the enemy had plenty of fight left in him.

(S) COMUSMACV noted that although commendable gains had been made in coping with the enemy's organized regular units and in disrupting his base areas and supply system, the communist political infrastructure retained its strength and vigor throughout RVN. Indeed, in step with the enemy's buildup of major unit structure, he also had concentrated on strengthening the fiber of his political infrastructure and guerrilla forces. This was the realm that received continual communist emphasis on the political objective of winning control of the people. The enemy retained his conviction that he possessed greater will power than his adversaries, and that in the protracted war of attrition to which he was committed, he could anticipate a weakening of resolve and effort on the part of US/FW forces. Looking ahead to 1967, COMUSMACV said that against this background the relentless aim of US/FW forces had to be continued pressure on the enemy within the framework of the current strategy. Such an aim carried with it the determination to take the fight to the enemy and to destroy his logistic apparatus. It also meant that greater resources would be required to support the Revolutionary Development of RVN.<sup>17</sup>

#### GROUND OPERATIONS

(U) Before detailing the ground operations in RVN during 1966, it is well to consider the various environments in which these operations took place. The Republic of Vietnam is almost 500 nautical miles in length and its width varies from 185 nautical miles in the south to 35 nautical miles near the 17th Parallel; its area is about 66,000 square miles. Starting at the south, the Mekong Delta is low, flat, and poorly drained--during 1966, major flooding radically changed many operations. A few miles north of Saigon begins a forest-covered mountain range, with

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PAGE 350 OF 872 PAGES

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peaks up to 8,000 feet, which extends north beyond the 17th Parallel. Between these extremes of Delta and mountains are coastal plains and jungle-covered plateaus. The climate of RVN is generally typical of that of all SEASIA characterized by alternate dry and rainy seasons. In the south the summer monsoons prevail from June through September, while during the winter months it is very dry. In the north the seasons are reversed. These natural factors had to be considered in the planning of all the operations in 1966.

(S) Early in 1966 the Free World peace offensive, coupled with the Lunar New Year (TET) and the accompanying cease-fire, resulted in a period of restricted military activity for both friendly and enemy forces. Despite this decrease in activity, RVN and Free World forces continued to make inroads into areas long conceded as VC territory. The majority of friendly operations consisted of search-and-destroy operations designed to deprive the VC of long-established command and operations centers, training sites, and supply areas. These operations also served to keep the VC off balance, and prevented him from mounting offensive large unit attacks. Although there were many effective search-and-destroy operations conducted during the first part of 1966, gains in area and population control were relatively small and the security status of LOC's remained comparatively unchanged. Despite the severe punishment absorbed by the enemy, his strength continued to grow and his will to persevere remained essentially unshaken. Yet, it was apparent that the losses the enemy had suffered and the victories he had been denied had had their effect; the slow process of sapping his strength and eroding his will had begun.

(S) Allied success could be attributed mainly to the tactics of exploiting the inflexible VC/NVA rule of slow and painstaking planning and preparation for operations. The enemy tactical philosophy of "move quick and one slow" (advance quickly, assault quickly, clear the battle-field quickly, withdraw quickly, but prepare slowly) made him particularly vulnerable to the tactic of the spoiling attack. Every time that the enemy presented forces of sufficient size to constitute a threat, he was hit by a spoiling attack that disrupted his plans and preparations. In the prosecution of the war against the VC, COMSMACV issued guidance in definite time frames appropriate to changing enemy situations and geographic/climatic conditions. In his guidance for the initial part of 1966, he stressed the need for finding, fixing, and destroying the enemy by sustained and aggressive operations, employing the friendly advantages of mobility and firepower. He assigned major subordinate commands the following missions: 1) continued security of critical installations, base areas and national priority areas, with the ability to meet VC/NVA main forces; 2) implementation of aggressive intelligence programs to locate enemy forces, bases, and infiltration/supply routes; and, 3) development and implementation of tactical plans which would exploit intelligence and take advantage of superior

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PAGE 352 OF 822 PAGES

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mobility and firepower to destroy enemy forces whenever and wherever they could be found. He also emphasized the need to free combat troops from static security missions.<sup>18</sup>

## Rules of Engagement

### The DMZ

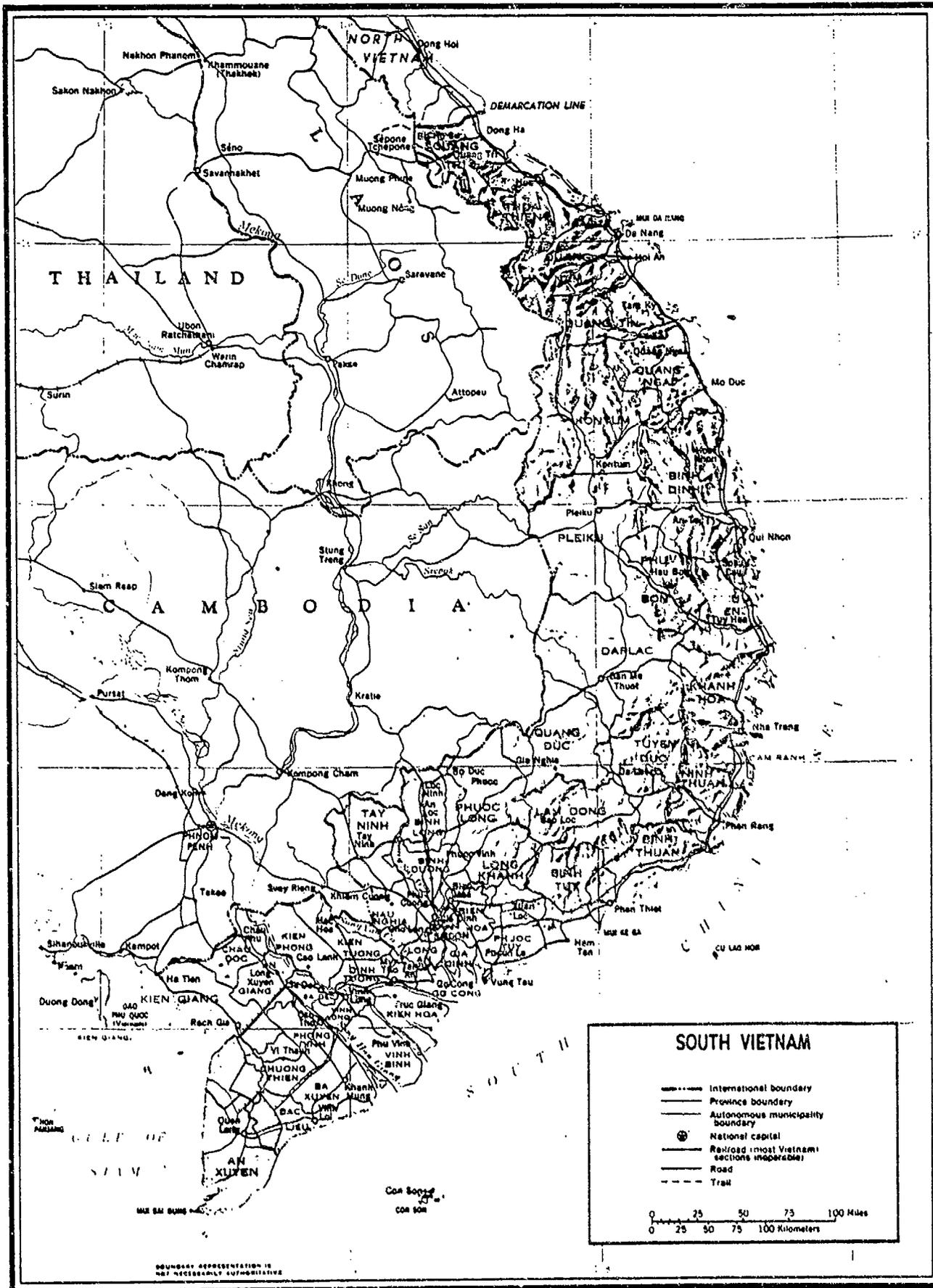
(TS) During 1966, in every instance where US/FWMA/RVN forces were operating near a border of RVN, there was a requirement, primarily politically-based, for ground rules. The operations near the DMZ commencing in July and August were no exception. On 13 July COMUSMACV requested rules of engagement from CINCPAC for friendly forces conducting operations in the immediate vicinity of the DMZ, adding that until instructions were received, friendly forces would take necessary action or counteractions against VC/NVA forces, which might involve returning of fire or maneuvering into the DMZ in attaining objectives in RVN or in exercising the right of self-defense. On 26 July CINCPAC granted COMUSMACV authority, after justifying and obtaining approval from JCS and State Department, to conduct air strikes into the DMZ, and artillery and naval gunfire into that portion of the DMZ south of the demarcation line against clearly-defined military activity. COMUSMACV was directed to minimize civilian casualties, and to make no public disclosure of DMZ actions except in accordance with instructions to be provided separately from Washington. Movement of ground forces into the DMZ was to be a subject of separate instructions to follow. CINCPAC, based on COMUSMACV's interim guidance to Field Force Commanders pending receipt of instructions, immediately recommended to JCS that the bidding be reviewed regarding the rules of engagement for conduct of operations in the DMZ. He specifically requested broadening of the rules to permit maneuvering of troops into the RVN portion of the DMZ, and the use of artillery and naval gunfire in the northern part of the DMZ where air strikes had previously been authorized. The rationale for the gunfire support was to allow greater flexibility of fire power uninhibited by darkness and/or weather. The obvious reason for desiring authority to maneuver troops into the DMZ was that offensive operations undoubtedly would occur as the NVA forces were in the DMZ in sizable strength. JCS quickly authorized COMUSMACV to maneuver troops in the DMZ south of the demarcation line when in contact with VC/NVA forces, or where such engagement was imminent, as necessary for the preservation of US/FWMA forces. These forces would not advance north of the demarcation line and would withdraw south of the DMZ when contact

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PAGE 35 OF 872 PAGES

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with the enemy was broken. JCS was to be informed immediately of actions taken under this authority. SECSTATE also gave approval of the recommended rules of engagement on 30 July. 18A

(TS) While the authority for maneuver of US/FW ground units was granted, no mention had been made of the possibility of RVNAF becoming involved. SECSTATE brought the matter up and requested comments from JCS, who, after receiving assistance from CINCPAC, notified SECSTATE that the consensus was that RVNAF should be authorized the same freedom of action as the US/FWMAF. SECSTATE concurred that RVNAF should be authorized to participate in defensive operations in the southern part of the DMZ, on the same basis as US/FWMA forces; however, he desired that the GVN be notified of the absolute necessity for RVNAF units not to exceed authority given to US/FWMA forces operating near the DMZ. This settled the matter, and by early August all Allied forces in RVN were instructed on the rules of engagement for the DMZ. The authority to maneuver forces into the DMZ would not be delegated below the level of the senior US tactical commander, in this instance CG III MAF. COMUSMACV further directed that, when time permitted, requests in advance for necessary action against VC/NVA forces within the DMZ be forwarded to MACV headquarters. In December COMUSMACV updated the rules of engagement for the DMZ, stating that the rules applied to US/FWMA forces only; however, personnel in positions to influence RVNAF operations conducted in or near the DMZ would make every reasonable effort to insure that such operations were conducted under the rules of engagement as established for US/FWMA forces. The only significant change to the existing rules was that artillery fire (lead) was authorized against weapons firing on friendly forces from positions north of the line of demarcation in order to insure preservation of US/FWMA forces' lives and equipment. Employment of artillery would be conducted in such a manner as to minimize potential damage to the noncombatant population. 18B

#### Laotian Border

(TS) At the beginning of 1966 no rules of engagement had been established for combat operations near the RVN/Laotian boundary. In March CINCPAC, based on a request from COMUSMACV, requested that rules of engagement similar to those for RVN/Cambodia boundary be promulgated. CINCPAC suggested that coordination be effected with AMEMB Vientiane in each instance when planning operations near the RVN/Laotian border, and that approval be requested in advance for necessary actions or counteractions against VC/NVA forces which might involve returning fire or maneuvering into Laos in obtaining objectives in RVN or in exercise of the right of self-defense. In June JCS indicated that the information provided was sensitive and would be safeguarded by appropriate security procedures; in addition, the knowledge of the existence of the information provided would be held closely by

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PAGE 355 OF 822 PAGES

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addresses with access limited to persons specifically authorized on a need-to-know basis. JCS provided instructions in line with the recommendations made by CINCPAC, to coordinate operations near the border with AMEMB Vientiane and to keep Washington closely informed when necessary actions or counteractions against enemy forces might involve return of fire or maneuvering of troops into Laos in attaining objectives. In emergency situations, US forces were authorized to take necessary counteractions in the exercise of the right of self-defense against enemy attacks directed at US/RVN/RMA forces from locations inside Laos. An emergency situation was considered to exist when, in the judgment of the commander, the urgency for taking timely counteractions in self-defense of US/RVN/RMA forces precluded obtaining prior approval. Such counteractions might involve artillery and air strikes against enemy firing from the Laotian side of the border against US/RVN/RMA forces; or maneuver by US troops, while obviously engaged and in contact with enemy forces, into Laos as necessary for the preservation of the force. In the execution of these operations, Laotian villages would not be attacked except when fire was being received therefrom, and when, in the judgment of the US commander, attack on a populated area was essential for the preservation of his force. JCS reiterated the fact that the instructions in no way modified the requirement for the military commander to defend his command against armed attack with all means at his disposal. COMUSMACV promulgated the JCS instructions to commanders concerned on 10 June 1965.

Cambodian Border

(US) In December 1965 COMUSMACV, based on instructions received from JCS, provided guidance to his subordinates concerning the rules of engagement for operations near the Cambodian border. These rules were:

1) When planning operations near the Cambodian border, in each instance, request approval for necessary actions or counteractions against VC/PAVN forces which may involve returning fire or maneuvering into Cambodia, attaining objectives in RVN, or in exercise of the right of self-defense.

2) In emergency situations US forces were authorized to take necessary counteractions in exercise of the right of self-defense against VC/NVA attacks directed at US/RVNAF forces from locations inside Cambodia. An emergency situation would be considered to exist when in the judgment of the commander the urgency for taking timely counteractions in self-defense of US/Allied forces precluded obtaining prior approval. As necessary, such counteractions might include artillery and air strikes against an enemy firing from the Cambodian

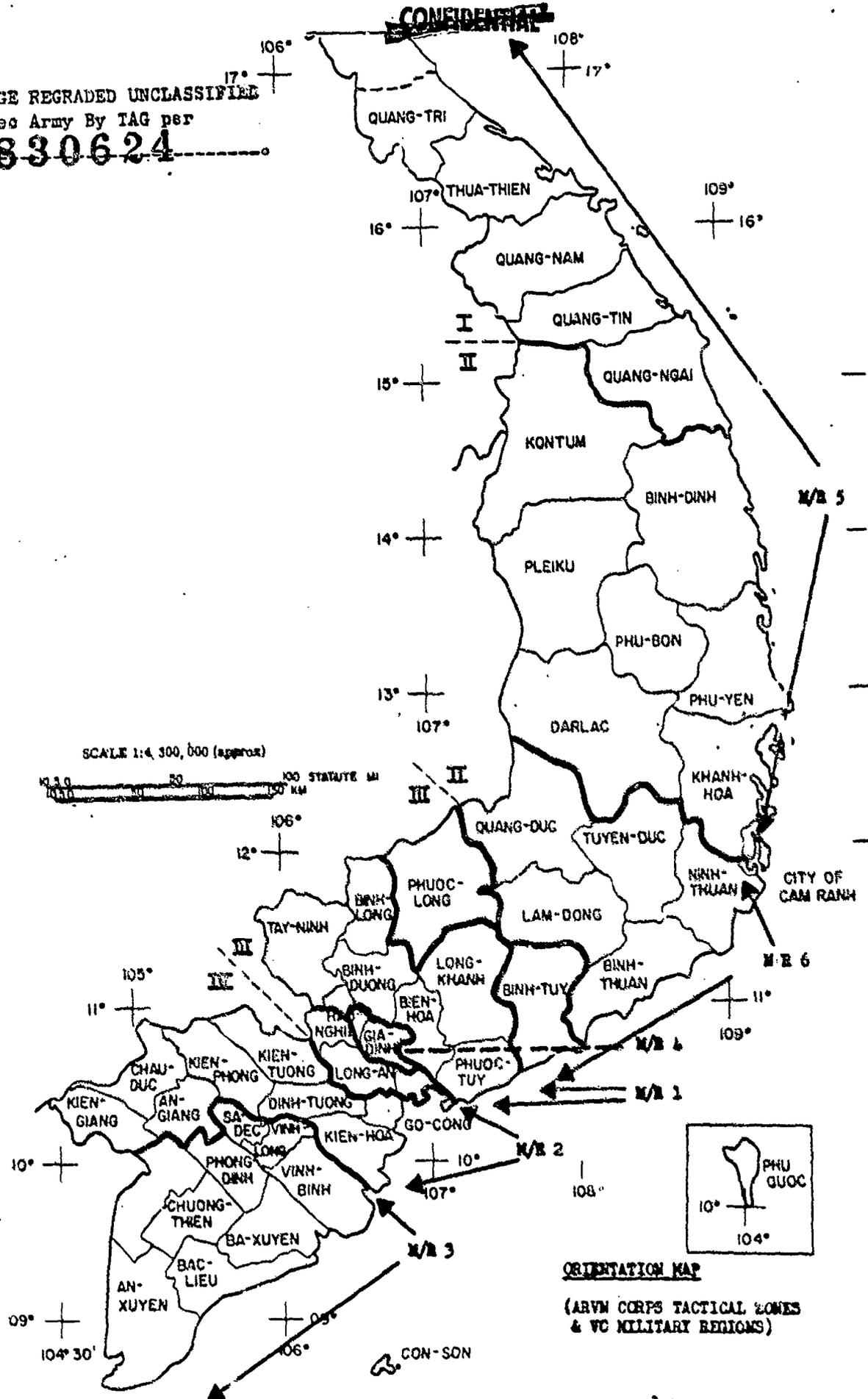
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830624 PAGE 356 OF 872 PAGES

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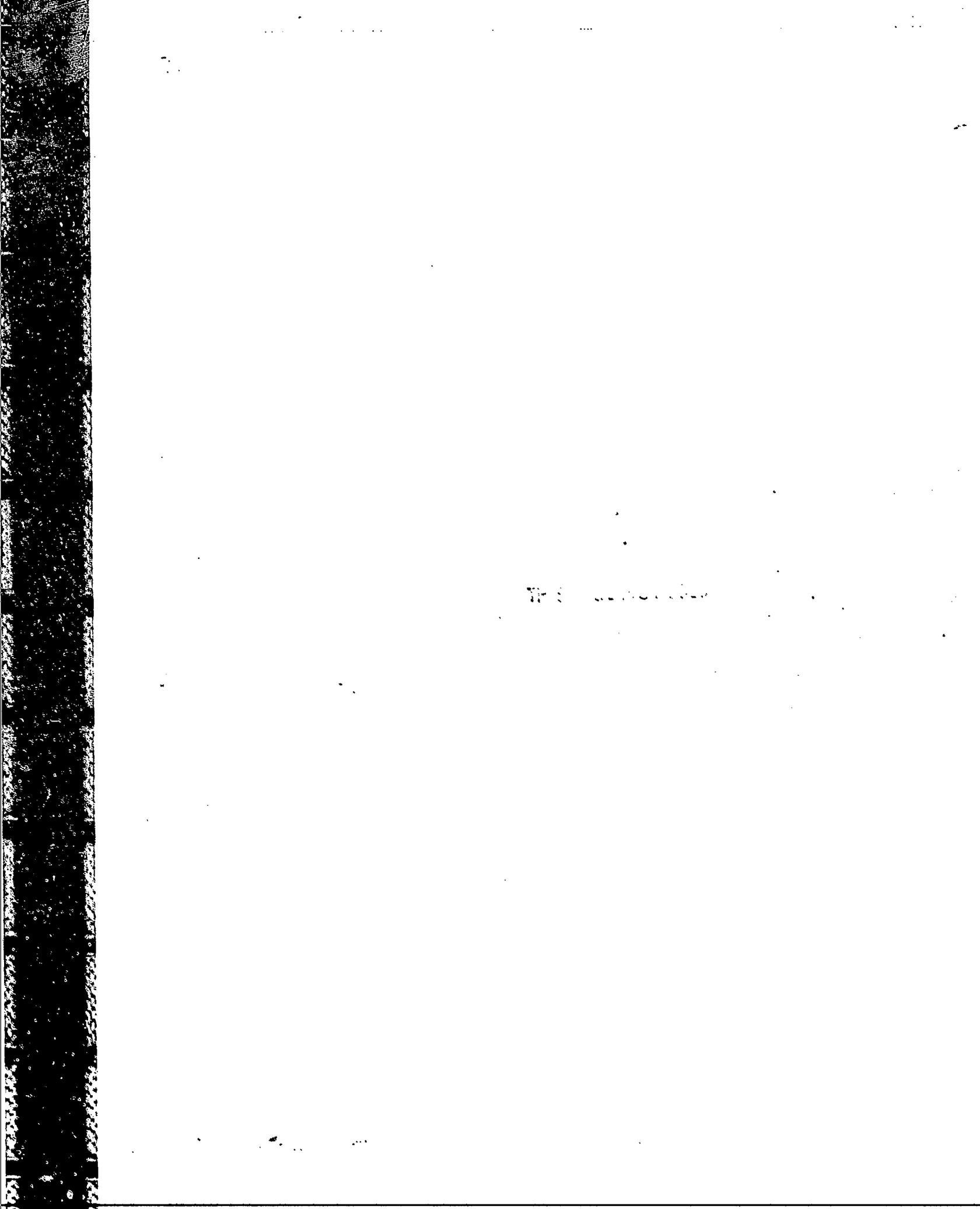
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**ORIENTATION MAP**

(ARVN CORPS TACTICAL ZONES  
& VC MILITARY REGIONS)

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border against US/RVNAF troops, and/or maneuver by US troops, while actually engaged and in contact with VC/PAVN forces, into Cambodia as necessary for the preservation of the force.

3) No Cambodian forces would be engaged except in self-defense, and no Cambodian villages or populated areas would be attacked by air, artillery, or ground forces.

4) These authorities and procedures were established to provide for the defense of US/Allied forces, and would not be applied toward widening the conflict in SEASTA.

5) The military commander retained the requirement to defend his command against armed attack with all means at his disposal. In the event of such an attack the commander concerned would take immediate aggressive actions against the attacking force.<sup>18D</sup>

(TS) In March COMUSMACV requested specific authority from JCS through CINCPAC to maneuver troops into Cambodia in order to approach the Chu Pong massif in Pleiku Province from the west to seal off the border and deny the enemy any route of escape. This request was denied. In April CG I FFORCEV requested authority from COMUSMACV to maneuver troops into Cambodia during Operation PAUL REVERE. COMUSMACV appreciated the request but since JCS had only recently denied a similar request there was no reason to think that the policy had changed so soon, and no further request would be made to JCS. In July a joint STATE/DOD message informed Saigon that the Ambassador's concern with evidence of VC/NVA use of Cambodian territory was thoroughly understood, and assured him that both departments had very much in mind the added burden which this created, morally and materially, for our fighting forces. The message added, however, that it would not under the existing circumstances be in the overall US interest to go beyond existing authorizations to US commanders to attack across the Cambodian border in self-defense. The message did state that when and if it became necessary for a US commander to use existing authority to attack across the Cambodian border in self-defense, the key justification, in terms of public and international opinion as well as law, would be clear and demonstrable evidence that the VC/NVA forces concerned were using the Cambodian territory in the particular instance.<sup>18S</sup>

(TS) A program to update the rules of engagement for the Cambodian/RVN border on a quarterly basis was inaugurated, with the first updating scheduled for September. The revisions as published, applied only to US/FWMA forces, but it was felt that personnel in positions permitting them to influence RVNAF operations near the Cambodian/RVN border would exert themselves to insure that the rules of engagement were conformed to as much as possible. The updated rules of engagement did not change materially the guidance provided earlier by COMUSMACV.

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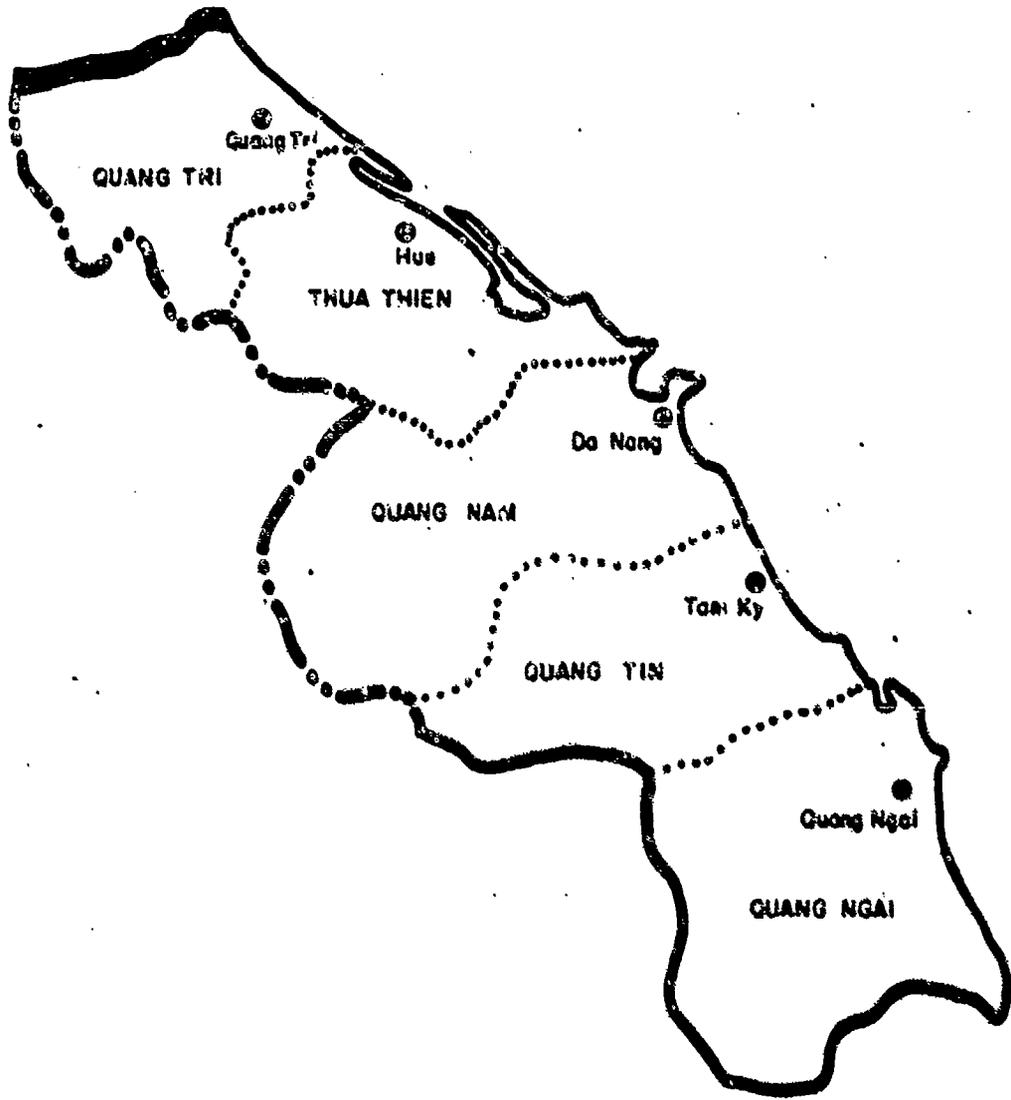
but restated that when operations were planned near the Cambodian border, and the possibility existed that actions or counteractions would be necessary against VC/NVA forces which would require firing or maneuvering into Cambodia, approval in advance would be requested for the anticipated action. This provision was applicable both to operations against objectives in RVN and in exercising the right of self-defense. In emergency situations, US/PWMA forces were authorized to take the action necessary to protect themselves against VC/NVA attacks originating from within Cambodia. Artillery and air strikes against enemy forces firing upon friendly forces from within Cambodia were authorized, as was maneuver by friendly forces into Cambodia while actually engaged and in contact with VC/NVN forces, when it was considered necessary to preserve the force. No Cambodian force was to be engaged except in self-defense, and no Cambodian villages or populated areas were to be attacked by air, artillery, or ground forces. Civilian casualties were to be minimized. The rules of engagement were not to be construed as prohibiting commanders from defending their units; on the contrary, commanders were directed to take all necessary counteractions against the enemy forces in the exercise of the right of self-defense, and to defend against armed attacks with all means at their disposal. Knowledge of the rules of engagement was to be disseminated strictly on a need-to-know basis, and COMUSMACV reserved the right to make known publicly the substance of the rules of engagement and of actions taken under authority of the rules. The intent of the rules of engagement was to provide for the defense of RVN and for the protection of US/RVN/PWMA forces. They were specifically not to be applied toward widening of the conflict. 108

Operations in I CTZ

(S) COMUSMACV directed that January-February operations would be designed to implement the offensive concept within the limits of available forces in each CTZ, adding that as additional forces became available the implementation would be expanded and that security of critical installations and base areas would continue. The main enemy forces posing a real threat to I CTZ during this period were the 18th NVA and 2d VC regiments, believed to be located in Quang Ngai Province. COMUSMACV directed that CG III MAF conduct an operation to locate and destroy the enemy force. This Operation DOUBLE EAGLE, the first major operation in I CTZ during CY 66 was a search-and-destroy (S&D) operation conducted in southern Quang Ngai, northern Binh Dinh, and Quang Tin provinces. Phase I, 28 January-17 February, occurred in southern Quang Ngai and northern Binh Dinh provinces in coordination and conjunction with operations of the 1st Cav Div (AM), 2d ARVN Div, and 1st ARVN

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Div. Phase II, 19 February-1 March, was conducted in Quang Tin Province in the area west of Tam Ky. The operation was designed to position Task Force (TF) Delta (a reinforced regiment) in the objective area (OA) for the ultimate purpose of finding and destroying the enemy forces. The buildup of forces was to be accomplished to deceive the enemy as to friendly intentions. Assault elements of the TF, two battalions, conducted an amphibious landing in the OA to create the impression that the forces were ashore to conduct operations within the immediate area; however, on D+1 one battalion was helilanded about five miles west of the landing beaches and on D+4 a second battalion was committed by helicopter. Detailed searches were conducted throughout the area, but contact was light.<sup>19</sup>

(C) During the same period 1st Cav Div and the ARVN Abn Div were conducting Operations MASHER/WHITE WING in northern II CTZ. The scheme of maneuver required the Marines to enter Binh Dinh Province to continue operations and link-up with the 1st Cav Div. This was the first time any large unit had conducted an operation across the Corps boundaries. Following the link-up, Marines continued saturation patrolling in the area north and east of An Lao Valley, with moderate contact with scattered VC elements, and swept northward into Quang Ngai Province toward the original beachhead area. Phase I terminated 17 February with the enemy suffering 312 KIA as a result of sporadic fighting. (Detailed casualty figures, both friendly and enemy, for all major ground operations, may be found in Annex K--Chronology.)

(C) Phase II began on 19 February with the same units involved in Phase I converging by helicopter and motor transport on the OA located west of Tam Ky in Quang Tin Province, 25 miles north of Chu Lai. Contact with the enemy was again light, and extraction of battalions commenced on 22 February. The operation terminated on 1 March. Final results of DOUBLE EAGLE were 437 enemy killed, 34 PW's, and eight ralliers.<sup>20</sup>

(C) In analysis of DOUBLE EAGLE operations the single factor of most significance was the complete lack of contact with main force VC elements. Confirmed intelligence reports had indicated that major VC forces were located in the area of operations and extensive security precautions were taken during both planning phases so as not to divulge friendly intentions; in addition, rapid re-disposition was accomplished as late as possible. All these steps were taken in the vain attempt to gain contact with the VC main forces. Interrogation of captured personnel indicated that the VC had knowledge of the time and place of attack for Phase I of DOUBLE EAGLE. How this occurred was not known; however, the planning time for Phase I was quite lengthy, with extensive message traffic. It was concluded that planning for operations in this environment must be executed quickly and under the most stringent security measures in order to achieve tactical surprise.<sup>21</sup>

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PAGE 361 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) In March, April and May there were indications of significant buildup of enemy forces in Quang Ngai Province. The 1st VC and 21st NVA regiments were confirmed and another regiment had been reported moving into the province. In addition reports indicated that two NVA divisions, the 312th and 324th, were preparing to enter Quang Tri Province. Captured documents resulted in acceptance of the 31st Regiment and four additional battalions in I CTZ, these units were subordinate to the 620th Division located in the Quang Tin area. A rallier reported details of a VC plan for liberating the plains of Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces. To disrupt the enemy plans, COMUSMACV directed CG III MAF to conduct operations to locate and destroy the enemy and his base areas on the border of Quang Nam-Quang Tin provinces, and to mount an operation to locate and destroy the enemy forces and their bases in Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces.<sup>22</sup>

(C) A battalion S&D operation was conducted 20-23 March in Thua Thien Province in an effort to disrupt enemy plans in that area. Operation OREGON commenced with a USMC battalion being heli-lifted into an area 25 km NW of Hue, where heavy contact was made with an estimated VC battalion in a well-fortified village complex. The engagement cost the VC 99 confirmed and 53 estimated dead.<sup>23</sup>

(C) A combined operation in Quang Ngai Province (Operation UTAH/LIEN KET 26) commenced 4 March and was highlighted when USMC and ARVN infantry and airborne troops trapped an NVA regiment in well-prepared positions in a valley area 15 km NW of Quang Ngai City. A total of eight battalions coordinated their efforts to prevent the enemy from taking control of the rice harvest in the area. The battle lasted four days; final results were 532 enemy killed and 24 captured. The 1st MAF flew 267 sorties, dropping 233 tons of ordnance, and 2,100 helicopter sorties transported 1,200 troops and 171 tons of cargo.<sup>24</sup>

(S) The political turbulence caused by the dismissal of CG I Corps on 10 March had little overall effect on operations in RVN. In I CTZ, the most seriously affected, the number of ARVN-initiated operations increased from the first of the year through March and remained generally at that level through June. The war effort was definitely disrupted, however, by the rapid rotation of commanders in key positions. There was a standdown of some elements of the 1st ARVN Div, and it became necessary to employ a portion of the General Reserve against the dissidents which detracted from other employment of those forces. Only the 1st ARVN Div was seriously affected by the crisis, and all other RVNAF units continued to perform at their past levels. US and other FW military operations were not affected. (See Chapter VIII)

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PAGE 362 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) Combined Operation TEXAS/LIEN KET 28 was conducted in reaction to an attack on a prepared and established RF outpost by a major VC unit. As the operation did not begin until the day after the VC attack, it was a relief operation as well as a pursuit of VC forces in an effort to fix and destroy them, consistent with the COMUSMACV policy. The An Hoa outpost located in Binh Son District of Quang Ngai Province lost radio contact with the province headquarters in Quang Ngai on the morning of 18 March. Early on the following day a 15-man ambush patrol, which had been sent out from the outpost the previous night, received heavy small arms fire from An Hoa when it attempted to return to the outpost. An air observer surveying the situation later that morning observed 25 to 30 bodies within the perimeter. The five-day operation commenced on 20 March when two companies of the 2d ARVN Div attempted to reoccupy the outpost with heliborne troops. The LZ was only 200 meters from the outpost; the troops came under intensive small arms fire and had to be extracted immediately after landing. The second attempt was successful when a battalion of VNMC and an ARVN battalion were landed by helicopter 1,000 meters from An Hoa and attacked the outpost. The rapidity with which the operation had been organized and mounted did not permit the publishing of the ordinary operation plan with intelligence annex; however, it had been estimated that the VC forces would withdraw rapidly once sizable forces were introduced. The most likely route of withdrawal was considered to be SW into Binh Tur initially, and to the SW if pursued. This estimate proved correct. As the enemy withdrew a USMC battalion was helilanded into a blocking position to effect an interception, and the envelopment proved successful. Final results were 623 enemy killed and 7 PW's.<sup>25</sup>

(C) From a political and economic standpoint, Operation GEORGIA which commenced on 20 April in Quang Nam Province, 20 miles SW of Da Nang was of particular importance. Primarily a clearing operation, its purpose was to clear the area around the industrial complex of An Hoa and Nhong Son, which had been developed into a highly productive area servicing the whole of Quang Nam Province with electricity, coal, fertilizer, and water. It had been isolated, however, by the VC's closing of Route 4 eastward to National Highway 1. Upon the success of the operation depended the livelihood of more than 5,000 Vietnamese workers who could be gainfully employed if the area were cleared and the road to Da Nang opened for unrestricted commerce. The operation continued through the end of April and terminated 10 May culminating in the opening of Route 4 and the flow of goods and services in large quantities, while the enemy had suffered 103 confirmed KIA.<sup>26</sup>

(C) ARVN operations in I CTZ continued to expand and develop in conjunction with US operations. Considerable conjecture had been expressed earlier as to whether ARVN would continue to mount purposeful operations or if a "let George do it" attitude toward the Americans would be assumed. An indication could be found in the month of March,

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PAGE 363 OF 872 PAGES

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during which 11 of the 26 significant operations recorded were unilateral ARVN operations and four were conducted in conjunction with US operations. One noteworthy ARVN operation was LAM SONG 235, which was conducted 22 February-1 March by the 1st and 2nd Regts of the 1st ARVN Div. It accounted for 444 enemy killed and 12 captured.<sup>27</sup>

(S) A major action, accepted as a portent of the actions which could be expected during the summer monsoon season, was the VC attack on the isolated A Chau Special Forces Camp near the Cambodian border in Thua Thien Province on 9-10 March. Intelligence indicated that this camp would be attacked by mid-March and on 8 March it was reinforced by a CIDG strike-force company and 17 USASF personnel. Enemy forces initiated a vicious night attack in a desperate "victory-seeking effort" on 9 March, when an estimated three to four VC/NVA main force battalions opened fire against the camp. Weather (100-ft ceiling) prevented aircraft from attacking in relief during the morning hours. An AC-47, in an attempt to provide support for the outpost, crash-landed due to ground fire; three of six crew members were rescued. C-123 aircraft managed to resupply the camp with ammunition although weather continued to hamper air strikes. Bombing attacks on enemy positions around the perimeter began on the following day, aircraft being positioned for bomb release by means of the TACAN navigation system. Nineteen such sorties were flown prior to 0630 hours. In all, 201 sorties were flown in the two-day support operation, with resulting loss to heavy ground fire of three attack planes and three helicopters. After the battle, 261 friendly personnel were counted as killed or missing and 103 had been evacuated. The number of enemy casualties could not be assessed accurately, but the intensity of the fighting suggested that the enemy had paid a heavy price.<sup>28</sup>

(C) In April CG III MAF, based on intelligence reports that the 21st NVA and the 1st VC regiments had reinfilted the Cape Estangan area of Quang Ngai Province since the success of Operation PIRANHA in the fall of 1965, decided to resweep the area. Operation NEVADA, a two battalion operation conducted 12-17 April in coordination with ARVN and VMC units, was successful in destroying numerous caves and tunnels. One tunnel complex was approximately one-half mile long with sleeping quarters for several hundred persons. One of the caves contained 15 enemy, all of whom were captured after a brief fire fight. It appeared that the enemy had been successful in the re-infiltration, as the final results were 68 KIA and 23 PW's.

(C) Three days after termination of NEVADA, a VC defector accurately revealed that the VC 1st Regt headquarters and the 35th and 40th Inf Bns and the 45th Arty Bn were located approximately 30 km NW of Quang Ngai City. This location was in the same general area where Operations UTAH, TEXAS and INDIANA had taken place during March. The intelligence was verified personally by the 1st Mar Div G-3 and the

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PAGE 364 OF 872 PAGES

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division commander. On 21 April a three-hour artillery preparation began, followed by saturation bombing by USMC fixed-wing aircraft. Over 2,000 artillery shells and more than 100 tons of bombs hit the target. One VNMC and two ARVN battalions teamed with three USMC battalions for Operation HOT SPRINGS/LIEN KET 36, which began at 0900 as troops were landed in landing zones. By mid-day 257 VC bodies had been counted, plus 96 individual weapons and 14 crew-served weapons captured. Final results of the operation were 327 KIA and 16 PW's.<sup>30</sup>

(TS) In April COMUSMACV furnished planning guidance to the senior tactical commanders for the period 1 May - 1 November, a period generally corresponding to the SW monsoon season. The concept for I CTZ called for intensive S&D operations along the entire east coast of I CTZ south of Quang Tri Province, while holding, reaction and spoiling operations would be conducted throughout the remainder of the zone. CG III MAF, in conjunction with RVNAF, would conduct large scale S&D operations to locate and systematically destroy the enemy communications and base structure therein, and to destroy or drive out all significant enemy forces. Also in conjunction with RVNAF, CG III MAF would:

- 1) Maintain security of already cleared areas in his zone employing a minimum of US forces.
- 2) Conduct a continuous and integrated program of surveillance, coordinated with adjacent and higher command programs, to detect enemy movement and concentrations in his zone, with particular attention to the DMZ, division and corps boundaries, and the vicinity of friendly locations likely to attract enemy attack.
- 3) Conduct a continuous and integrated program to harass and disrupt the enemy in his zone, employing all firepower means available.
- 4) Respond rapidly to destroy significant enemy forces, anywhere in the zone, which had been located positively and under conditions that indicated a reasonable chance of fixing and destroying them.
- 5) Support local defenses of remote military and political centers when threatened, to include reinforcement of such defenses as required.
- 6) Conduct special operations as necessary to deny enemy access to rice and salt.<sup>31</sup>

(C) In the southwest corner of the Da Nang TAOR, in the An Hoa industrial area, Marines had been operating to clear the area so the complex could develop and expand. Operation GEORGIA had been conducted in the same area early in May. Rifle companies conducting clearing operations there received heavy small arms fire from three sides on 4 July

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PAGE 365 OF 822 PAGES

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An aerial observer observed 250-300 VC in the area and called in both air and artillery. As a result of this sighting a five-battalion effort--Operation MACON--was launched. Enemy contacts were numerous through 9 July, but then contact became light and the operation was reduced to battalion size. The enemy contact was constant, characterized mostly by small unit engagements. The operation, continued at low intensity and was not terminated until 28 October. Final results were 507 enemy KIA and 5 PW's.<sup>32</sup>

(C) In early July the largest combined operation of the war to that date began in I CTZ when Operation HASTINGS opened. On 7 July Phase I commenced when a USMC battalion was sent into the area south of the DMZ, ten km southwest of Dong Ha in Quang Tri Province. As a result of reconnaissance sightings and intelligence reports, the operation was expanded on 15 July (Phase II) to a multi-battalion S&D operation, with Task Force Delta (USMC) as command headquarters, and including the battalion landing team of the SLF. On 18 July two USMC platoons were attacked by an estimated 1,000 NVA soldiers. The platoons were acting as rear guard for a regiment moving to attack a large enemy concentration several miles NW of Cam Lo. The enemy hit the two platoons with small arms and mortar fire and the battle intensified until contact was terminated four hours later. The Marines called in artillery fire and directed close air support to drive the enemy off. Napalm was dropped as close as 50 feet from the USMC FAC attached to the platoons, who directed the air strike from the ground. During the attack on the two platoons, the enemy were wearing khaki uniforms and using bugles, whistles and arm-and-hand signals to direct the attack. Casualties to the two platoons were heavy. ARVN units operating to the south of the combat area reported only light contact. Operation HASTINGS ended on 3 August with heavy casualties to elements of the NVA 324B Division which had infiltrated through the DMZ with the suspected purpose of attacking and seizing Quang Tri Province. Results were 882 enemy KIA and 15 PW's. 1st Marine Air Wing supported the operation with 1,198 fixed-wing sorties, and five B-52 strikes were used with unconfirmed results.<sup>33</sup>

(C) During the period 17-27 September Operation GOLDEN FLEECE was conducted to protect the rice harvest in the Hoc Duc region of Quang Ngai Province south of Quang Ngai City. In previous years guerrillas had obtained as much as 90 percent of the harvest. This year, while 10,000 daily harvesters at Hoc Duc were protected by a USMC battalion 7,620 tons of rice were harvested and retained by the villagers, and 727 additional tons were confiscated from VC sources uncovered during the operation--an amount sufficient to feed some 31,000 Vietnamese civilians for a year. The enemy reacted strongly to GOLDEN FLEECE, daily accepting the risk of open encounter with USMC forces in attempts to capture the harvest. There were frequent small-unit contacts and artillery and naval gunfire was

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PAGE 366 OF 872 PAGES

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extremely effective, accounting for 143 VC KIA. The ground forces also destroyed a VC hamlet (Von Ha) with 13,150 pounds of explosives. When the operation terminated at 271800H September, about 3,000 villagers led by the district chief turned out to thank the Marines for the help provided during the harvest. Total enemy losses were 244 KIA and 1 PW.<sup>34</sup>

(S) During the September GVN election period, cumulative evidence from the preceding several weeks indicated that NVA forces were preparing for operations in the northern part of I CTZ. The communists showed signs of considerable logistic buildup, and numerous reports of the arrival or expected arrival of additional NVA units were received. Evidence indicated that the enemy was reinforcing in MR IV with possibly another division-size force from MR III. If true, this division would be a fresh unit, probably fully manned and trained, and capable of being committed within three to five days in the eastern sector of northern Quang Tri in support of an attack to seize and control Quang Tri and Thua Thien Province. From these indications COMUSMACV decided that the major enemy threat was in the northern portion of I CTZ. In view of this belief and in the light of the developing situation, COMUSMACV tasked III MAF, as a matter of high priority, to wage probable enemy courses of action in I CTZ. COMUSMACV specifically wanted to know the capabilities of countering the several courses of action open to the enemy, which presently-planned operations would have to be modified, postponed, or cancelled because of the enemy activity, and what additional combat and combat service support would be required.<sup>35</sup>

(C) Concurrently with other preparation to receive the expected enemy attack, COMUSMACV directed contingency planning to reinforce I CTZ. Three such plans were drawn up. SOUTH CAROLINA was the contingency plan to reinforce III MAF in northern I CTZ with a USA brigade of three battalions. NORTH CAROLINA was a plan to reinforce III MAF with a USA brigade of three battalions to counter enemy threat in Quang Nam, Quang Tin, or Quang Ngai provinces in the event it became necessary to employ major USMC elements in northern I CTZ. The possibility loomed that actions to counter the threat in the north would require the deployment there of larger USMC forces than were visualized originally. Should that situation occur, then the result could well be insufficient forces available to counter enemy threats to central or southern I CTZ. To insure against the possibility of weakness in central or southern I CTZ, the third contingency plan, TENNESSEE, was prepared. Essentially, TENNESSEE called for the deployment, after NORTH CAROLINA had been implemented and SOUTH CAROLINA was imminent, of a three-battalion brigade from the 1st Cav Div (AM) to Chu Lai. From there the brigade would be deployed further in southern I CTZ.<sup>36</sup>

(S) Meanwhile, the apparent enemy buildup continued. The southerly deployment of SAM missile equipment, first reported in September, was thought to include one site located within six to eight

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PAGE 267 OF 972 PAGES

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miles of the DMZ. The suspected site was heavily camouflaged, which suggested the presence of other undetected sites in the same locality. The disposition of the site posed a significant threat to US aircraft operating in that area.<sup>37</sup>

(S) Operation PRAIRIE had commenced 3 August when, upon termination of Operation HASTINGS, one battalion was retained in the Dong Ha-Cam Lo area of Quang Tri Province to keep track of the NVA 324B and 341st Divisions, which had been driven back into and across the DMZ in Operation HASTINGS. Contact with the enemy began immediately and continued to increase. The 3d Mar Div forces were redistributed, reconstituted, and prepared to disrupt any further attack across the DMZ. The NVA 324B Division returned, this time from entry points in the mountainous western portion of the DMZ; by the end of August three USMC battalions were engaged and by mid-September the fourth battalion had been added. At the same time the Special Landing Force (SLF) of the SEVENTHFLT landed in an amphibious assault just south of the DMZ and conducted Operation DECK HOUSE IV against enemy units which had been detected attempting to infiltrate from the DMZ southward along the coast in eastern Quang Tri Province. The SLF remained ashore ten days (15-25 Sep), inflicting 254 confirmed enemy KIA. The battle continued and by the end of September seven infantry battalions were engaged and 943 enemy had been killed, while USMC casualties remained light.<sup>38</sup>

(S) In early October, because of the increasing enemy threat in Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces, COMUSMACV directed certain USA units to be withdrawn or diverted from other CTZ's and deployed on a priority basis to reinforce USMC/ARVN forces in I CTZ. These were principally 175-mm artillery units, some of which were still at sea. Once they were deployed, Quang Tri Province from Khe Sanh to the sea could be covered by artillery fire. In addition one USA airborne battalion was redeployed to I CTZ. The 3d Mar Div moved to Phu Bai and assumed responsibility for operations in Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces. The 1st Mar Div CP was moved to Da Nang and was made responsible for operations in Quang Nam, Quang Tin, and Quang Ngai Provinces. The redistribution provided for improved command and control over III MAF forces in their areas of deployment and for continuance of the high tempo of operations against the enemy forces.<sup>39</sup>

(S) By the end of October the NVA 324B Division had, for the most part, withdrawn back across the DMZ after suffering heavy losses. Cumulative results as of 29 October were 1,200 KIA and 6 PW's. 3,134 air sorties had been flown and 144 naval gunfire missions fired in support of the operation to that time. Enemy losses indicated, when combined with those inflicted when Operation HASTINGS thwarted the southward advance of the NVA 324B Division, exceeded 2,000 confirmed enemy killed in the same congested area.<sup>40</sup>

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PAGE 368 OF 872 PAGES

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(6) Intelligence indicated that the enemy intended to seize a major base area in Quang Tri Province in order to resupply prior to the northeast monsoon season, but by the end of the year he had not been able to accomplish this goal. Meanwhile there were no other indications of what the enemy planned to do in this area. Intelligence indicated that the 324B Div had been relieved by the NVA 341st Div and had withdrawn north of the DMZ, while the 341st was in and just north of the DMZ near the eastern edge of the mountainous area, and was infiltrating small forces into RVN. Operation FRANKIE was continuing at the end of the year, primarily in reconnaissance with application of force when needed. Cumulative results as of 31 December 1966 were: Friendly--216 KIA, 1,052 WIA, 1 MIA; enemy--1,318 KIA and 12 PW's. 4,767 air sorties, 223 naval gunfire, and 228 ARC LIGHT missions had supported the operation.<sup>41</sup>

Small Unit Operations in I CTZ

(8) A prime USMC contribution to the accomplishment of the MACV and RVNAP missions was the steadily-growing wave of small unit operations by which new FACB's were being saturated. While the VC main force units presented a real threat to the population of I CTZ, the Marines found the VC guerrilla penetration of the people through terrorism, brutality, threat, and extortion to be even greater. By July 1966 there had been over 1,950 acts of terrorism in I CTZ; a total of 126 local officials and 772 private citizens had been kidnaped or murdered. The Popular Forces (PF) were taking the bulk of the punishment. About 54 percent of the RVNAP killed in I CTZ in 1965 had been PF, although PF made up only 20 percent of the RVN military establishment.<sup>42</sup>

(9) Realizing that the battlefield lay among the people, CG III MAP concluded that the best way to fulfill his early commitment to airfield security was by continuous offensive action designed to weed out the VC infiltration from the population, while concurrently seeking out enemy main force units threatening larger scale attacks on installations. It was apparent that the Vietnamese people themselves held the key to success against the enemy, because they knew who and where the enemy was. Consequently, it was quite clear that certain things must be done to exploit this fact. First, friendly forces had to demonstrate to the people that they were always close at hand and would stay in an area as long as they were needed. Second, they had to prove that they could be trusted and that they were friends. Finally, they had to give unmistakable evidence that they could beat the VC in battle.

(10) The maneuverability of small units assigned to counter guerrilla warfare was excellent. Although many operations were conducted from beginning to end on the ground, others were highly mobile. A good example of the latter was the SPARROW HAWK actions. Throughout the year enemy contacts were exploited by small units, often of squad size.

PAGE 369 OF 872 PAGES

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nicknamed SPARROW HAWK, which patrolled the air space over USMC areas in helicopters or stood by in alert areas for immediate launch orders. As a quick-reaction force to assist ARVN or other units requiring help, or to press attacks on targets acquired by the SPARROW HAWK force itself, these small unit operations tended to strengthen the protection of the countryside and made it progressively more difficult for the guerrilla to operate and find safe haven. A typical SPARROW HAWK action took place on 14 March, when a district chief reported that VC and VC sympathizers were organizing to seize rice from the villagers; a platoon was dispatched to apprehend them. As they started to flee, a heliborne SPARROW HAWK force blocked their escape; 65 VC were apprehended. A SPARROW HAWK unit normally is composed of three UH-34 helicopters, two UH-1E gunships, one rifle squad reinforced with four M-72 light AT weapons, one M-60 MG, one 3.5 rocket launcher, and one 60-mm mortar. The reinforced rifle squad and the helicopter teams were briefed together on each situation before launching. The average elapsed time from request submission to landing was 20 minutes.<sup>43</sup>

(C) Developed by III MAF and first employed in the heavily-populated area around Da Nang, County Fair operations proved successful in weeding out guerrillas. One operation on 26 April resulted in 45 VC KIA, 17 confirmed VC captured, and 14 weapons discovered. At another County Fair, the VC leader for a hamlet and his entire cadre were killed or captured when they attempted to slip through the cordon. The Marines believed that the County Fair concept had great promise; its only real deficiency was the inadequacy of the participating ARVN and GVN personnel to carry out with efficiency and compassion their part of the operation.<sup>44</sup> (See Chapter VII.)

(C) In addition to the thousands of small unit patrols and ambushes, a significant number of guerrilla casualties also resulted from a hunter-killer tactic employed by III MAF. Reconnaissance teams varying in size from four to 25 Marines were infiltrated deep into suspected enemy territory, and then called in artillery missions and air strikes on observed targets. Artillery and air support plans were developed and helicopterborne infantry units were pre-designated and alerted for the exploitation of significant sightings. Enemy casualties from this operational technique exceeded 100 per month, with the bulk killed by artillery fire. One significant small unit operation involving the long-range reconnaissance patrol took place about 28 miles northwest of Chu Lai in Quang Tin Province during June. An 18-man reconnaissance patrol was attacked by an estimated VC battalion at night and the battle continued for about eight hours. Every effort to break off the platoon was unsuccessful due to the heavy volume of enemy fire. However, at daybreak an overland relief column arrived at the scene and effected a relief. The reconnaissance platoon was still holding its original position despite 17 of its 18 members being either killed or wounded. At the time they were relieved, only seven of the original 18 Marines were able to fight, and some of

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PAGE 370 OF 872 PAGES

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them had been propped up into positions from which they would fire point-blank at the assaulting VC. Over 40 enemy bodies were found, with considerably more probably killed and carried away during the night, as evidenced by the 14 assault rifles, ten carbines and five LMG's captured. Armed helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft of the 1st Mar Air Wing were controlled by the patrol leader, who called in both artillery and air within 50 meters of his position. For his heroic action during the battle the patrol leader was recommended for the Medal of Honor.<sup>45</sup>

#### Operations in II CTZ

(U) Largest of the Corps Zones in RVN, II CTZ encompasses 12 provinces and two broad geographical areas, the Central Highlands and the Central Lowlands. The Central Highlands, actually the southern plateau area of the Chaine Annamitique, can also be divided into two distinct parts. The northern part extends from the vicinity of Ba Me Thuot northward for about 175 miles, and varies in elevation from 600 feet to 1600 feet, although individual peaks are much higher. Irregular in shape, with an area of about 5,400 square miles, this region is covered mainly with bamboo and tropical broad-leaf forests, interspersed with farms and rubber plantations. The southern portion, much of it lying about 3,000 feet elevation, and centered around Dalat, has about 4,000 square miles of usable land. Evergreens predominate at the higher reaches and bamboo at the lower elevations. Sloping gradually in the west to the Mekong valley in Laos, the Highlands fall steeply in the east to the Central Lowlands. The fertile, extensively cultivated Lowlands extend as far inland as 40 miles in some areas, while in others they have been crowded into the sea by the encroaching Highlands. Rice is the principal crop, although considerable sugar cane is also grown. In Cam Rann Bay, II CTZ had one of the finest natural deep-draft harbors in Southeast Asia.<sup>46</sup>

(C) The enemy threat existing in II CTZ at the beginning of 1956 was the presence of an enemy Field Front in coastal Binh Dinh Province, controlling at least the 2d VC MF and the 18th NVA regiments, a possible Field Front in Phu Yen Province and the likelihood of major enemy activity in the Highlands where elements of several regiments were believed to be operating. (See Chapter II.)

(S) To counter this threat, as well as those existing elsewhere in RVN, COMUSMACV directed his subordinates to continue to secure critical installations, base areas and national priority areas; to implement an aggressive intelligence program; and to develop and implement tactical plans which exploited the intelligence gained, as well as the superior mobility and firepower possessed by US forces. In addition, COMUSMACV

PAGE 371 OF 872 PAGES

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directed CG I FFORCEV to conduct operations against identified enemy targets; Operation MATADOR in Fleiku and Lower Kontum provinces to destroy enemy forces operating there, and Operation MASHER to locate and destroy the 2d VC MF Regiment and the 18th NVA Regiment. To accomplish these missions, the CG I FFORCEV had the 1st Cav Div (AM) and the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div.<sup>47</sup>

(S) Operation MATADOR was initiated on 4 January with a four-battalion brigade committed in western Fleiku Province along the Cambodian/RVN border; later a second brigade was committed to expand the operation into Kontum Province. Despite these deeply penetrating actions, contact was limited to occasional encounters with small groups of local force VC; in keeping with COMUSMACV's policy of reinforcing successes and withdrawing from fruitless operations, MATADOR was terminated on 20 January. (Detailed friendly and enemy losses in all major operations are contained in Annex K—Chronology.)

(S) Of the operations directed by COMUSMACV for January and February, MASHER proved to be the most effective. This operation was initiated on 24 January by the 3d Bde, 1st Cav Div (AM) and the 3d Bn, 1st Regt, Capital ROK Inf Div (GRID). RVNAF forces joined the operation on 28 January and called their portion of the Operation THANH PHONG II. Priority of effort went to the Bong Son/Con Thanh valley, with second priority to the An Lao River valley. This coastal plain area had not been entered by RVNAF troops for over a year. By 4 February over 800 VC had been killed. At that time another brigade from the 1st Cav Div (AM) was added and the name of the operation changed to WHITE WING. (Because of the wide-spread publicity the operation was receiving, authorities had expressed concern over US and worldwide reaction to the name MASHER as suggesting cruel or inhuman actions.) The combined Operations WHITE WING/THANH PHONG II continued to find, fix, and destroy elements of the 18th NVA and 2d VC MF regiments. The combined 42-day operation, which terminated on 6 March, resulted in VC losses of 2,389 killed, 701 captured, and over 2,000 suspects detained. The 18th NVA Regt was neutralized and the bulk of its crew-served weapons captured. The capability of the 2d VC MF Regt was seriously impaired, and VC/NVA base facilities and fortifications were destroyed. In discussing Operation MASHER/WHITE WING, CG 1st Cav Div (AM) noted that the enemy stood and fought from fortified villages and that it took heavy artillery (using delay fuzes) and tear gas to root him out. As the battle clearly went against him, the enemy fragmented into small groups and fled to the north and west, the majority of them getting away.<sup>48</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV's guidance did not exclude subordinate initiative and several other operations were conducted. Operation VAN BUREN, involving units from the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div, the 2d ROK Mar Bde

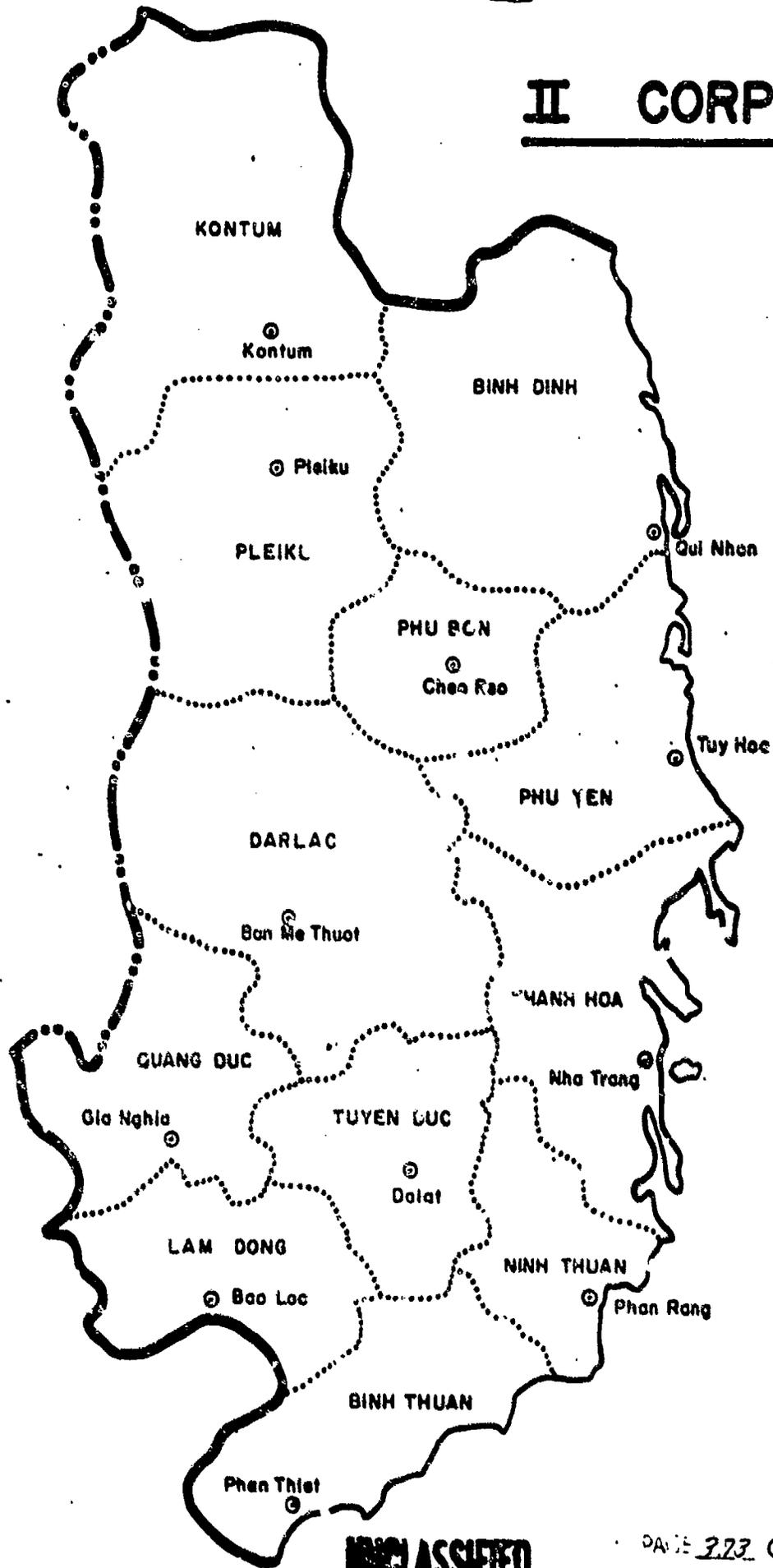
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PAGE 722 OF 872 PAGES

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and the 47th ARVN Regt, was launched on 19 January. This operation had a two-fold purpose; location and destruction of the 95th NVA Regt, believed to be in the Tuy Hoa valley, and protection of the rice harvest in the rich coastal delta. The operation continued until 21 February, during which time local inhabitants harvested 30,262 tons of rice, and the enemy lost 679 killed and 49 captured. In addition 177 enemy defected and 4,700 local inhabitants were relocated to safe areas.<sup>49</sup>

(S) Subsequent to VAN BUREN, Operation HARRISON, a search-and-destroy operation, was conducted in Phu Yen Province in the same general location as Operation VAN BUREN. Beginning on 21 February and ending on 24 March, this operation's purpose was to destroy VC/NVA units in the area of operations and to provide security for the Tuy Hoa and Song Dia Giang River valleys. The operation was conducted by the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div, in conjunction with elements of the 2d ROK Mar Bde and elements of the 47th ARVN Regt. During the operation, 258 VC were killed and 29 captured.<sup>50</sup>

(C) Identification of possible new units in II CTZ during March suggested that the enemy was continuing to infiltrate and preparing for future offensive action. Following Operation MASHER/WHITE WING in Binh Dinh Province, the enemy initiated efforts to regain control of the coastal lowland and to prevent consolidation of the areas brought under government control. Elements of the SAO VANG Division were reported in the mountainous areas of Binh Dinh Province, and there were yet further indications of continued enemy activity in the Highlands. Enemy strategy seemed to be to link his forces in the Highlands with those near the coast. (See Chapter II.)

(S) In addition to his directive to secure critical installations, LOC's base areas, and national priority areas, COMUSMACV again pressed for operations to carry the fight to the enemy. A series of search-and-destroy operations was prescribed for CG I FFORCEV, to locate and destroy the enemy and his base areas in Phu Yen, Binh Dinh, Fleiku and Kontum Provinces.<sup>51</sup>

(S) In Binh Dinh Province, the CRID conducted Operations SU BOK and MAENG HO V, while the 1st Cav Div (AM), in conjunction with elements of the 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, initiated Operation LINCOLN in Darlac, Fleiku, and Phu Bon Provinces. This operation was a series of company and larger unit search-and-destroy operations to locate and destroy enemy forces, facilities, and control installations, as well as to spoil the enemy's preparation for an anticipated southwest monsoon offensive in the high plateau. Meanwhile, the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div continued to operate in Phu Yen with Operations HARRISON and FILLMORE.<sup>52</sup>

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PAGE 374 OF 872 PAGES

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(TS) With the onset of the southwest monsoon season the enemy continued to infiltrate in an effort to achieve a favorable balance of forces. Another division, the Le Loi, had been identified in western Fleiku Province, while the NVA 5th Div was identified in Phu Yen Province. In September, two more enemy divisions, the 610th (subsequently renamed NVA 3rd) and the 630th (subsequently renamed NVA 1st) were identified. At the same time the enemy was not neglecting his logistics base. In spite of a US air interdiction campaign, which probably intercepted 50 percent of the enemy's supplies and which, in conjunction with US ground operations, resulted in shortages of food and other supplies, the enemy expanded his base. Adhering to the Mao-Giap doctrine of careful logistic buildup prior to commencing offensive operations, and showing himself to be an excellent, methodical, and sophisticated planner, the enemy built for a major campaign during the monsoon season, probably hoping for a "Dien Bien Phu" against a major US unit. The enemy's greatest threat in II CTZ was of a coordinated multi-pronged offensive in widely scattered areas, which would be difficult for US forces to counter.<sup>53</sup>

(TS) Elusiveness on the part of US forces was the key to frustrate enemy desires to destroy a major US unit, and to help explode the myth that monsoon weather negated US mobility and restored the advantage to the enemy. Important though it might be to secure Highway 19, the LOC to the highlands, it was even more important to keep the enemy off balance, to keep him guessing, and not to let him prepare. Operations in II CTZ were to be oriented on the enemy and on his resources, and the enemy's dispositions in II CTZ determined, in large degree, the areas for major operations. Against the enemy concentrations in the coastal areas, sustained offensive operations were the order of the day, to destroy or drive out all enemy forces of battalion or larger size, and to destroy his resources. Against the enemy concentrations along the border in the highlands, intensive surveillance and reconnaissance were called for to locate remunerative targets for attack by strategic and tactical air and previously designated reserve-reaction forces. Between these two areas, GVN-controlled facilities and areas would be held while positively located enemy forces would be attacked by ground and air forces. In order to accomplish these goals, COMUSMACV visualized that the 1st Cav Div (AM), although in reserve, would be continually on the move, exploiting intelligence or any contact or success of the 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, or of the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div. From time to time, however, a cavalry brigade could operate in the highlands, if desired. CG I FORCEV.<sup>54</sup>

(C) On 10 May, the 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div initiated Operation PAUL REVERE east of the Cambodian border near Chu Fong mountain. Designed to be the "westward push" of COMUSMACV's southwest monsoon

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PAGE 375 OF 822 PAGES

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strategy, this operation was probably the single most significant allied action in keeping the enemy from mounting his vaunted southwest monsoon offensive. In July, when the NVA infiltration appeared to have become too large for the 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div to handle, the 1st Cav Div (AM) stepped in to assist. During PAUL REVERE, the enemy lost 546 killed and 69 captured. On 1 August, when the cavalrymen became involved, the name of the operation was changed to PAUL REVERE II and continued for another 25 days, when the major NVA threat seemed to abate, and the operation was again redesignated, this time to PAUL REVERE III. The results of PAUL REVERE II were 708 enemy killed and 98 captured. CO 3d Bds, 25th Div discussed Operation PAUL REVERE:

The 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div had one battalion on a surveillance mission north of Chu Pong, one south of it and one screening the area in the rear. There had been a good bit of activity north of Chu Pong with four or five contacts per day. This was a surveillance over a 17,000 meter front, and therefore, many of the contacts were by long range observation. . . . This was an extremely rugged area. Airlift was completely impossible and the use of armor severely limited.

The peculiarity of Operation PAUL REVERE was that the enemy was all around US forces. Saturation patrolling of the entire operational area showed that the enemy was operating on external lines and he could always slip away into Cambodia or in other directions. The pattern was one of daily contact with small groups of four to five men scattered over a very large area. Based on the foregoing, it looked as though the 320th NVA Division had moved in from Cambodia and was getting ready for an attack against Plei Me. PAUL REVERE broke up their attack. Although the total enemy force was a large one, US forces did not find any caches or base camps. This pointed to the conclusions that the NVA 320th Division was based across the international border in Cambodia. JJ

(TS) Conducted in the same general area as the earlier MASHER/WHITE WING, Operation DAVY CROCKETT (4-16 May 66) was a 12-day search-and-destroy operation in Binh Dinh Province near Bong Son, the Eagle's Claw and Soul Cat Valley. The enemy fought from formidable positions, regular ant hills of case-hardened clay, which proved the value of tanks as well as air and artillery in operations. DAVY CROCKETT resulted in 374 enemy killed and 82 captured. With the mission of spoiling an

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PAGE 376 OF 822 PAGES

830624

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anticipated VC regimental attack on the Vinh Thanh CIDG camp, Operation CRAZY HORSE was conducted 17 May - 5 June by the 1st Bde, 1st Cav Div (AM), plus CIDG and ROK units, between the Vinh Thanh Valley and Eagle's Claw. The terrain encountered on CRAZY HORSE was characterized as the most rugged met by the 1st Cav Div, and the big problem was to determine just how long it was fruitful to fight in such terrain.<sup>56</sup>

(TS) On 2 June the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div initiated Operation HAWTHORNE, an 18-day search-and-destroy operation in Kontum Province designed to permit the withdrawal of the Tucmorong outpost to Dak To. After successfully relieving the outpost, the brigade encountered the 24th NVA Regt, and executed a double envelopment, which proved to be most effective, especially in conjunction with the massive artillery and air support available. The brigade commander stated that he had had around-the-clock air support and that he had airlifted 15,000 troops in 30 separate airmobile operations. The brigade exploited one B-52 strike within 30 minutes after the last bomb fell, and found that employment of CS riot-control agent just prior to a strike was an effective way to get the enemy out of his holes and to increase the effectiveness of the strike. This operation resulted in 531 enemy killed and 22 captured, as well as 22 tons of rice seized.<sup>57</sup>

(TS) In the middle of June, COMUSMACV sponsored a conference to discuss the strategy for the immediate future. It was apparent that although the enemy had begun his Highlands SW monsoon campaign, the US SW monsoon campaign was proceeding admirably and had only to continue to keep the enemy off balance. Following termination of the then in-progress Operation HAWTHORNE, COMUSMACV wanted the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div to slip south, generally centering its rear on Kontum while providing surveillance and a screen to the west. In the meantime the 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, centering on Pleiku, was to continue its mission of providing surveillance and a screen to the west. When the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div moved south, COMUSMACV wanted a brigade of the 1st Cav Div (AM) to move south of the 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div centering itself in the Ban Blech/Buen Brieng area, and operating to the west, generally south of the Chu Pong Mountain complex. US units were to be on the move continually, never permitting a brigade base to be stationary for more than two weeks to lessen opportunities for the enemy to launch a major attack on US forces.<sup>58</sup>

(S) Another spoiling operation was the 12-day search-and-destroy Operation NATHAN HALE, conducted in Phu Yen Province beginning on 19 June. A unilateral operation to exploit contacts gained by the 47th ARVN Regiment, it disrupted the plans of the NVA 18B Regt to attack the Dong Tre USASF Camp. During the operation, 459 enemy were killed and 36 captured, besides which 177 tons of rice were captured.<sup>59</sup>

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 377 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) A series of operations in Binh Dinh Province severely crippled the 5th NVA Div. Three operations, THAYER I, IRVING, and THAYER II, beginning 18 September and continuing successively through the end of the year, were conducted by the 1st Cav Div (AM), while two combined US/ARVN/FWMAF operations, DIA BANG 800 and MAENG HO 6 were conducted, beginning 23 September and continuing through 9 November. These operations inflicted enemy losses of 2,396 killed and 2,160 captured—the latter figure later revised downward after screening. In addition, over 130 tons of rice and 100 tons of salt were captured, and over 85 tons of rice, and 267 tons of salt were destroyed during these operations.<sup>60</sup>

(S) Operation IRVING was conducted to clear the terrain around Phu Cat Mountain prior to its incorporation into the TAOR of the CRID. The plan for this operation called for a phased offensive. Phase I was a search-and-destroy operation by an ARVN regiment, a US brigade and two ROK regiments. During Phase II a search-and-clear operation was conducted to incorporate Phu Cat Mountain into the TAOR of the CRID to reestablish GVN control over the surrounding lowlands. Participation of the 1st Cav Div (AM) during this phase was reduced to permit the bulk of its forces to return to Operation THAYER.

(S) A request connected with Operation THAYER shed an interesting light on the unique nature of the war being fought in RVN. Since previous operations in the THAYER area had revealed fortified positions which offered excellent targets for the employment of tanks, a tank company was requested for participation in the operation. Two reasons were given for refusing the request. The roads in the operations area were not thought sufficiently strong to support the tactical employment of tanks and the logistic effort required to sustain them, especially during the monsoon. The other factor arguing against the employment of tanks was the crop damage and other loss to civilian property likely to accompany tank operations in Binh Dinh Province. The latter reason would have reacted unfavorably on civil affairs and revolutionary development programs.<sup>61</sup>

(S) Operation PAUL REVERE IV commenced on 18 October in Fleiku Province and continued through the end of the year. Conducted initially by elements of the recently-arrived 4th Inf Div and the 25th Inf Div, with later reinforcement by two battalions of the 1st Cav Div (AM), PAUL REVERE IV severely disrupted both the enemy's planned attack and his base area. During the course of this operation, it was necessary to commit US forces west of the Nam Sathay River, an area which the enemy used as an infiltration route and in which he could operate with a number of tactical and logistical advantages. The nearness of the Cambodian border made this a sensitive area in which to operate, and in conformity with the existing rules of engagement, authorization was given neither to fire nor maneuver into Cambodia except in self-defense. COMUSMACV, commenting on PAUL REVERE IV on 21 November,

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 373 OF 872 PAGES

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observed that the operation conducted against a well fortified and dug-in secret enemy base in very rugged terrain, had been successful. However, he also observed the US forces had sustained rather substantial casualties. Final friendly losses were 136 killed and 466 wounded, while the enemy lost 977 killed and 90 captured.<sup>62</sup>

(S) In Phu Yen Province, the combined operation ADAMS/GERONIMO I was conducted by the 1st Bde, 4th Inf Div and the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div against elements of the NVA 18B and 95th Regiments. The concept of operations was to surround and destroy, or at least to defeat in detail, the enemy units in the area. To accomplish this mission, the plan of attack called for the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div to helilift two battalions under cover of darkness to attack from the north and northwest. The 1st Bde, 4th Inf Div meanwhile was positioned to attack or block from the east, while the three battalions of the 47th ARVN Regt were placed to attack or block along the southern border of the operation area. No overall commander for the operation was designated, so maneuver and fires had to be coordinated by the commanders on the ground. Operation GERONIMO I, whose original concept envisioned an airborne operation, terminated on 4 December. Enemy personnel losses were 150 killed and 76 captured. Operation ADAMS continued through the end of the year, by which time the enemy had lost 162 killed and 101 captured.<sup>63</sup>

(S) Concurrently with these operations, other operations were being conducted throughout the CTZ. Some, like Operation SEWARD, conducted in Phu Yen Province from 5 September to 25 October by elements of the 101st Abn Div, were search-and-destroy rice harvest-protection operations. Others like Operation BYRD, conducted in Binh Thuan Province by a battalion task force of the 1st Cav Div (AM), were economy of force operations. Operation BYRD was conceived as a study vehicle to determine whether an airmobile battalion could operate effectively alone in a province, over an extended period of time. Operating within a radius of about 25 km from Phan Thiet, the battalion task force mounted squad-to-company size operations with considerable success. The enemy, estimated to be one VC battalion, three separate companies, and two separate platoons, was kept off balance by the operation and was unable to mount a single major attack. Operation BYRD demonstrated that a single battalion could operate successfully under terrain, weather, and enemy conditions such as existed in the area around Phan Thiet.<sup>64</sup>

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PAGE 379 OF 872 PAGES

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Operations in III CTZ

(U) Though not popularly thought to be a part of the Mekong Delta, III CTZ nevertheless includes the northern part of the Delta. It is a low-lying area, most of it being under 625 feet elevation, and large portions lying as low as 10 feet above sea level. The area is drained by three rivers, the Van Co, the Saigon, and the Dong Nai, all of which are affected by tidal action. Differences of six feet between high and low tide on the northern reaches of the Saigon River have been recorded. While much of the land has been cleared for rice production, there are still large tracts of rain forest, especially in the east and north along the Cambodian border, and in the coastal provinces. Mangrove swamps are found in Bien Hoa Province, where the Saigon River empties into the sea.<sup>65</sup>

(C) At the beginning of the year, the enemy was firmly entrenched in several areas of III CTZ. In Tay Ninh Province, War Zone C was still controlled by the enemy, as was War Zone D in Binh Duong Province. In addition, the enemy was active in the Rung Sat Special Zone, the mangrove swamp of Bien Hoa Province, where he had a mission to block the deep-draft channel to Saigon by sinking a ship in a narrow stretch of the Long Tao River. (See Chapter II.)

(S) To meet the enemy threat, COMUSMACV directed CG 1st Inf Div, the senior US tactical commander in III CTZ, to conduct several operations against the enemy. Operation MASTIFF was prescribed against the enemy operating in and around the Michelin Plantation in Binh Duong, Binh Long, and Tay Ninh Provinces. Operation MARAUDER was prescribed along the Oriental River in Hau Nghia and Long An provinces to locate and destroy the enemy there, and to interrupt the major infiltration routes passing through the area. Operation MALLET was prescribed for February in Phuoc Tuy Province to locate and destroy the enemy, open Route 15, and disrupt infiltration corridors. The 1st Inf Div and the 173d Abn Bde as well as the Australian Task Force were present in III CTZ to accomplish these missions.<sup>66</sup>

(S) Most of the action in Operation MARAUDER occurred on the first day during an airmobile assault by the 2d Bn, 503rd Inf of the 173d Abn Bde. Thereafter the operation degenerated into sporadic contact and was terminated on 7 January. Besides detaining 625 suspects, US troops killed 130 VC and captured 43, as well as seizing rice and other foodstuffs, livestock, 30 sampans and a hospital.<sup>67</sup>

(S) Operations MALLET and MASTIFF were conducted in February. MALLET disrupted command and logistic organization by destroying tunnels, bunkers and command posts in Long Than District east of Route 15

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PAGE 380 OF 872 PAGES

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MASTIFF was the 1st Div attack against a reported VC stronghold in the Hai Loi woods. Troops of the Division rapidly dominated the area and contested its use by the VC. Neither operation produced any substantial enemy kills, but they were instrumental in breaking up VC supply and command and control facilities.<sup>68</sup>

(S) Besides the operations directed by COMUSMACV, several other operations were conducted in III CTZ. Operation CRIMP was conducted 8-14 January by the 3d Bde, 1st Inf Div, the 173d Abrn Bde, and elements of the 1st Bn, RAR in an attack of Ho Bo Woods along the Hau Nghia-Binh Duong Provincial boundary. Endeavoring to find and destroy the Saigon-Gia Dinh-Cholon VC political headquarters, five battalions in airmobile assault, followed a B-52 strike in the objective area. Enemy resistance was limited to sniper fire and occasional squad and platoon delaying action, most of the VC escaping through an elaborate and well-camouflaged tunnel system. Those tunnels which could not be destroyed were contaminated by a persistent riot-control agent. Operation CRIMP accounted for 151 VC killed, 91 captured, and the seizure of sizable quantities of rice, weapons, ammunition and documents.<sup>69</sup>

(S) On 11 January the 3d Bde, 1st Inf Div was withdrawn from Operation CRIMP so it could participate in Operation BUCKSKIN. A follow-on operation to CRIMP, BUCKSKIN was conducted in conjunction with ARVN forces to clear the area north and west of Chu Chi in Hau Nghia Province to assist in establishing a base camp for the 25th Inf Div. This operation resulted in 93 VC killed, 11 captured and 159 tons of rice and some weapons seized.

(S) The 1st Bde, 1st Inf Div and the 1st Bn, RAR began Operation BULLINE STONE on 10 February to provide security for the 1st Engr Bn, which was constructing a road between the TAOR's of the 1st and 2nd Bdes. On 27 February, an estimated 1,000-man VC force attacked the 1st Bn, 26th Inf but was defeated in the ensuing fire fight with a loss of 122 killed and 11 captured. Total enemy losses for the operation were 148 killed and 16 captured.<sup>70</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV directed that while continuing to secure critical installations, LOC's, base areas, and national priority areas, operations be undertaken to locate and destroy VC forces and their bases around the Michalin Plantation northwest to War Zone C in Tay Ninh Province. This operation had, as an additional objective, the furtherance of planning and preparation for a future major campaign to eliminate War Zone C as an enemy operating base. COMUSMACV also wanted an operation in Phuoc Tay Province to locate and destroy the enemy and his base areas.<sup>71</sup>

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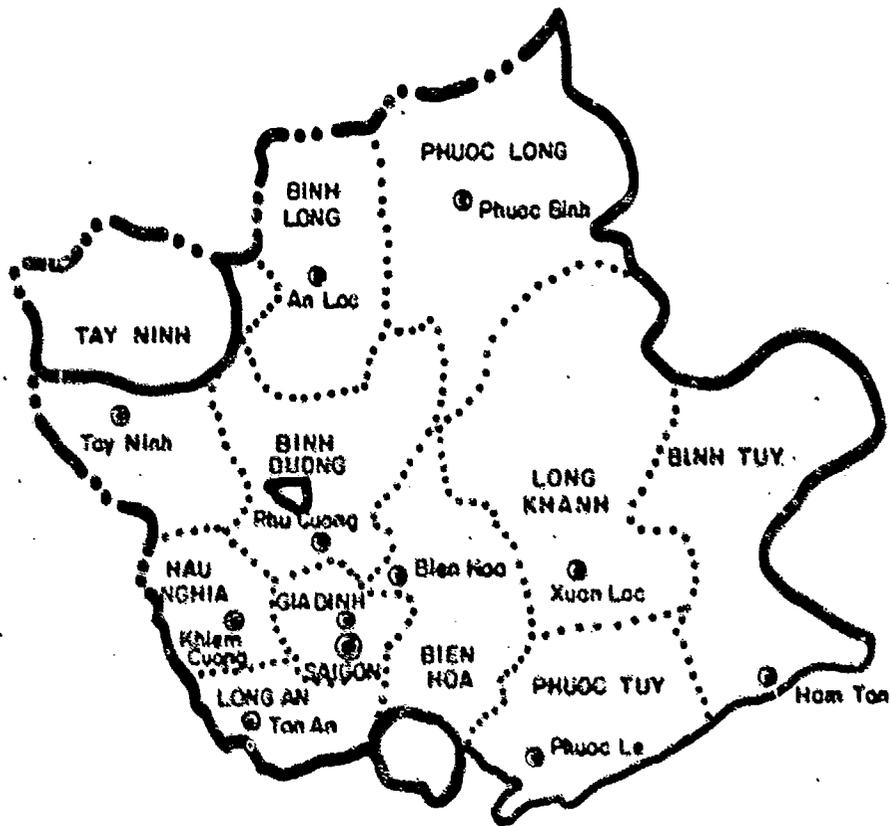
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PAGE 381 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) On 7 March the 1st Bde, 1st Inf Div, the 173d Abn Bde, and elements of the 10th ARVN Div began Operation SILVER CITY, a search-and-destroy operation, in the area of the Be River in Binh Duong Province. The mere introduction of this force triggered a four-hour attack by the enemy against the 173d Abn Bde. The operation resulted in destruction of a major enemy supply installations and disruption of enemy LOC's and training, hospital, and logistical activities; 336 VC were killed and one captured.<sup>72</sup>

(S) As more US forces were introduced into III CTZ, a Corps-level headquarters, II Field Force Vietnam (II FFORCEV), was organized to control them. Organized on 15 March, II FFORCEV assumed operational control of the 1st Inf Div, 25th Inf Div, 173d Abn Bde (Sep), 23d Arty Gp, 12th Aviation Gp, 1st Bn RAR, and 161st Btry, RNZ Arty.

(S) Beginning on 30 March, one day before SILVER CITY terminated, Operation ABILENE was initiated in Phuoc Tay Province by elements of the 1st Inf Div. On 11 April, two days before the operation terminated, an estimated VC battalion surrounded a company of the 2d Bn, 16th Inf. During the ensuing three-hour battle, the US unit sustained heavy casualties. Final figures, however, showed that the enemy lost 92 killed and 20 captured in the operation against friendly losses of 48 killed and 170 wounded.<sup>73</sup>

(C) The thrust in Tay Ninh Province, Operation BIRMINGHAM, began 24 April and continued through 27 May. The 1st Inf Div employed two reinforced brigades operating in close coordination with ARVN III Corps. As the operational area shifted westward in Tay Ninh Province, large quantities of VC material were located above the Rach Gia Bac River. Installations uncovered confirmed that the area was used by the enemy for rest, recuperation, training and supply. The most significant part of BIRMINGHAM was the capture or destruction of vast quantities of enemy supplies and facilities including 2,103 tons of rice, 323 tons of salt and other large quantities of goods. In addition, 118 enemy were killed and 28 captured. The impact of this operation was expected to have a long-term effect on the VC ability to shelter, feed, and equip large numbers of personnel in the area. The immediate effect was to disrupt further the enemy southwest monsoon campaign plans. From these material losses the enemy became hard-pressed to support his forces in the area, reflected by his initiation of increased taxation around the Michelin Plantation. Notwithstanding the material losses, the loss of prestige and control in an area formerly considered a safe haven was a demoralizing blow to enemy stability and influence in Tay Ninh and was the first of the operations that sent large forces into Cambodia to seek relief from US initiatives.<sup>74</sup>

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PAGE 383 OF 872 PAGES

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(TS) The pattern of operations in BIRMINGHAM was a continuous series of platoon-size action against caretakers of VC base camps. US forces expected to find VC supply areas along the roads, but not until the river was reached were sizable supply areas uncovered. All the possible LZ's in the area were heavily fortified, but fortunately were not occupied. Artillery and bombs had no effect against the bunkers, so US forces developed a skip-type delivery of napalm and also changed their assault techniques. The troops now began to charge out of the helicopters and immediately assault the tree line instead of waiting for the departure of the helicopters before commencing the assault. Gunships hovered over the troops and delivered overhead suppressive fire against the tree lines.<sup>75</sup>

(S) In the latter stages of Operation BIRMINGHAM, a raid was planned which offered the prospects of destroying the headquarters of COSVN. This operation, code-named TF HOLLINGSWORTH, was scheduled for 7-9 May, and called for the helicopter employment of four infantry battalions and one artillery battalion. The initially hot, dry, and dusty weather gave way to heavy rains of unexpected intensity which dumped 3.5 inches of water into the objective area over a four-day period. The weather deteriorated to such an extent that the first lift was postponed by an hour and a half, and prevented further introduction of task force elements. "Accordingly, the decision was made to extract the committed elements. . . and cancel the remainder of the landings."<sup>75A</sup>

(TS) Operation LEXINGTON III was significant because of its kill-ratio and the fact that this was the first time that USA units had operated in the mangrove swamps of the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ). The operation began on 17 April, was interrupted on 5 May because of other commitments, and was resumed on 22 May, and terminated 9 June. In LEXINGTON III the 1st Bn, 18th Inf operated jointly with USN and ARVN III Corps forces in demonstrating US ability to operate freely and effectively in such terrain. In this operation the VC lost 61 killed and 10 captured, plus 35 tons of rice and 27 tons of salt, against friendly losses of one killed and seven wounded. The operation, which saw the troops operating in mud up to their hips, proved the VC to be vulnerable to night ambushes because of his habit of moving by sampan. Fire discipline also proved to be very effective, and it was found that units could not remain in the swamps for more than 48 hours because of the threat of immersion foot. Of the three rifle companies of a battalion, only one at a time was able to operate in the swamps. A system of rotation was established, whereby one company conducted the operation, while another company held out at base camp and the third protected the base camp.<sup>76</sup>

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PAGE 384 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) With the approach of the monsoon season, the enemy was expected to exploit the adverse weather conditions which would exist over much of III CTZ, and he appeared to be building for a sustained offensive. As part of the buildup, NVA units were infiltrating into Phuoc Long and Binh Long and, since Operation ABILENE had knocked the enemy off balance in Phuoc Tuy, constituted the major threat. The enemy was also building up in War Zone D, and at least one regiment was reported in War Zone C. While primary emphasis in I and II CTZ's was on enemy forces and his resources, in III and IV CTZ's primary emphasis was oriented on terrain, where it was hoped National and Corps Priority Areas could be cleared. In the northern and western parts of III CTZ, intensive surveillance and reconnaissance would locate targets for spoiling attacks, while in the region around Saigon, clearing and securing operations, characterized by saturation patrolling, search of selected villages and areas, and clearing of TAOR's would be conducted. Units participating in these operations would have to be alert to conduct spoiling attacks or to relieve centers or outposts under attack. In Tay Ninh and along the coast in Binh Tuy Provinces, GVN-controlled facilities and areas would be held and positively-located enemy units would be attacked by strategic and tactical air and by ground forces. Surface LOC's would have to be secured to support future operations.??

(C) On 2 June two brigades of the 1st Inf Div pushed into War Zone C in the search-and-destroy Operation EL PASO II. Ending on 13 July, the operation resulted in 855 enemy killed and 37 captured. In addition, 1,600 tons of rice, 25 tons of salt, 15 tons of fish and 250 gallons of cooking oil were captured or destroyed. In discussing this operation at a commanders' conference in July, CG 1st Inf Div said his division had engaged three VC regiments, the 271st, 272nd, and 273d; he summarized the action: (Quotation paraphrased.)

• On 8 June, a cavalry troop moving on Route 13 was attacked by all the battalions of the VC 272d Regiment. They hit the lead tank with 75-mm recoilless rifle fire and fired on the rear of the column, then the VC charged the column. Two days later at Loc Ninh one platoon of the 1/28 developed a VC battalion dug in deep trenches. They were from the 273d VC Regiment and had been planning to attack Loc Ninh.

On 30 June, enroute to Tac Ninh, the cavalry squadron was attacked by all the battalions of the 271st VC Regiment. This was a complete surprise. The 2d Bn, 18 Inf, 1st Bn, 2d Inf, and 1st Bn, 28th Inf were all committed by 2 July. US forces nearly lost this battle. However, air superiority proved to be the deciding factor and inflicted severe losses on the enemy.

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PAGE 385 OF 872 PAGES

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On 9 July the cavalry went out again, this time as bait. A feint was made to the northeast with a B-52 strike and information was leaked through the local people that one cavalry troop would be coming down the road. However, two cavalry troops with infantry were sent. At 1100 hours right where expected, the lead troop was hit with heavy mortar and artillery fire. The second troop double backed (closed the column by doubling the column) and north of the road was hit with 2,200 rounds of artillery and the south side with 99 air strikes. The VC finally broke under the air and artillery. They had been deeply dug in and charged the column, hoping to swarm the vehicles. The first 15 minutes was critical in these fights.

To win these fights, they needed to be intensively preplanned with plenty of fire support ready and plenty of helicopters standing by. (The last one was actually war gamed with every commander involved.)<sup>78</sup>

(S) The Australians recorded their highest success of the war against the 5th VC Div on Operation SMITHFIELD during the period 18-24 August. In this action, the enemy lost 245 killed and 3 captured. The enemy had attempted to destroy an Australian battalion, but the tables were turned and the Australians destroyed a VC reinforced battalion which contained a large number of NVA troops.<sup>79</sup>

(U) The enemy, in spite of the wounds he had sustained in EL PASO II, moved the 9th VC Div into well-concealed base areas where he absorbed replacements—mainly from NVN—retrained, and reequipped. In early November, the 9th Div moved to its base area near the Michelin Plantation west of Tay Ninh, where a very large logistics base had been developed. Intending to use this base as a jumping off place for objectives in Tay Ninh Province, the enemy instead collided with the 196th Lt Inf Bde. The resulting battle, Operation ATTLEBORO, fought in the snarled thickets of War Zone C, became, before its final crescendo, the largest operation of the war.

(S) On 14 September the 196th Lt Inf Bde began a single-battalion search-and-destroy operation in Tay Ninh Province, but did not gain significant contact. On 19 October the brigade was directed to reenter the area with one battalion to look for more rice and storage areas; with the uncovering of such areas, another battalion was fed in. On 30 October 1,000 tons of rice were uncovered, and the deeper the area was penetrated, the more was found. A sizeable base area was uncovered but,

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PAGE 386 OF 872 PAGES

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although known to be in the area, the 9th VC Div was not yet definitely located. By 3 November further reinforcements had expanded the search capability in the battle area and, on the next day, all US companies in the operation were in contact with the enemy. The 1st Inf Div committed a battalion, then a reinforced brigade, and by moving all night, concentrated near Dau Tieng. Accepting an area of operations, the 1st Inf Div started search-and-destroy operations on 6 November with two brigades, one committed and one held back as a reaction force. The 3d Bde, 4th Inf Div was positioned and the 173d Abn Bde, with one of its battalions and two ARVN Ranger battalions, initially screened along the river in the eastern part of the battlefield. The 173d then began to search and destroy, while the 25th Inf Div was placed on the left of the 1st Inf Div to protect its flank. By 13 November action in front of the 1st Inf Div had died down and on 15 November, as the enemy faded away, the 25th Div began to thrust to the north, moving a brigade consisting of two mechanized battalions, three infantry battalions and two artillery battalions to the Katum area, making the deepest penetration of War Zone C yet recorded. During the battle, artillery and air support were used extensively; over 4,200 105-mm rounds and 5,800 155-mm rounds were fired and 74 air sorties were flown. B-52 strikes were used almost as close air support or long range artillery, and served to disrupt the enemy's chain of command. Platoon level contact constituted 90 percent of all contacts and 70 percent of those were at night. By the time ATTLEBORO was terminated in late November, the enemy had lost 1,106 killed and 42 captured; the 9th VC Div was badly mauled.<sup>80</sup>

(C) Generally there were fewer major operations producing large kills in III CTZ than in II CTZ, because of the nature of the threat in each area, and because of the differences in the missions assigned. In II CTZ, I FFORCEV was fighting a defensive battle, while employing maximum offensive action to keep the enemy off balance and pinned against the border. In III CTZ, on the other hand, II FFORCEV was on the offensive and was concerned with increasing the security of territory already under GVN control, or of extending GVN control, while the enemy was as elusive as possible.

#### Operations in IV CTZ

(U) Known generally simply as "The Delta," IV CTZ embraces the low-lying alluvial plain formed by the Mekong River system in RVN. Nowhere rising over 10 feet above sea level, the region's fertile soil is intensively cultivated, with rice being the chief crop. Canals criss-cross the area, and dense rain forests cover its western portion, while mangrove swamps abound along the coast.<sup>81</sup>

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PAGE 387 OF 822 PAGES

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(C) At the beginning of the year, the VC were well entrenched in IV CTZ and the main threat seemed to be from guerrilla activity. Although his activity decreased slightly from December 1965, the enemy's strategy still seemed to be to control Highway 4. Terrorism was a primary tactic and, though he retained the capability to conduct battalion attacks, most of the enemy's attacks during the early months of the year were company-size or smaller.

(S) During the first two months of 1966, ARVN forces conducted in excess of 230 battalion or larger unit operations. These were short-term one to four day operations capitalizing on quick reaction to intelligence, and using overwhelming firepower and strength to trap and destroy isolated enemy battalions and company-size units. In IV CTZ, ARVN developed a tactic in which a VC force was cordoned from three sides with one side purposely left open, but covered with crushing firepower. It was found that when confronted with superior strength, the VC would move to the point of least resistance, the open area, where intense fire from artillery, air, and helicopters would be brought to bear. During January and February there were some 46 significant engagements with friendly forces victorious in 37. It is significant that of the ten VC-initiated engagements, he was successful in nine, tending to reinforce the VC tactic of initiating action only when assured of success. Most of these successes were gained in attacks on isolated RF and PF units, and in ambushes of ARVN units.<sup>82</sup>

(C) During March and April the enemy continued to harass isolated posts and hamlets. On 25 April, however, the VC departed from his normal tactic by attacking in daylight the district town of Cau Ke, in Vinh Binh Province. Timely intervention by armed helicopters and reinforcements by ARVN prevented the VC from inflicting heavy casualties and overrunning the town. The enemy also displayed his disregard for proper treatment of civilians and political detainees on 6 April, when he executed 22 chained captives. In early May, sea infiltration of supplies into IV CTZ was confirmed when a 200-ton seagoing vessel was engaged by tactical air and beached off the tip of Cau Mau Peninsula. Subsequent boarding of the vessel disclosed 120-mm mortar ammunition, the first indication that such weapons were in IV CTZ. In May, in two search-and-destroy operations the 21st ARVN Div, in An Xuyen and Bac Lieu Provinces, accounted for 512 enemy killed and 24 captured.<sup>83</sup>

(U) Beginning in late September, water in the Delta began to rise and continued until three provinces in particular, Chau Duc, Kien Phong, and Kien Luong, were flooded. Such a situation, accompanied as it was by refugee flow and concentrations of people on ground and in communities above the flood level, created conditions exploitable both by the enemy and by friendly forces.

(C) In Kien Phong Province, which had been the least aggressive province in IV CTZ, the enemy was caught unprepared. Remaining in the

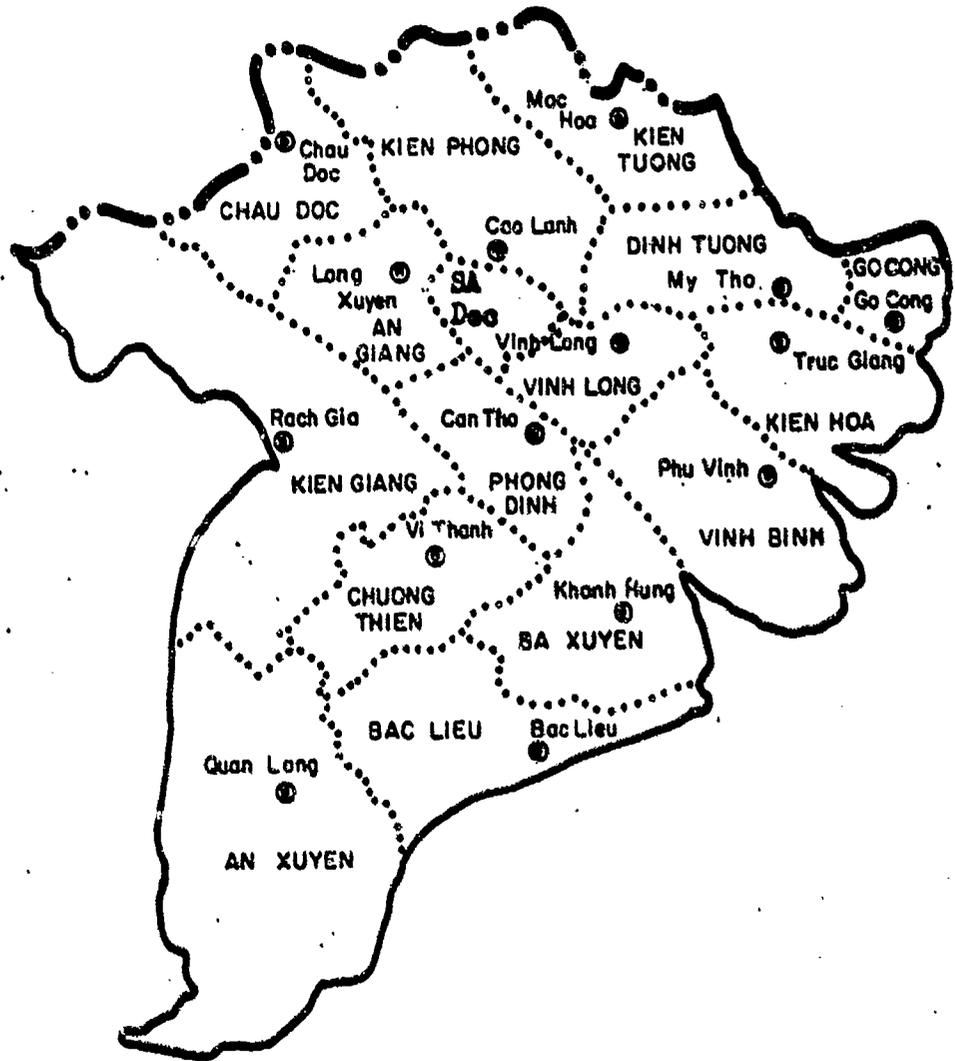
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PAGE 388 OF 872 PAGES

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area during the flood, the enemy simply had moved to higher ground. In the process, however, he became scattered and lost control of the people. The technique used to hunt down the enemy was to block off an area and send in boats which had been provided by the USN and which were controlled by helicopters overhead. Helicopter gunships also provided fire support. Results from this effort were gratifying: the enemy lost 262 killed and 158 captured, at a cost to friendly losses of three killed, and 38 wounded.<sup>84</sup>

(TS) In Kien Tuong Province, where the province chief and the RF/FF had been very aggressive and the VC were wary, the enemy had scattered and had gone into Cambodia. Even so, in the Plain of Reeds, PER's and helicopters were used to good effect together and the enemy lost 147 killed and 82 captured. Here, though, friendly losses were heavier: 25 killed, 68 wounded and eight missing.<sup>85</sup>

(C) The year closed with the largest airborne assault in the war since 1964. At dawn on 27 December two waves of C-130's of the 7th AF thundered over the fringes of the U Minh Forest in Chuong Thien Province; 1,200 RVNAF paratroopers disgorged from the craft to initiate Operation DAN CHI 270/D. This search-and-destroy operation terminated on 30 December after inflicting losses of 124 killed and 12 captured on the enemy.<sup>86</sup>

(C) For plans to introduce US forces into the IV CTZ, see Chapter III.

#### AIR SUPPORT OF GROUND OPERATIONS

(C) The early 1965 resolution to unleash US airpower in support of US/RVN counterinsurgency operations against VC/NVA infiltration in RVN rapidly moved toward new records in tactical air warfare. By the end of the year 1965, USAF tactical and strategic pilots had flown more than 53 thousand strike sorties in SEASIA, including about one thousand delivered by B-52 bombers based on Guam.<sup>87</sup>

(S) The conflict in RVN generated rules of engagement for in-country operations and for contiguous border areas--Cambodia, Laos, and the DMZ. Within the country itself MACV directives delineated the rules of engagement. In border operations, coordination with nearby Embassies and compliance with higher headquarters guidance also was necessary. In RVN operations all targets were approved by the province chief or through higher authority; strikes would not be executed if identification of friendly forces was in doubt. Control by an air liaison officer (ALO), forward air-controller (FAC), or MSQ-77 or TFG-10 (ground control radars) was required, with the exception that

PAGE 390 OF 872 PAGES

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FAC's were always required for strikes on villages. The presence of temples, pagodas, shrines, or other places of worship would negate approval of B-52 strikes. Immediate requests for air strikes against targets, other than close support of ARVN/FW forces under direct attack and engaged in specified operations, would not be honored if the possibility of friendly casualties existed. Strikes not associated with a specified military operation required positive identification and RVN military/political authorities' approval. The use of SKY SPOT (MSQ-77) bombing was prohibited on targets within 1,000 meters of friendly troops.<sup>87A</sup>

(TS) The rules of engagement for operations near the Cambodian border provided that no Cambodian villages or populated areas would be attacked by air; the Cambodian border could be penetrated when in support of tactical operations; and the air--to include B-52's--could be employed to a depth of 25 km. In the DMZ, air strikes into the area were permissible south of the Line of Demarcation when against a clearly defined military target. (For Laos, see Out-of-Country Air Operations.)<sup>87B</sup>

(S) Policy governing military operations during TET, the Vietnamese New Year holiday, directed that no offensive air operations be initiated in RVN. Exception could be authorized by COMUSMACV, if deemed necessary, for security of US/RVNAF/FWMAF forces in contact with VC/NVA forces. In such instance, air and naval operations in support of ground forces could be employed, including B-52 ARC LIGHT forces requested through normal channels. As the possibility existed that VC/NVA forces would avoid engaging RVNAF during TET while continuing to engage US/FWMAF units, VNAF participation in defensive actions which might result was provided through prior coordination. Meanwhile, intensive aerial reconnaissance was authorized for conduct throughout the TET period.<sup>88</sup>

(S) Increased aerial surveillance, special support missions, and shifts in operational flying patterns during January evolved in part from the four-day standdown in observance of TET and from the Presidential moratorium on bombing NVN which lasted 27 days--23 December 1965 through 30 January 1966. USAF conducted and sustained the total volume of tactical strike sorties flown by the services, and in so doing, increased six-fold the large general-purpose bomb rate of delivery. Even so, USAF tactical strikes in RVN were off 1,200 sorties, seven percent below the December 1965 peak, with direct air support down by 20 percent. Despite a slight drop in total strike sorties by all Services during January, airpower was highly active and effective throughout RVN in support of major ground actions and numerous small operations, striking against long-held enemy strongholds, troop concentrations, storage areas, and infiltration routes. Chief JCS, RVNAF, Lt Gen Cao Van Vien, in a letter to COMUSMACV, highly commended US and Australian forces in uncovering an important enemy base used by the VC for the Saigon/Cholon/Gia Dinh area, adding that outstanding support by USAF and USA aviation units contributed greatly to the success

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of this operation. This was one of several JGS commendations which followed on other major operations throughout 1966.<sup>89</sup>

(S) A sharp upward trend in RED HAZE (infra-red) activity occurred during January. Human activity or suspicious activity outside normal areas of habitation were located precisely in 31,982 separate returns from 3,243 positions within the target areas. Air strikes on 23 January against an IR-identified NVA/VC regiment of approximately 800 men in Chuong Thien Province killed an estimated 185 enemy.<sup>90</sup>

(S) While TET holidays reduced hostilities during a ten day period, VR-identified infiltration routes in the I CTZ resulted in increased reconnaissance coverage aimed at enemy harassment and target development. On 12 January COMUSMACV voiced his concern to the Cmdr 2d Air Div for insuring positive target identification and control of air strikes in support of US/ARVN/FWMAF units. More FAC's were needed to support adequately this critical requirement of the visual surveillance program. Primary responsibility for visual surveillance was assigned to USA, effective immediately. Corps SA's would continue detailed planning (MACV Dir 381-1, 2 Jun 65). USAF air-borne FAC's would continue to provide visual reconnaissance for strike control missions and, in addition, provide requested visual reconnaissance in assigned areas as practicable.<sup>91</sup>

(S) AC-47 aircraft operating in attack mode, side-firing 18,000 7.62 caliber rds-per-minute from three internally-mounted mini-guns, continued producing impressive results. Enemy fear of the AC-47's firepower throughout RVN, and in TIGER HOUND operations within the Laotian Panhandle, was fully justified as "PUFF, the Magic Dragon," circled at relatively safe altitudes and sprayed deadly fire upon FAC controlled targets. These aircraft were employed almost daily on pre-planned targets in support of ground operations.<sup>92</sup>

(S) Herbicide operations, as applied to defoliation of VC infiltration routes in RVN, began in November 1962 when COMUSMACV and the US Ambassador were given authority to approve defoliation requests from RVNAF. Defoliation operations, until early 1965 were conducted under GVN rules of the FARMGATE program, which also comprised RANCH HAND enemy crop destruction and JUSPAO psychological operations. FARMGATE rules required a RVNAF observer aboard US piloted aircraft with VNAF marking on military missions in RVN. Defoliation operations in Laos were closely coordinated and approved by the Royal Laotian Government through the US Ambassador in Vientiane.<sup>93</sup>

(S) The herbicide program was increased again in 1966 to encompass military security around airfields, bivouac areas, and supply dumps. In 1966 defoliation operations were scheduled well in advance of planned

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ground operations. In some instances, later aerial igniting of areas dried by defoliation would precede air and ground attacks, such as the burning-off of dense foliage on Chu Fong Mountain for an attack during March 1966.<sup>94</sup>

#### Air Support for Search-and-Destroy Operations

(S) USAF's constant striving for an improved air-support capability during inclement weather conditions brought forth in 1966 the installation of three AN/MSQ-35 ground radars to provide a ground-directed all-weather bombing capability for RVN. Priority had been given to these elements of the SEASIA Integrated Tactical Air Control System (ITACS) approved by the JCS in mid-January 1966. The first unit was operational in early March. USAF's 30th Weather Sq at TSN also received daily real-time pictures of weather conditions over SEASIA and adjacent regions from ESSA II, a weather-observing satellite. This information, relayed to the SEASIA Tactical Forecast Center, was used in RVN to confirm weather analyses in data-scarce regions, to give more confidence to long-range forecasts, to determine detailed cloud coverage over the SEASIA peninsula--thus confirming tactical area forecasts in support of air strikes and reconnaissance missions--and to provide more timely data on location and tracking of tropical storms affecting SEASIA operations.<sup>95</sup>

(S) By the end of March, airspace over RVN was covered by radar and navigational facilities useful in MACV joint operational planning. COMUSMACV urged his component commanders to make maximum use of these facilities. Advising that during the monsoon season enemy attacks would take advantage of marginal weather, he directed USA and USAF elements to develop an essential capability of providing support under reduced visibility conditions. More than 40 beacons were operational, which contributed to navigation and location of targets or landing zones. Of special importance was the capability of USAF AN/MSQ-35 and the USMC AN/TPQ-10 Radar Course Directory Centrals (RCDC) to direct and control both fixed and rotary-wing aircraft to predetermined locations. Further, a DECCA Navigation System was operational in the southern portion of RVN, and another would become operational in the northern portion of RVN in May or June 1966.<sup>96</sup>

(S) Effective 1 April 1966, HQ PACAF deactivated the 2d Air Div and activated the Seventh Air Force (7th AF) with headquarters at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, RVN. The administrative changeover did not affect USAF modus operandi, nor the command structure with respect to COMUSMACV.<sup>97</sup>

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PAGE 393 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) In air operations during April, friendly aircraft flew 12,224 in-country strike sorties. This was a 3,500 decrease from March and the lowest since September 1965, reflecting reduced VC activity as well as the application of a more discriminating target selection policy. Concurrently, a new high was set in the number of aircraft held on ground-alert-not-launched as the slowed rate of munitions delivery became critical, particularly for general purpose (GP) bombs and rockets. (See Chapter IV.) In some instances, lighter bomb loads were carried. Reconnaissance decreased as requests dropped nine percent during April.<sup>98</sup>

(C) In a continuing effort aimed at best possible utilization of O-1 aircraft used in the VR program, COMUSMACV in mid-April considered test results of a USAF operational concept based on placing these aircraft under the 7th AF for single management. COMUSMACV decided that the tests proved the concept was not practical and that the USA system of decentralization was sound. However, the tests evolved certain management practices which would be modified for more efficient use of this limited asset.<sup>99</sup>

(S) As the monsoon season approached, tactical and strategic air support of search-and-destroy ground operations continued on an ever-widening scale throughout suspected VC-occupied areas in RVN. On 12 May COMUSMACV requested consideration be given to utilizing YANKEE and DIXIE CVA air assets to meet contingency conditions, the deployment of CVA's to more favorable positions for support of ground forces when and where required, and authorization for COMSEVENTHFLT and 7th AF direct liaison in contingency planning. CINCPAC responded that COMUSMACV should request additional carrier sorties from CINCPAC when needed and from CINCPACFLT when directed; he would task YANKEE STATION CVA's to support COMUSMACV with any additional sorties required. CINCPACFLT would retain operational control of CVA forces assigned. Furthermore, CINCPAC stated that such coordination as would be necessary to meet contingency situations could be accomplished by utilizing the 7th AF/CTF 77 coordinating committee.<sup>100</sup>

(C) During May COMUSMACV initiated, on verbal instructions, the joint air-ground operations system with the objective of increasing the number of sorties on a mission. Initial response of US forces to the system was excellent, reducing preplanned missions and relying on ground-alert aircraft to meet immediate requirements, resulting in some reduction in sortie rates experienced. The tactical air support element reacted with less-stringent screening of sortie requests, in order to insure that support, which would be used in any event, was spread over the most desirable targets. By the end of May preplanned air requests exceeded available aircraft as a matter of usual procedure, and the installation of SKY SPOT radars at Bien Hoa and Fleiku AB's permitted night and foul-weather radar deliveries of munitions by fighter aircraft.<sup>101</sup>

PAGE 394 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) Further efforts to maximize the effectiveness of strike sorties based on available air assets continued as COMUSMACV sought to conduct search-and-destroy operations within RVN while maintaining a high priority effort in the newly assigned Route Package 1 (RP-1) in the southern NVN Panhandle. In early June CINCPAC stated that the first priority task in the conduct of air operations in SEASIA would remain in support of the in-country effort. However, RVN-based US air assets could be used out-of-country and in RP-1 on a priority second to their use in-country "when COMUSMACV considered such employment advantageous to the overall battle." CINCPACFLT was directed to support COMUSMACV's in-country air operations with one CVA (or modified CVS) until further notice. Should COMUSMACV determine this support insufficient, a request to CINCPAC would be appropriate. Aircraft from YANKEE STATION would be used for operations in Laos and NVN, but no Thai-based aircraft would be used in RVN. VNAF should continue to participate in action against NVN on at least a token basis, and would normally carry out such operations in RP-1. VNAF operations would be conducted only when they did not degrade significantly in-country operations. Meanwhile, ARC LIGHT strikes would be conducted in RVN, NVN and the Laos Panhandle, but with priority effort in RVN. 102

#### E-52 ARC LIGHT Program

(S) On 17 June 1966 the first year of ARC LIGHT operations within SEASIA had been completed. During this period 3,715 B-52 aircraft missions employed munitions against the enemy. COMUSMACV notified his ground component commanders that experience indicated that accurate and comprehensive ARC LIGHT bomb-damage assessment could only be obtained through ground exploitation. He realized that tactical ground maneuvering and target locations would not always permit troops to be committed for exploitation, but the use of troops was encouraged for post-strike target coverage whenever possible. In evaluating the effectiveness of ARC LIGHT support, COMUSMACV requested a one-time consolidated report of each commander's personal estimate (through brigade level for USA and regiment level for USMC), to include total evaluation of direct support, spoiling attacks, and destruction of VC base areas. 103

(S) A review of E-52 ARC LIGHT targets struck during the first full year of operations in RVN revealed that previous evaluations had analyzed the effects of E-52 raids and not their effectiveness. Sufficient statistical data was not available to justify an assessment of effectiveness. From 18 June 1965 through 19 January 1966, 54 of the 150 strikes were covered at least partially by ground follow-up operations. Since that time, only 23 of the subsequent 219 strikes had been so covered. Several scheduled follow-up strikes were cancelled because of adverse weather or the ground tactical situation, while one operation was cancelled because of the internal political situation in RVN. Monsoon

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PAGE 375 OF 872 PAGES

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rains which often precluded air support operations was a primary cause for the decreasing percentage of strikes covered by ground follow-up operations. Also, B-52 raids were being conducted deeper in enemy territory; 52 raids took place in Laos and NVN where no RVN troops were committed, and where few agents had penetrated. While available information did not allow complete evaluation of the effects of B-52 strikes, numerous interrogation reports continued to indicate that the raids had undermined VC morale. In addition to statements by captives and returnees, a captured document revealed that "psychologically speaking, the use of B-52's by the enemy for bombing, along with an extensive propaganda program, considerably lowered the morale of cadre and mass."104

(S) A captured VC directive gave evidence that, as a result of B-52 strikes, the VC had altered their security techniques. Stressing the need for increasing personnel security, more effective camouflage dispersion of bivouac areas, and an increase in guard and patrol activities, it was noted that troops were to be stationed along the periphery of base areas rather than entirely within them. Fortifications were being strengthened and troops, as well as important activities, were shifting more frequently. Experience had aided the VC in their passive defense against B-52 strikes. Hastily-built shelters, which had proven inadequate, were to be replaced by ground craters. The use of bomb craters as shelters, when available, would provide relative safety because the VC had learned that B-52's rarely dropped bombs on the same locations during a single strike. VC captives also noted that B-52 bombings were usually preceded by reconnaissance missions conducted by either L-19's or jet planes. If such aircraft were spotted and suspected of flying air photo missions, the VC would establish aircraft warning cells on a 24-hour basis.105

(S) Of major significance was the fact that a growing number of strikes was being integrated with the field commander's immediate operational plans and tactical situations. It became apparent that the force would be targeted increasingly against fleeting targets, such as troop concentrations in contact, and less against persistent targets such as base camps. Seven of the 33 strikes within I CTZ were directed toward the further disruption of the command and control exercised by VC MR 5 headquarters and subordinate units. After VC headquarters relocation in June, the intent was to continue harassment in order to deter effective control of subordinates and thereby lessen the opportunity for major campaigns. Continued harassment of elements of the 620th Div was achieved by directing six strikes in Quang Tin Province.106

(S) On 6 July B-52's scored two "firsts" while conducting the first mission under a new QUICK RUN system of rapid response to COMUSMACV targeting and the first B-52 mission utilizing the MSQ-77

PAGE 396 OF 398 PAGES

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SKY SPOT bombing system in RVN. CG I FFORCEV expressed high appreciation to the Comdr 3d Air Div for a B-52 PINK LADY mission in support of 1st Cav Div (AM) operations. He observed that elapsed time from the 1st Cav Div (AM) request through COMUSMACV to time over target (TOT) was only 11 hours, and that from the time SAC's receipt of the target until TOT was only nine hours and 55 minutes. This record reaction time, coupled with the great accuracy in concentration of firepower, resulted in dismemberment and dispersal of an enemy artillery force of at least battalion size.<sup>107</sup>

(S) SAC's quick-reaction force consisted of six B-52 aircraft on continuous alert on Guam, subject to control by the MSQ-77 system. CINCPAC and CINCSAC established ground rules for the QUICK RUN force which called for: 1) reaction time of ten hours from SAC's receipt of target information from COMUSMACV to TOT; 2) from one to six aircraft which could be used for QUICK RUN launch (there were no spare aircraft to replace air or ground aborts); 3) bomb fuzing would be a 50:50 ratio of surface to sub-surface bursts; 4) use of the QUICK RUN force would reduce the next scheduled ARC LIGHT strike by the same number of aircraft used; 5) minimum time between QUICK RUN launches would be 16 hours; 6) alternate targets would be scheduled by COMUSMACV in the event one or more aircraft could not employ munitions due to MSQ-77 malfunctions; and 7) the MSQ-77 system would direct not more than two aircraft over the target in each seven-minute period due to necessitating a time-frame for releasing munitions, rather than a specific TOT. To insure availability of the QUICK RUN force to attack urgent targets, COMUSMACV established guidance responsive to the field commanders target nominations. Only strikes in direct support of friendly forces in contact with a confirmed enemy would be considered for QUICK RUN and the target would be the enemy force actually in contact. The elapsed time from field commander's decision to nominate such target for QUICK RUN strike and SAC's receipt of the target information would necessarily be kept to a minimum.<sup>108</sup>

(S) Night sorties employing the SKY SPOT bombing system (MSQ-77/TPQ-10) increased from 735 in June to 910 in July. This night harassment and interdiction program was a most effective use of ordnance, as prospects of hitting an enemy occupying a target at night were greater and the psychological effect was more pronounced. Prior to 11 May 1966 no such capability had existed in RVN. As a result of increased SKY SPOT employment, the intensity of air attacks on the enemy was more evenly distributed throughout each 24 hour period. However, unavoidable sortie peaks still occurred at about 0700, 1000 and 1500, while the slack-off periods occurred between 1100 to 1400.<sup>109</sup>

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

PAGE 397 OF 872 PAGES

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DMZ Air Operations

(S) By 12 July enemy activity in the DMZ had become a primary concern of COMUSMACV. He visited with senior commanders of the I CTZ and learned of major units of the 324B NVA Div crossing the central and western parts of the DMZ. He requested a priority emphasis on use of O-1 visual surveillance aircraft in Quang Tri Province, necessitated by a high priority requirement to locate, confirm, or deny the presence of the 324B Div in RVN. The NVA had been blocked in infiltration attempts by sea, and by the disruptive efforts of TIGER HOUND operations against his LOC through Laos. Rains in Laos had almost halted truck movements. Therefore, the enemy had chosen a short LOC routed across the DMZ, and had placed greater effort on reopening interdicted routes in southern NVN. On 16 July COMUSMACV requested assistance from CINCPAC to lift the restriction on B-52 strikes in Laos so that logistic and training areas could be hit; to grant COMUSMACV authority to strike identified enemy targets in the DMZ west of populated areas and remote to ICC posts; and to institute an intensified air interdiction campaign of the TIGER HOUND type along lines of communications south of Vinh in NVN. COMUSMACV suggested a change of policy that would permit sorties be diverted to strategic-type targets as opposed to the interdiction of enemy's LOC's. COMUSMACV deemed it essential to disrupt in major degree this movement of the enemy to the battlefield, even at the expense of stretching out the destruction of ROLLING THUNDER targets. He urged continued top priority be given to the ground war in RVN. COMUSMACV believed that the enemy, in finding his planned defensive actions blunted in III, II and southern I CTZ, would "go for broke" in the northern I CTZ. 110

(TS) CINCPAC replied that the latest efforts to gain approval for all logistic and training-area targets in Laos for ARC LIGHT strikes had been disapproved. He assured JCS support for these missions and expected the SECSTATE position in the immediate future. Regarding strikes against enemy targets in the DMZ, a follow-up message had been sent to JCS supporting COMUSMACV's position. CINCPAC stated that COMUSMACV had more than sufficient USAF assets under his control to intensify the effort against the LOC's south of Vinh, since the allocation of sorties for Laos and NVN RP-1 had been increased from 3,500 to 4,500 per month. He believed that the objectives of COMUSMACV could be met without diluting the effort in other areas to the north and lessening the pressure on the enemy POL system. 111

(TS) COMUSMACV appreciated CINCPAC's efforts to lift restrictions against B-52 strikes on Laos and the efforts which gave him authority to strike enemy targets in the DMZ. Meanwhile, based on CINCPAC's guidance, Cmdr 7th AF advised COMUSMACV that following several meetings with CINCPACFLT staff, great progress had been made in developing a

PAGE 398 OF 872 PAGES THIS PAGE DEGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
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more comprehensive interdiction program. COMUSMACV urged to be allowed the development of a fully-coordinated program before removal of the DIXIE CVA from south to north. CINCPAC reviewed the total sortie capability in SEASIA in relation to the current military situation. He concluded that an increased sortie capability was required in NVN, and that this could be best accomplished by moving the DIXIE CVA to POINT YANKEE on 6 August.<sup>112</sup>

(TS) COMUSMACV observed that during April he had received the first indications that another enemy division was moving from NVN to the south. At that time his feeling was that this division probably would move through the Laos Panhandle to reinforce NVN troops already in position in or near the central highlands of the II CTZ--such deployment would be consistent with Hanoi's strategy. In mid-May night air reconnaissance first noted considerable truck traffic moving toward the DMZ on Routes 1A and 101. On 1 June COMUSMACV received indications that elements of the division were moving across the DMZ. He believed that the enemy's initial plans for deployment of this division had changed because of the successful TIGER HOUND operations in Laos, and because of the political turmoil existent in the I CTZ. It became clear by 10 June that major elements of the 324B Div had moved into Quang Tri Province, and by 13 June intelligence had crystalized to permit a decision for execution of contingency plans that had been developed several month previous for offensive operations in the northern I CTZ. The enemy had prepared his division base in the rugged hills of north central Quang Tri Province, supported by LOC's along two routes that cross the DMZ. Enemy stockpiles had been prepositioned in and north of the DMZ in heavy jungles. An intensified interdiction program conducted by 7th AF in Operation TALLY HO north of the DMZ resulted in destruction of significant transport and supplies. In addition, B-52's were targeted against dispersed supply dumps. Intelligence confirmed major infiltration from Laos through a valley route ten km south of the DMZ, and from a logistics base seven km south of Highway 9. COMUSMACV restated his requirements for B-52's against these targets.<sup>113</sup>

(S) By mid-August rules of engagement applicable to TIGER HOUND operations were adapted to strikes within the DMZ, authorized under conditions that military targets of opportunity would be identified and controlled by FAC aircraft; preplanned strikes against fixed targets would be contained on TALLY HO frag orders; coastal armed reconnaissance would be conducted south of 17 degrees, and that strikes would be confined to land targets unless engaged by hostile water craft; all water craft operating east of the DMZ or within river estuaries or mooring areas of the DMZ would be considered friendly vessels; and water craft which fired upon any US craft would be considered hostile and could be attacked. On 19 August COMUSMACV emphasized that all possible air actions would be taken against the NVA 341st and 324B Divs, as well as any other NVA units in or near the DMZ. In order to insure

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 399 OF 522 PAGES

8-306-24

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that 7th AF planners had all information available to MACV, daily communication would be maintained regarding location of these units. 114

#### ARC LIGHT Bombing Assessment

(S) COMUSMACV assessed the value of the ARC LIGHT program, and reported to CINCPAC in mid-August that many innovations had emerged since the US had become involved directly in the RVN military effort. If these innovations could be tallied in light of their contribution to the overall war effort, the use in RVN of SAC B-52 bombers would be high on his list. COMUSMACV cited many advantages of B-52 strikes. They provided the ground commander an unprecedented advantage over the enemy as a means to deter or counter the aging communist tactic of employing mass formations on the battlefield. The psychological impact was effective, as "VC and NVA captives and returnees repeatedly state they fear B-52 strikes more than anything else." The enemy, a master of traversing difficult terrain, was constantly on the move except when preparing for attacks. COMUSMACV's strategy had been to attack the enemy's preparatory phase and keep him off balance; often, however, it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to position sufficient ground combat power to attack, and the B-52 was taking up a large portion of this slack. Another benefit was the impact on the operational aggressiveness of ARVN. Experience had indicated that, following a B-52 strike, ARVN would invade well-established VC bases, an initiative that could otherwise never have been expected. 115

(S) COMUSMACV admitted, however, that the potential effectiveness of the ARC LIGHT program had been reduced by the need for dividing B-52 assets among two or more targets to satisfy requirements. With increasing enemy ground maneuver elements in evidence, COMUSMACV expected an increased requirement for B-52 strikes in support of troops in contact with the enemy, "which must always have first priority." The success of B-52 strikes depended directly on the quality of intelligence, reaction time, and the amount of ordnance that could be placed on target. Both quantity and quality of intelligence had steadily increased, and would continue to do so. The major limiting factors were reaction time and weight of attack. Reaction time from Guam was barely adequate, the lengthy flight time reduced sortie availability, and many valuable targets were lost by delay. There was need for B-52 bases closer to RVN such as Thailand, Taiwan, Okinawa, or the Philippines. Obviously these areas would pose political problems but COMUSMACV believed it was time to initiate planning and negotiations necessary to develop close bases. Although his thoughts were aimed at the immediate war effort, COMUSMACV concluded that the availability of an increased B-52 strike capability and its deterrent effect on other potential aggressors in SEASIA, after the end of current hostilities, should not be overlooked.

PAGE 400 OF 872 PAGES

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Such a force, over-watching the peace, might permit a greater reduction of ground maneuver elements than would otherwise be possible. COMUSMACV recommended that provisions be made for B-52 bases closer to RVN, increased availability of B-52 aircraft, fully adequate stocks and production of munitions to support a sustained campaign, and greatly reduced strike reaction times.<sup>116</sup>

(TS) In response to a request from the JCS for comment and recommendation from CINCPAC and CINCOSAC on the question of basing B-52's closer to RVN, CINCPAC fully supported COMUSMACV's views. CINCPAC observed that the projected 800-sortie level operating from Guam approximated 7.7 million dollars per month, but if maintained from northern Luzon the cost would approximate 2.8 million dollars. CINCPAC stated that several bases and possible airfield sites could be considered, such as Kadena, Mactan, Clark, Ching Chuan Kang (Taiwan) and U-Tapao. Kadena provided the earliest available option but would be only a 38 percent improvement in distance over Guam. U-Tapao offered many advantages, including a nearby port, a short distance from target areas, and a large contractor capability on the scene. Ching Chaun Kang would require considerable rework and might involve political objections. The Philippines would have many advantages distance-wise, but Clark AB would require a major construction project, and Mactan would also require major development, with attendant disadvantages to joint-basing with the Philippine AF. A large air base could be built but the Philippine Government would expect substantive quid pro quo. CINCPAC advised that immediate steps should be taken to prepare for increased B-52 sorties. The quickest solution would be Kadena or U-Tapao, where political problems would not appear to be insurmountable.<sup>117</sup>

(S) Meanwhile, during August, high-level concern developed regarding the possibility of information leaks pertaining to ARC LIGHT strikes. In reply to CINCPAC's query, COMUSMACV on 22 August stated that if ARC LIGHT strikes were in fact being compromised, as suggested by captives and ralliers, the source of information could be a result of communications intercept at any level (e.g., high-level intelligence communication in either US or ARVN channels or lower-level intelligence collection by VC/NVA agents in the vicinity of US/ARVN field units). Through results from study of VC/NVA captive and returnee interrogations, it was apparent that all ARC LIGHT strikes were not compromised, since several such captives or returnees had stated that they received no advance warning of strikes. On the other hand, one captive did state that he had been warned of over 20 impending strikes, but that only two had actually taken place.<sup>118</sup>

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 401 OF 872 PAGES

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USMC Air Operations in I CTZ

(C) USMC air operations continued to increase in 1966. A monthly record of 4,190 combat sorties was flown during January. By February the Phu Bai/Da Nang/Chu Lai air complex had grown to be one of the most vital of its kind in SEASIA; 940 USMC, 144 USAF, 91 USA, and 44 VNAF aircraft operated from the complex. This force comprised a major portion of the air power in RVN. During March USMC fighter/attack planes flew 5,637 offensive sorties, a record high. The 33,466 helicopter sorties flown in February was also the highest monthly total to date. USMC aircraft often flew in support of ARVN operations, or in response to ARVN requests for help. A noteworthy example was the four-day emergency operation in support of an ARVN outpost in the mountains 60 miles west of Da Nang. This remote outpost sat astride a major communist resupply route. The 400 defending troops were attacked by an estimated three enemy battalions in March. USMC fixed-wing aircraft flew 92 sorties in support of the besieged troops, and helicopters flew resupply and air evacuation missions during the three-day battle. Two USMC A-4C aircraft and three helicopters were lost during the rescue operation; all the crews were recovered. In all, 107 US and ARVN troops were brought out before the outpost was completely overrun.<sup>119</sup>

(C) The 1st Marine Air Wing (MAW) aircraft also contributed to the air campaign in NVN and Laos. In April alone 171 sorties were flown in NVN and 1,595 as a part of the STEEL TIGER program. In June 4,096 combat or combat-support sorties accounted for 289 confirmed enemy killed. One particularly effective strike took place on 9 June, when Chu Lai-based A-4 Skyhawks struck an enemy concentration about 30 miles south of their base. The pilot assessment of enemy casualties (75 KIA) proved remarkably accurate--USAF patrol which arrived at the target area a short time later counted 79 enemy bodies.<sup>120</sup>

(C) During July, USMC helicopters flew a greater number of sorties--41,959--and lifted more passengers--58,231--than in any other month. Some 27 percent of the sorties and 29 percent of the passengers lifted were accomplished during Operation HASTINGS. About 3,682 casualty evacuation sorties were flown, and armed UH-1E helicopters flew 3,300 fire support missions.<sup>121</sup>

(C) USMC air operations during late 1966 were influenced to a limited extent by lowering ceilings and visibility prior to and during the monsoon. In September a total of 79 sorties were cancelled because of poor weather; the number would have been larger had it not been for the support rendered by the Air Support Radar Teams (ASRT), at Da Nang, Chu Lai, Phu Bai, and Dong Ha. These conducted 1,587 radar-controlled combat sorties--733 of them in support of Operation FRAIRIE. In September a total of 5,854 fixed wing sorties was flown

PAGE 402 OF 872 PAGES

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

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and only three aircraft were lost. One A-4 crashed while on a CAS mission in II CTZ; the pilot ejected successfully, but during the rescue attempt the sling of the rescuing USA helicopter broke and the pilot fell approximately 800 feet and was killed. 122

(C) In October alone 685 sorties were flown over NVN, 64 over Laos, and 345 in support of ARVN, ROKMC and USA units; some 5,000 tons of bombs and napalm were dropped on targets. The 10,000-foot concrete runway at Chu Lai, the first permanent one of its type for the USMC in RVN, was officially opened during October. 123

(C) In November 1st MAF flew a total of 5,447 fixed-wing sorties in support of RVN operations. Total tonnage delivered was 6,874. The wing ASRT sites controlled 1,834 sorties, hitting 2,404 targets. Helicopters flew 31,274 sorties, carrying 50,576 passengers and 3,827 tons of cargo. During December 1st MAF flew 5,620 fixed-wing sorties in support of RVN operations, expending a total of 7,812 tons of ordnance. III MAF forces received 3,933 of the sorties, for an attack-sortie rate of 5.7 sorties per battalion per day. Seventh Fleet was supported by 156 electronic-warfare sorties, and 134 photo missions were flown for III MAF. TFQ 10 attack missions were commenced at 311920H December in Thua Thien Province, against a reported target of massing enemy troops in the open, and continued until 010835H January 67. During the period 32 sorties expended 98.5 tons of ordnance under control of 1st MAF ASRT. The action took place during the period, with the concurrence of COMUSMACV.

### Herbicide Operations

(S) A distinct trend toward the increased use of herbicides as a tactical weapon emerged clearly in CY 66. The ever-increasing use of such herbicides contributed to two major problem areas: a herbicide shortage developed in the second half of the year, rivaling or surpassing the earlier munitions crisis in scope, and there was a shortage of aircraft to meet the expanded programs of herbicide usage. COMUSMACV presented to DOD the FY 67 herbicide requirements in January 1966. This requirement (5.62 million gallons) for FY 67 was validated in March. The follow-on program for FY 68 (6.44 million gallons) was presented for MACV/GVN in July and September and was validated in October. By November COMUSMACV was made aware of the fact that herbicide shortages would limit the original FY 68 requirement to half of that requested, while at the same time the original request was being increased by two million gallons. By December COMUSMACV's further reassessment produced a requirement for a total of 11.7 million gallons. An astronomical nine-million-gallon short-fall now existed. MACV/GVN's newballing requirements were accounted for by an increasing buildup from 15 to 24 aircraft available by 1 July

PAGE 463 OF 872 PAGES

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1967, by increased operational efficiency, by an increase in the number of project requests commensurate with the improved responsiveness to such requests, and by the introduction of the TF 728 (DMZ) program of defoliation. Alternate programs suggested to meet the predicted shortfall included substitution of another herbicide which was effective only against broad leaf vegetation, but it was determined that the jungle growth was too varied to accept this consideration. A modified but less destructive mixture was proposed, which MACV felt would require an increased number of sorties. Another suggestion was to cut the present mixing ratio by using 50 percent diesel fuel. Unable to find any of these alternatives acceptable, COMUSMACV recommended to DOD that all sources--plant expansion, off-shore procurement, and diversions from CONUS commercial markets--be explored to obtain the quantities of herbicide required. The year ended with the dilemma unresolved. 125

(S) The impact of herbicide shortages was one of the contributing factors toward stretching out planned large-scale defoliation projects by year's end. COMUSMACV reported JGS/RVNAF approval of extensions of up to six months on six defoliation projects. At the same time defoliation was proceeding along planned lines for the entire Long Toan secret base, War Zone D, and War Zone C. The defoliation project in War Zone D was well enough on schedule to complete the operation in early CY 67 under the PINK ROSE concept (a defoliated area ignited by B-52 fire bomb missions). Herbicide shortage was not the only complicating factor in defoliation projects; in addition, there were such factors as adverse weather conditions, aircraft availability, and in-progress ground operations denying the area to defoliation sorties. At the onset of CY 67 a hold action was initiated upon plans for defoliation in the northern DMZ until an intensive evaluation had been completed on the program to be carried out in the southern DMZ. 126

## NAVAL OPERATIONS

### Organization and Control

(S) The CINCPAC concept of naval operations in SEASIA for 1966 included offensive air operations from attack carriers (CVA) in the waters adjacent to RVN and NVN; naval gunfire support (NGFS) of friendly forces ashore as well as for amphibious operations, and destruction of known or suspected VC concentrations and bases; coastal air and surface operations against enemy seaborne infiltration; and amphibious operations in RVN in support of COMUSMACV. In implementing this concept, naval forces were divided into two categories; those forces under the operational control of COMUSMACV, acting through his naval component commander, Commander Naval Forces Vietnam (COMNAVFORV); and those

PAGE 404 OF 872 PAGES

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

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forces under operational control of Commander Seventh Fleet (COMSEVENTHFLT),<sup>127</sup>

(C) Naval forces, including United States Coast Guard (USCG) forces, under operational control of COMNAVFORV during 1966 were the Coastal Patrol Force, Task Force 115 (TF 115), known as MARKET TIME; and the River Patrol Force, Task Force 116 (TF 116), known as GAME WARDEN.<sup>128</sup>

#### Operation MARKET TIME

(C) The mission of MARKET TIME operations was to "conduct surveillance, visit and search, naval gunfire, psychological warfare, combat support of US Free World and RVN forces, and other operations as directed in order to secure the coastal regions and major rivers as part of the overall effort to defeat the Communist insurgency in Vietnam." For MARKET TIME operations the coast of RVN was divided into nine patrol areas, enclosing 80 to 100 miles of coastline and extending 30 to 40 miles at sea. Air surveillance of the entire MARKET TIME area was provided by seven SP-2H based at Tan Son Nhut, augmented by P-3A based at Sangley Point, Philippines, and by periodic deployments of SP-5B aircraft from temporary seadromes established at Cam Ranh Bay utilizing SEVENTHFLT seaplane tenders (AV). Three types of ships and craft were used for patrol and visit-and-search of suspect craft. COMSEVENTHFLT provided the larger, more seaworthy ships for off-shore patrol, radar picket escort destroyers (DER), ocean minesweepers (MSO), and coastal minesweepers (MSC), the ship-mix providing a total of 11 units on station with logistic support provided by SEVENTHFLT Services Forces. Twenty-six USCG 82-foot cutters (WPB) operated from three bases to provide close off-shore and in-shore patrols operating in coordination with the 84 Fast Patrol Craft (PCF) stationed at five permanent bases and three temporary bases. All these forces were supported by repair ships (ARL), barge repair facilities (YR), and LST. The VNN maintained an average of 13 Sea Force patrol units and 200 Coastal Group Junks on patrol. This air/sea patrol of the RVN coast was controlled through a network of five Coastal Surveillance Centers (CSC) at Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, Vung Tau, and An Thoi, manned by USN and VNN personnel.<sup>129</sup>

(C) MARKET TIME rules of engagement (ROE) allowed US forces to stop, visit, and search any vessel (less warships) suspected of attempting infiltration within three miles of the coastline. Within the contiguous zone (out of 12 miles from the coast) units were authorized to visit and search any vessel (less warships) which gave a false response to its identification and declaration of intent, or gave other valid grounds for suspicion. Vessels of foreign flags would not be visited and searched within this area unless specifically authorized by CTF 115. Beyond 12 miles RVN vessels or vessels reasonably believed to be RVN, even though refusing to show a flag, were similarly subjected to stop, visit,

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 415 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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and search in order to prevent or punish any infringement of the laws of the RVN. When identity was determined to be other than RVN, the vessel was authorized to proceed. Most of the US units on patrol have a VNN liaison officer embarked as a member of the ship's boarding party.<sup>130</sup>

(C) As forces available approached programmed strength, the number of contacts increased, except where bad weather limited coastal traffic and patrol activity. The effectiveness of MARKET TIME was summed up by COMUSMACV in a backgrounder for selected correspondents on 9 August:

A year ago it was estimated that 70 percent of the enemy's supplies came by sea, but due to MARKET TIME operations probably only 10 percent comes in by sea now. In the Delta area there is a lot of movement going on by the VC along the waterways and GAME WARDEN is designed to make this type movement difficult for them.<sup>131</sup>

(C) In addition to the thousands of small junks, sampans, and other watercraft searched or contacted by MARKET TIME patrols, there were two incidents involving large-scale infiltration attempts during 1966.

#### The Point Grey Trawler Incident

(C) On the evening of 9 May USCGC Point Grey began a routine patrol in the area off the eastern coast of the Cau Mau Peninsula. At about 2200, while patrolling four miles off the coast, what appeared to be a large bonfire was observed. Point Grey closed the beach and determined it to be two large bonfires at a position just north of the entrance to the Rach Gia River. It was decided to maintain continuous surveillance through the night. A few hours later (100010Z May) Point Grey's radar indicated a contact with an apparent steel-hulled vessel, steaming at 10 knots. Point Grey closed and issued a challenge; receiving no reply, she closed to about 400 yards and illuminated, identifying the contact as a trawler. Coastal Surveillance Center, An Thoi, was notified, and Point Grey continued her surveillance. At 0200 the trawler appeared to heave to, and remained dead in the water just offshore from the bonfires. By 0315 the trawler appeared to be drifting; Point Grey illuminated with 81-mm and closed to 100 yards to hail the trawler, but there was no reply. By 0500 the trawler had drifted to about 1,000 yards from the shore, and into shallow water, which led to a decision of Point Grey to delay boarding until daylight. By daylight, the trawler was apparently deserted and aground, 400 yards from the shore. At 0700 Point Grey approached to board. She then came under heavy fire from shore, which she returned as she withdrew to a position 1,500 yards off the beach.

PAGE 406 OF 872 PAGES THIS PAGE DEGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
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(C) A task force was already underway to assist. USS Brister (DER 327) and USS Vireo (MSC-205) were enroute. CTF 115 ordered USCGC Point Cypress to the scene and VNN HQ ordered five junks of Coastal Group 41 and Fleet Command Ships LSIL 328 and PGM 614 to assist. Meanwhile, the tide and a running sea had pushed the drifting trawler to within 100 yards of the shore, in an area of dense mangrove swamps. At 1350, air support was on station and CTF 115 gave the order to expedite boarding. With aircraft support, Point Grey worked in toward the trawler, but received heavy and accurate small arms and automatic weapons fire when within 200 yards of the shore; three men were wounded. Point Grey backed out 200 yards at which time she was able to turn and withdraw to safer waters. Surface units then shelled the shore all afternoon to prevent VC attempts to offload the trawler. By 1700 the trawler was 50 yards offshore, and the VC would probably commence offloading at dark. The decision was made to destroy the trawler, and at 1750 shelling and bombing commenced. Numerous fires and secondary explosions were seen until 2030, when a violent explosion broke the trawler into two pieces, putting out the fires. Shelling then ceased, but the area was illuminated throughout the remainder of the night.

(C) At daylight, VNN Coastal Group 41 moved in and established a defensive perimeter, with US and VNN surface units providing additional support. LSIL 328 commenced salvage operations, assisted, late in the afternoon, by USN SEAL and VNN LDVN (UDT) personnel, the latter also assisting in maintaining the defensive perimeter. There was no VC opposition, and salvage proceeded until dark. Through the night, illumination was provided. Salvage continued at first light on 12 May 1965. US Tortuga (LSD 26) arrived on scene with Harbor Clearance Team One, HLC-1 and a helicopter fire team embarked.

(C) There was a temporary halt in salvage operations at 1500, when VC harassing fire caused the defensive perimeter to withdraw to sea. An air strike put an end to VC opposition. At 1800 salvage operations resumed and continued through the night, concluding at 1015 on 13 May. USS Brister then destroyed the trawler. Six crew-served weapons and about 15 tons of ammunition, movie projectors, and other propaganda material were captured. A significant item was the recovery of 120-mm mortar ammunition manufactured in Communist China in 1965, the first discovery of this type in the Mekong Delta. Also found was 12.7-mm API ammunition of same manufacture and date, perhaps indicating a shortage of ammunition on the part of VC in the area. 132

#### The Point League Trawler Incident

(C) On the afternoon of 19 June an SP2H MARKET TIME aircraft detected and photographed a trawler about 80 miles east of the Con

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PAGE 407 OF 872 PAGES

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Son Islands. The aircraft reported the contact, then continued on patrol. The next morning, at 0300, USCGC Point League, patrolling off the mouth of the Co Chien River, obtained a radar contact of an apparent steel-hulled vessel, heading toward the river, and reported the contact. Point League picked up a smaller target along side the contact and closed at best speed. At 600 yards she illuminated and discovered a 40-foot junk alongside the steel-hulled trawler. The trawler got under way, abandoning the junk, and headed for the beach. Point League fired two rounds across the bow of the trawler, but the trawler did not stop. Point League went to General Quarters, and again fired across the bow. Heavy return fire caused two hits, one of which was an incendiary round, which knocked down the executive officer and temporarily blinded the commanding officer and helmsman. Point League maintained heavy fire and at 0350 the trawler went hard aground. During this period, the junk may have been sunk. Since the trawler could not maneuver, Point League made three firing runs, and illuminated. She then stood off to await assistance, which came in the form of a helicopter fire team from Can Tho and a MARKET TIME VP-2 aircraft.

(C) With assistance on station, Point League again closed, but came under heavy fire from the beach and was forced to withdraw. Two USAF F-100's were called in to strafe and bomb the shore positions. An explosion from an unknown cause was observed aboard the trawler, and fire broke out in the after hold and pilot house. CTF 115 directed all possible attempts to salvage the trawler. Point League moved out to replenish ammunition and USCGC Point Slocum moved in to within 800 yards when she also received heavy shore fire. Point Slocum made several passes, the helicopter fire team aiding with suppression fire, but she was struck and one of her gunners was wounded. Point Slocum withdrew and aircraft attempted to silence the shore fire. Other units arrived: USS Haverfield (DER 393); units of VNN Coastal Group 35; River Assault Group 23; USS John A Bole (DD 755), and USCGC Point Hudson. By 1000 VC resistance was apparently suppressed and a boarding and salvage team of volunteers from USN and VNN ships went aboard the trawler, cooling the fire with portable equipment and commenced removing cargo, despite flames and exploding ammunition. USS Portuga arrived at 1020 and put a damage control team aboard the trawler. At 1115 troops from 21st ARVN Div landed on the beach via USA helicopters and set up a defensive perimeter. Throughout the morning and early afternoon, USN, USCG, and VNN personnel continued to offload cargo and fight fires. By 1400 all fires were out and salvage crews commenced dewatering. At noon on 21 June the trawler was pulled free, and arrived at Vung Tau the following morning. Of the possible 14 crewmen, five were discovered KIA on the beach, one was found KIA in the engine-room, and two were captured ashore by ARVN troops. The 280-ton displacement trawler was captured intact, and about 100 tons of war materials were salvaged.<sup>133</sup> As a result of these incidents, MACJ2 prepared Coastal Surveillance Program (CAPE COD) to intensify intelligence and psywar operations to enhance detection of enemy trawlers

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PAGE 408 OF 872 PAGES Under Sec Army By IAG per

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and steel-hull ships attempting to infiltrate the coast of RVN.

### Operation GAME WARDEN

(C) The Mekong Delta region of the RVN is the rice bowl of the nation and, in a real sense, the prize for which the present struggle is being waged. The Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ) encompasses the river approaches to Saigon employed by all shipping. Control of this zone by the VC provided a secure base for the conduct of insurgent operations within this area and in adjoining areas. During 1966 large-scale operations in the Delta region and the RSSZ were instituted to pacify areas controlled by the VC. Effective control of the rivers and waterways to these regions was essential for the successful accomplishment of the objective. The concept for GAME WARDEN operations was developed jointly by COMUSMACV and Chief, Naval Advisory Group (CHNAVDVGRP) in the early weeks of August 1965. It consisted of patrols and inshore surveillance to enforce curfews and prevent VC infiltration, movement, and supply along the Delta estuary coast and across the major rivers of the Mekong Delta and the RSSZ. These operations were conducted by a force of four river patrol groups of 30 boats each, operating from secure land bases and offshore support ships. On 18 December 1965 Task Force 116 was established, with CHNAVDVGRP assigned the additional duty as Commander River Patrol Force (CRF 116). Since the commencement of GAME WARDEN operations many infiltration and exfiltration movements of supplies and/or personnel have been detected and stopped effectively. The vast majority of these movements have been cross river. 134

(C) GAME WARDEN operations and forces expanded rapidly and at year's end consisted of 120 PBR's stationed throughout the Delta and RSSZ in shore base locations at Binh Thuy, Vinh Long, Sa Dec, Long Xuyen, My Tho, Cat Lo, and Nha Be. In addition, one section of PBR's operated from a specially-configured LST stationed off the mouth of the Mekong and Bassac Rivers. Two Repair Barges (YPNB's) located at river bases provided support to maintain the PBR's in an operationally ready status. Twelve Mine Sweeping Boats (MSB's) stationed at Nha Be were assigned the task of keeping the Saigon shipping routes clear of mines and, in addition, were available for mine-clearing operations elsewhere should the requirement arise. Five armed UH-1H helicopters operated from shore bases at Vinh Long and Nha Be, and from a specially-configured LST flew support for GAME WARDEN operations. SEAL teams were employed for river ambush, patrol, and river bank search and reconnaissance. 135

(S) Annex H discusses in detail the enemy use of the inland waterways of RVN as a supply route for war materials into Cambodia and the infiltration of these and other supplies into RVN for the use of the VC. Included is the development of GAME WARDEN rules of engagement and development of US presence in RVN control of international shipping on the Mekong and Bassac Rivers.

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## SEVENTHFLT Operations

(U) Commander, Seventh Fleet maintained USN forces in the contiguous waters of RVN and NVN operating in support of COMUSMACV. Tactical operations, primarily air strikes and NGFS actions, came from forces provided by Commander Task Force 77 (CTF 77) who was an afloat commander, usually an attack carrier division commander (COMCARDIV) embarked in one of the CVA's operating in the Gulf of Tonkin. Close coordination between CTF 77 and all MACV components was effected to preclude mutual interference. Major SEVENTHFLT operations in support of COMUSMACV are described below.

### Air Operations

(S) COMSEVENTHFLT provided in-country air support from CVA's operating at DIXIE STATION, approximately 100 miles off Vung Tau, until 6 August when the DIXIE STATION CVA was moved north to YANKEE STATION as a result of redistribution of air assets brought about by the shift of air-strike emphasis to the north. YANKEE STATION CVA's launched strikes in the ROLLING THUNDER, STEEL TIGER, and TALLY HO operations and Route Package interdiction. The coordination procedures and operational relationships for these operations are outlined later in this chapter.<sup>136</sup>

### Naval Gunfire Support

(S) Destroyers (DD) and cruisers (CA) from TF 77 conducted NGFS in all CTZ's during 1966. The accuracy and all-weather capability of NGFS resulted in increased utilization of SEVENTHFLT ships. COMUSMACV requested additional NGFS ships in February. CINCPAC advised that COMSEVENTHFLT would provide four DD's on a regular basis, with escorts from YANKEE and DIXIE stations available on request for emergency missions. Additionally, one heavy cruiser (CA), one Inshore Fire Support Ship (IFS) and three Landing Ship Medium Rocket (LSMR) would be available by April. The assignment of cruisers with 6 and 8-inch guns and post-WW II-construction destroyer type ships mounting 5"/54 guns, increased the ranges at which targets became vulnerable to NGFS. Destroyers on station in the Gulf of Tonkin provided continuous search and rescue and radar picket early warning for both USN and USAF strike aircraft.<sup>137</sup>

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PAGE 410 OF 872 PAGES

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Operations SEA DRAGON and TAIY HO

(S) In late March COMUSMACV recommended to CINCPAC that naval gunfire (NGF) be employed against specified targets in NVN. CINCPAC recommended to JCS that NGF augmentation be included in ROLLING THUNDER operations, especially in the area of Vinh. Not until intelligence indicated a possible infiltration and buildup of NVN forces in the DMZ did JCS, on 20 July, authorize air strikes in the DMZ and further authorize the employment of land artillery and naval gunfire in the DMZ, south of the line of demarcation, against clearly defined military targets. 138

(S) Operation TAIY HO, the air interdiction of LOC's in NVN, commenced 20 July. On 20 July COMUSMACV proposed to CINCPAC that NGF be integrated into TAIY HO operations:

Whereas naval gunfire increases fire coverage of the coastal segment during daylight in good weather, exploitation of this capability for unobserved night and foul weather firing can be especially valuable in inhibiting repair efforts and in demoralizing the enemy force. 139

CINCPAC recommended to JCS that not only Route Package I (RP I), as proposed by COMUSMACV, but RPs II, III and IV be included in the authorization for employment of NGF. In his actions he stated:

NGF can economically, efficiently, continuously and selectively interdict LOC in conjunction RT and concomitantly provide RT aircraft with SAR and early warning. Ships conducting NGF off the RVN coast could also interdict coastal traffic supporting the NVN/VC infiltration effort. The accuracy of NGF will also limit collateral damage to non-military targets. 140

(S) There was no response to this recommendation as late as 26 August, when CINCPAC recommended early approval of NGF in NVN based on intelligence reports of coastal traffic, particularly in the vicinity of 17°20'N. COMUSMACV provided CINCPAC with a comprehensive review of the intelligence concerning LOC in the RVN littoral on 11 September, stating: "The current intelligence assessment is that the coastal activity recently observed represents an intensive NVN effort to build up its logistical support base for very substantial forces, known to be in these areas, for offensive actions." To counter this activity, he proposed the interdiction of these ships

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

PAGE 411 OF 872 PAGES

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and craft by US surface units in an operation having the unclassified nickname TRAFFIC COP. The TRAFFIC COP concept called for a surface unit of one DD and two FCF, under OPCON of COMSEVENTHFLT, operating in an interdiction zone of the territorial and contiguous waters of NVN in an area approximately the seaward extension of the TALLY HO area. Air support would be provided by tactical air, available through existing tactical air control agencies. Rules of engagement were proposed which would allow destruction of any hostile watercraft in the interdiction zones; hostile watercraft to include those attacking, or evaluated as reasonably intending to attack, US or friendly forces; and those engaging in direct support of attacks against the RVN. In addition, other watercraft acting in an unfriendly or suspicious manner would be engaged as hostile vessels. 141

(S) JCS disapproved previous proposals for NGF against NVN coastal targets on 13 September. In the message, CJCS suggested that definition of specific targets and a limited area of operations might result in favorable consideration of the proposal. COMUSMACV recorded his reaction to continued restrictions on the use of NGF:

Although the B-52 strike north of the mid-point of the DMZ was approved, my request for naval gunfire was not. It is important that we have this and I will continue to press for it. For well over a month now I have asked for authority to use naval gunfire along Highway 1, north of the DMZ since the enemy has been attempting to move large numbers of trucks loaded with supplies to or near the DMZ along the coastal routes. Although tactical air has done considerable damage, the enemy has built up considerable anti-aircraft defense which I believe could be effectively suppressed by naval gunfire. 142

(S) Replying to CINCPAC, COMUSMACV gave his estimate of the situation with supporting intelligence and, inter alia, again requested authority to employ NGF in the TALLY HO area, particularly against AA (AW) sites and coincidentally against enemy LOC's. CINCPAC repeated the request for NGF against the NVN coast, using the rationale and information provided by COMUSMACV, including specific targets, additionally incorporating the concept of and requesting approval for TRAFFIC COP operations. As proposed, the initial use of surface ship operations against NVN would be destruction by NGF of enemy watercraft transporting war materials along the coast from the DMZ to Dong Hoi, with FCF to aid in boarding and identification if required (TRAFFIC COP). Secondary objectives would be interdiction

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830624

PAGE 412 OF 872 PAGES

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of coastal LOC's concentrating on transshipment points and highway traffic, with occasional flak suppression of known AAA sites as feasible.<sup>143</sup>

(S) Anticipating early approval of the TRAFFIC COP concept, COMUSMACV initiated liaison for planning and coordination among CTF 115, COMSEVENTHFLT, and 7th AF. COMSEVENTHFLT issued a planning directive on 20 September outlining the concept of operations as stated by COMUSMACV and designating the task organization. The Surface Action Group (TG 77.1) integral to the attack carrier Striking Force (TF 77) was tasked for coastal interdiction operations, and Commander Crusier Destroyer Force (CTG 70.3), a destroyer flotilla commander, was directed to report to CTF 77 as planning agent for TRAFFIC COP and to conduct pre-employment training. COMUSMACV provided CINCPAC with additional possible NGF targets, citing the intelligence from which they were derived, and requested that the authority being sought for TRAFFIC COP include authority to direct NGF observed by FAC on specifically identified AA (AW) sites, to employ observed fire against fleeting targets of opportunity wherever located, and to conduct unobserved NGF in specific areas of known NVN truck parks, supply dumps, storage areas, and other military targets in areas devoid of population. CINCPAC withheld approval of these targets pending favorable response from higher authority on the initial TRAFFIC COP operations.<sup>144</sup>

(S) JCS on 15 October approved the conduct of surface ship operations "to interdict NVN military and logistics craft in coastal waters of NVN south of 17°30'N." Shore bombardment was prohibited except in self defense as was attack against fishing craft, house junks, or sampans engaged in purely civilian activity.<sup>145</sup>

(S) The surface action group commander (CTG 77.1) had issued an operation order for Operation SEA DRAGON which included Operation TRAFFIC COP and the interdiction of NVN ground targets by NGF in the TALLY HO area. A rehearsal of the SEA DRAGON/TRAFFIC COP operation with tactical air units (7th AF and SEVENTHFLT) was conducted on 24 October and TRAFFIC COP became operational on 25 October, initial forces consisting of COMESDIV 152 and two DD. The rules of engagement were as proposed originally by COMUSMACV, slightly modified to reflect the JCS language as indicated above, with the exception that boarding operations were prohibited, obviating the requirement for FCF's in the task organization.<sup>146</sup>

(S) COMESDIV 152 in USS Mansfield (DD 728) with USS Hanson (DD 832), commenced operations on 25 October. At 1710 local time both ships were taken under fire by shore batteries and immediately responded with destructive fire which silenced the battery. The FAC

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830624

PAGE 413 OF 872 PAGES

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in the area reported that there were many fires. The shore battery was evaluated as a battery of six 120-mm guns. Day and night actions continued as planned for a period of five days, subsequently extended to continuous coverage of the interdiction area. Many NVN logistics craft were taken under fire and either sunk or forced to beach to avoid destruction. This latter tactic was nullified when the rules of engagement were changed on 28 October to allow NGF against watercraft once taken under fire to continue until the craft was destroyed, even if the craft beached to evade. The ROE were relaxed further to permit attack in the coastal waters of NVN whether the watercraft were afloat, moored or beached. Because of the possibility of mutual interference with tactical aircraft if NGF were directed against beached craft or craft moored in bays or coves detailed coordination procedures between DD's and tactical air controllers were established. As the operation continued into November, the effectiveness of the DD tactical air team was demonstrated by the reduction of coastal traffic in the interdiction area, to the point that on 5 November traffic was at a standstill and 7th AF was advised that airborne spotter aircraft were not required but that aircraft on ground alert would be required because of the threat from enemy shore batteries.<sup>147</sup>

(S) This threat had been abundantly demonstrated on 4 November when CTU 77.1.1 in USS Perkins (DD 877) with USS Braine (DD 630) were fired upon by enemy shore batteries. During the engagement both ships received numerous near misses and Braine sustained minor fragment holes in the forward stack, fire control radar reflector, and national ensign. This was the third war in which Braine had been hit by the enemy. There were no personnel casualties. The shore battery was silenced by the DD's guns and air strikes, with large secondary explosions noted. Cooperation and performance of tactical air/surface forces was evaluated as outstanding.<sup>148</sup>

(TS) On 11 November CINCPAC authorized the extension of the interdiction zone north to 18°N latitude, and on 15 November defined enemy radars in NVN which were engaged in tracking surface units as a threat and therefore to be taken under fire by NGF and air strikes. SEA DRAGON (as CINCPAC directed all surface operation off the NVN coast now be called) was now in continuous operation with two DD's on station in the interdiction area. Waterborne logistics traffic resumed and daily reports of destruction of enemy craft by SEA DRAGON forces were received. Enemy response to the interdiction of his coastal waters by warships continued as SEA DRAGON forces were fired upon frequently during the period. Significant exchanges of fire occurred on 15 and 19 November. On 24 November CINCPAC again requested authority to conduct NGF and artillery fire against targets in the northern DMZ and NVN, citing recent intelligence showing a continued buildup in the area and pointing out the increased AAA fire which was being directed at friendly aircraft in the areas. This request was disapproved by JCS on 10 December.<sup>149</sup>

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830624

PAGE 414 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) The enemy logistic traffic was hampered by bad weather during the first half of December. SEA DRAGON forces continued surface patrols but the same weather conditions precluded the use of 7th AF and TF 77 spotter aircraft. As the weather cleared in late December, waterborne logistics traffic increased, and daily sinkings and damage were reported. Just prior to the Christmas standdown, on 23 December, USS O'Brian (DD 725) was hit by enemy shore batteries. The ship sustained two direct hits and one near miss on the port quarter. O'Brian received moderate material damage. Two men were KIA and four WIA, one seriously. O'Brian returned the fire and called in strike aircraft from USS Kitty Hawk and USS Enterprise; naval satellites and spotting aircraft were provided by USS Boonville.

(C) During the standdown, SEA DRAGON maintained patrols in the interdiction area and reported intense traffic as the enemy took advantage of the lull in fighting to replenish and build up his forces. (See Chapter II.)

#### AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS

(C) The discovery of a VC mystery ship in Vung Ro Bay, in Phu Yen Province in February 1965, represented a turning point in the history of naval operations in RVN. Infiltration by sea had long been a tantalizing but unexplained explanation as to how the VC successfully transported large quantities of men, arms, and ammunition undetected into RVN. This incident confirmed that infiltration by sea was taking place, though the scale of such operations was not known. The large arms cache found in the area indicated that more than one trip had been made or that more than one ship had made the journey. As a result of this discovery, COMUSMACV directed that a concept of operations be developed to counter infiltration by sea. Early in March 1965 a six-month conference was held in Saigon among representatives of USMC, USN, and USMC/USN. The outgrowth of that conference was the development of the present MARKET TIME operation and a concept for use of the DEVELOPMENT Special Landing Force (SLF) as an anti-infiltration weapon. Procedures for utilization of those two systems were covered in the COMUSMACV/CINCPACFLT Agreement of Anti-Sea Infiltration Support Operations of 14 May 1965.

(S) In 1959 the Amphibious Ready Group/Special Landing Force (ARG/SLF) was created by CINCPAC as a balanced, versatile PACOM Contingency Force to meet requirements throughout the CINCPAC area of responsibility, which included Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, and RVN. The ARG/SLF, which could be augmented for special missions, is basically composed as follows:

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PAGE 415 OF 872 PAGES

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1) Three ships: A Landing Platform Helicopter (LPH), an Amphibious Assault Transport Ship (APA) and a Landing Ship Dock (LSD). A Landing Platform Dock (LPD) (a modified LSD equipped to carry troops, equipment, and helicopters) is being considered to replace the LSD.

2) One battalion of Marines (reinforced with artillery, howitzers, tanks, amphibious tractors, Ontos (tracked vehicle carrying 6-106-mm recoilless rifles), trucks, shore party, engineers, beach masters, etc.), and one medium helicopter squadron for a total of about 2,000 troops. On a small scale the SLF has elements of all units found in a USMC division.

(C) The SLF has been deployed as the landing and support forces in all amphibious operations conducted in RVN. It is a specially tailored, ready landing force, embarked in SEVENTHFLT ships and prepared for any amphibious contingency within the SEVENTHFLT area of responsibility, or elsewhere, commensurate with its capabilities. When operating west of Okinawa, the SLF can respond to an amphibious contingency situation within 96 hours. However, judicious employment of the ARG/SLF is required because it is the sole mobile, ready reserve force available to CINCPAC for contingency operations.<sup>151</sup>

(S) The concept for employment of the SLF was that it would be used in the role of an Amphibious Raiding Force for short periods, usually 48 hours, against suspected VC infiltration points. The initial code name designated for these operations was DAGGER THRUST. In February 1966 the code name was changed to BATTEN DOWN, in compliance with a policy for moderated operations code names.<sup>152</sup>

(S) Because of the wide range of targets along the littoral of RVN and the possibility of inadvertent conflict with friendly troops and civilians, JGS, RVNAF was always informed of all objectives and were requested to provide ARVN interpreter/liason teams. RVNAF always responded promptly to these requests.<sup>153</sup>

(S) The BATTEN DOWN operations, which were limited in time (72 hours) and scope, were self-sufficient and ordinarily did not require in-country combat support or reinforcements. A minimum amphibious objective area (AOA) was established as an arc 10 nautical miles from the target center inland and an arc 25 nautical miles to seaward. The AOA also provided for a restricted air space up to 25,000 feet, except for a "tunnel" for civil airways 10 nautical miles wide from a flight level of 7,000 through 11,000 feet altitude. This probably constituted the smallest AOA in US naval history. BATTEN DOWN raids normally were characterized by the use of both surface and helicopter assault elements, supported by NGF and close air support. The objective area was saturated by a fast moving search-and-destroy sweep and withdrawal via the same means used in landing. Because of poor intelligence on some

PAGE 416 OF 872 PAGES

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objectives, area surveillance teams (expert ground reconnaissance) were employed when suitable terrain for concealed observation points was available. Although initial use of the SLF was limited to amphibious raids to interdict suspected VC infiltration routes, it gradually served also as a floating reserve for large-scale ground operations, or as an assault element, as in Operation DOUBLE EAGLE in Quang Ngai Province during January-February 1966. (Covered earlier in this chapter under Ground Operations.)

(S) COMUSMACV recognized the potential of the SLF in the coastal areas and in April 1966 requested CINCPAC to authorize its positioning to enable deployment in I CTZ within 48 hours as a quick-reaction force. The buildup of VC/NVA units in the provinces of Quang Tri and Thua Thien posed a substantial threat, particularly to Hue/Phu Bai, and COMUSMACV believed that the SLF was uniquely suited as a wide-ranging seaborne strike force off the I CTZ littoral. In his view the SLF could be used to trap a VC/NVA force seeking to disengage, or to pursue such a force beyond the range of III MAF units. In addition it could, in its classic amphibious assault role, exploit an opportunity to destroy a VC/NVA unit caged with its back to the sea, or hit such a force maneuvering near the coast on its flank or in the rear.<sup>154</sup>

(S) CINCPAC, after discussion with CINCPACFLT stated that the 48-hour reaction time, which had been in effect briefly during the spring of 1966, was unacceptable and that a 96-hour reaction time was needed unless overriding considerations dictated otherwise. The requirement for the 96-hour reaction time, established in July 1965 as a normal posture for the SLF, was based on the need of the USN/USMC elements for minimum essential ship/SLF material maintenance. However, CINCPAC did approve the use of the SLF as COMUSMACV had requested. Operation OSAGE, conducted in early May 1966 in Quang Tin Province, was the first following this approval.<sup>155</sup>

(S) In May COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC that although he appreciated the value of the SLF and recognized the ARG/SLF's contributions to the war effort, he did not foresee the continued need for purely BATTEN DOWN-type operations. He felt the changing nature of the war had rendered the BATTEN DOWN concept too narrow in scope. The buildup of US/FW forces had resulted in expanded operations in which lucrative targets accessible to the SLF had already been exploited. Further, expanded MARKET TIME operations and NGF had inhibited considerably the use of sea infiltration points. COMUSMACV recognized that the extensive coast line was susceptible to assault from the sea in many areas, and that targets suitable for SLF operations would materialize occasionally. To capitalize on such opportunities, COMUSMACV desired to develop, in concert with COMSEVENTHFLT, a more responsive procedure than previously used for commitment of the SLF. He informed CINCPAC that a new concept for deployment and use of the SLF would be forwarded to CINCPAC for approval.<sup>156</sup>

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PAGE 417 OF 822 PAGES

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(S) CINCPACFLT agreed in principle with COMUSMACV's views and proposals, and CINCPAC authorized direct liaison between the two commands to facilitate development of the new concept concerning use of the SLF. CINCPACFLT proposed on 17 May to host a conference on this subject in Okinawa as soon as practicable. CINCPACFLT considered that the basic concept for use of the SLF, as stated by COMUSMACV earlier in the month, was essentially valid and probably would need only minor changes to bring the procedures up to date. COMUSMACV concurred with the need for a conference. 157

(S) The conference, held on Okinawa from 25-28 May, resolved all problems and views except some differences concerning the use of close air support and NGF. The proposed Joint Agreement was thus largely a matter for CINCPAC's approval. The main provisions of the Joint Agreement were that both COMUSMACV and COMSEVENTHFLT would provide sufficiently detailed, accurate, timely intelligence to conduct successful amphibious operations; USMC units from SEVENTHFLT, or III MAF in RVN, would be made available as landing and close air support forces for operations; and SEVENTHFLT and MACV forces would be made available for participation in amphibious operations as required. The types of amphibious operations were envisaged as: 1) unilateral fleet amphibious operations in which the landing force was composed of PACFLT Amphibious Force troops; 2) amphibious operations in which the predominant effort was by naval amphibious forces with the in-country forces involved as a lesser part; these were operations in which the landing force was composed of PACFLT amphibious forces and the in-country forces were not embarked; and 3) in-country operations requiring a supporting amphibious operation which included establishment of the landing force ashore as a lesser part of the specific in-country operation--in this instance, in-country forces might or might not be embarked with PACFLT amphibious forces. Planning for the amphibious operations was to be in accordance with JCS Publication 2 and NWP 22 (A)/FM 31-11/Landing Forces Manual 01. 158

(S) As intelligence was developed and operational plans prepared, COMUSMACV and subordinate commanders were authorized to consider employment of USN amphibious forces in support of operations conducted in RVN. It was anticipated that such supporting operations would vary in duration from rapidly executed raids to operations of a week or more. To provide an amphibious supporting capability to COMUSMACV, CINCPACFLT would, on a quarterly basis, furnish COMUSMACV a planned schedule of employments, including the periods of availability of the ARG/SLF for specific operations. COMUSMACV in turn would nominate objectives and provide CINCPACFLT with the missions proposed for the operation (s) to be accomplished by the Amphibious Task Force (ATF), current intelligence including the enemy situation, the in-country forces to be employed, the in-country commander, his location, and communications details to all interested commands, i.e., CINCPAC, CINCPACFLT, COMSEVENTHFLT, CG FMFPAC, COMPHIBPAC, CTF 76, CTF 79, CTG 76.5, and CTG 79.5. Direct

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Liaison between COMUSMACV and CINCPACFLT was authorized. In addition, COMUSMACV was responsible for providing Class I, III, and V support during operations of the ARG/SLF in which it supported an in-country commander. Otherwise, the ARG/SLF was to be logistically self-sufficient for a two-week operation. Naval gunfire and close air support were to be conducted in accordance with the applicable rules of engagement. The minimum AOA remained the same as under the DAGGER THROST/BATTEN DOWN concept.<sup>159</sup>

(C) On 24 August COMUSMACV concurred in the conference report. Although some modifications were made in the revised agreement, for the most part they were editorial in nature. The only objection made by COMUSMACV concerned the requirement for approval by CINCPAC prior to use of the SLF; this was held to be unduly restrictive and lacking in flexibility for rapid reaction. The portion of the agreement involving this procedure was modified accordingly. With concurrence in the Joint Agreement it was believed that the basis for an effective procedure for use of the ARG/SLF had been established which gave every indication of a hopeful future.<sup>160</sup>

(C) The first major contribution was made in September when the ARG/SLF conducted Operation DECK HOUSE IV, landing the SLF in Quang Ngai Province in southern I CTZ. The SLF remained ashore ten days (15-25 Sep) and accounted for 254 enemy KIA.<sup>161</sup>

(C) To meet the indicated threat of imminent large-scale attack in I CTZ posed by the rapid buildup of the enemy in the DMZ during September, CINCPAC was requested to provide a RLF (-) consisting of two SLF's from fleet assets to be responsive to COMUSMACV should the need arise. The regular ARG/SLF was in the Philippines undergoing training, but was in position to react to any requirement within 96 hours. The additional ARG/SLF was formed and in position off the coast of I CTZ by 6 October, where it remained until directed to debark and report to CG III MAF for operational control at the end of October. In the meantime, the regularly assigned ARG/SLF had moved up and was standing ready off I CTZ coastline.<sup>162</sup>

(C) In November CINCPAC granted CINCPACFLT authority to conduct ARG/SLF operations in RVN during the periods requested and mutually agreed on by COMUSMACV and CINCPACFLT. COMUSMACV immediately informed CINCPAC and CINCPACFLT that barring unforeseen changes in the situation along the coastal areas of RVN, present plans were to request employment of the ARG/SLF during January in the Kien Hoa Province of the IV CTZ. Since this was to be the first ARG/SLF operation in the Delta, CINCPACFLT's comments were requested. CINCPACFLT replied that there would be problems, but they could be substantially reduced; he concurred with COMUSMACV's plans for ARG/SLF January special operations in IV CTZ.<sup>163</sup>

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PAGE 419 OF 572 PAGES

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(S) The planning continued for employment in early January. The COMUSMACV concept was that the amphibious task force, in addition to the ARG/SLF, would include one VMC battalion and TF 115 elements; 7th AF would provide CAS and FAC's. CINCPACFLT concurred with the concept, with reservations concerning the VMC forces. He desired assurance that the VMC troops were properly equipped and trained to conduct amphibious operations and that a clear and complete understanding of command relationship was understood. COMUSMACV readily assured CINCPACFLT that the VMC units were capable of conducting amphibious operations and that no problems were expected in command relations. In addition the JGS had made available for the operation not one, but two infantry battalions, one 105-mm artillery battery, and a command group including two USMC advisors.<sup>164</sup>

(S) In late December information was received from a reliable source that the enemy knew about the operation and was moving supplies to either the Long Tan or the Binh Dai area during Christmas holidays. Nevertheless, as the year 1966 came to an end, it appeared that DECK HOUSE V, as this operation was now being called, was ready to go into Kien Hoa Province, IV CTZ, with D-Day tentatively set for 4 January 1967.<sup>165</sup>

#### AIR OPERATIONS OUT-OF-COUNTRY

(TS) Preparatory measures taken by CINCPAC and COMUSMACV for the early 1966 Honolulu Planning Conference set the tenor and the tempo of air operations outside of RVN in 1966. The policy paper prepared for and by CINCPAC was entitled a "Concept for Vietnam." Since the out-of-country air operations depended heavily upon USAF contributions to the war effort, its designated role encompassed the definition of the program. The definition of the USAF role was:

Air strikes are conducted against military targets in the Hanoi/Haiphong complex and areas to the north and northeast, to include enemy ports, power plants, communication facilities, fuel and heavy industrial complexes, mineral resources, military installations, including the air strike capability, and governmental control buildings. Air strikes are made against enemy targets to destroy their potential to support the war, with follow-on strikes to keep targets unusable. Armed reconnaissance within DRV and its coastal waters and within Laos is conducted to interdict LOC and harass, destroy and disrupt dispersed military operations, and

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PAGE 420 OF 872 PAGES

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to harass, disrupt and impede the movement of men and materials from DRV into Laos and SVN.

Armed reconnaissance in SVN, NVN, Laos and Cambodia are conducted to provide necessary intelligence for ground, naval and air operations. 166

(TS) Development of worthwhile targets was a prerequisite to effective interdiction of the enemy LOC in Laos. Following the Christmas standdown, RVN-based aircraft were cleared again to support TIGER HOUND, STEEL TIGER, BARREL ROLL and YANKEE TEAM operations. CVA aircraft were cleared to overfly RVN in support of these operations and RLG-approved B-52 ARC LIGHT strikes were authorized, but only with JCS approval. Permission was granted to use Thai-based US aircraft for BARREL ROLL and STEEL TIGER special close air support in specific areas. 167

(TS) On 5 January COMUSMACV met [redacted] to review operating problems in Laos. [redacted] refused to lift the line of demarcation between TIGER HOUND and STEEL TIGER which had inhibited attack upon targets of opportunity avoiding or escaping the TIGER HOUND area, but agreed to reconsider this proposal after more experience gained could assure Laotians that the TIGER HOUND system worked. He agreed to permit [redacted] to set up tactical air control and navigation (TACAN) equipment in southern Laos to complement new secure sideband communications between Vientiane and RLAFL headquarters at Savannakhet. He arranged to place two RLAFL observers aboard the existing C-130 airborne command post, and gave COMUSMACV authority to drop PSYOPS leaflets along Laotian infiltration routes, but [redacted]

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(TS) Rules of Engagement for out-of-country air strikes focused primarily upon Laos and NVN. B-52 ARC LIGHT strikes were employed only if approved by RLG and authorized by JCS. [redacted] US aircraft were permissible for BARREL ROLL/STEEL TIGER close air support in specified areas. As CY 66 began, existing rules authorized napalm only when it was absolutely required in highly critical situations, which effectively excluded the use of napalm in Laos. By the end of March napalm was authorized in Laos, but: 1) in the STEEL TIGER area it would be confined to RLAFL-validated targets only; 2) FAC control, as defined in BARREL ROLL/southern Laos operating rules, was required; 3) every means for prevention of inadvertent strikes against villages, innocent inhabitants, and friendly troop positions were applicable; and 4) there would be no publicity. Further clarification [redacted] restricted COMUSMACV from utilizing napalm against targets of opportunity such as vehicles and truck parks unless specified as a numbered RLAFL target. The rules within the BARREL ROLL/southern Laos armed recce

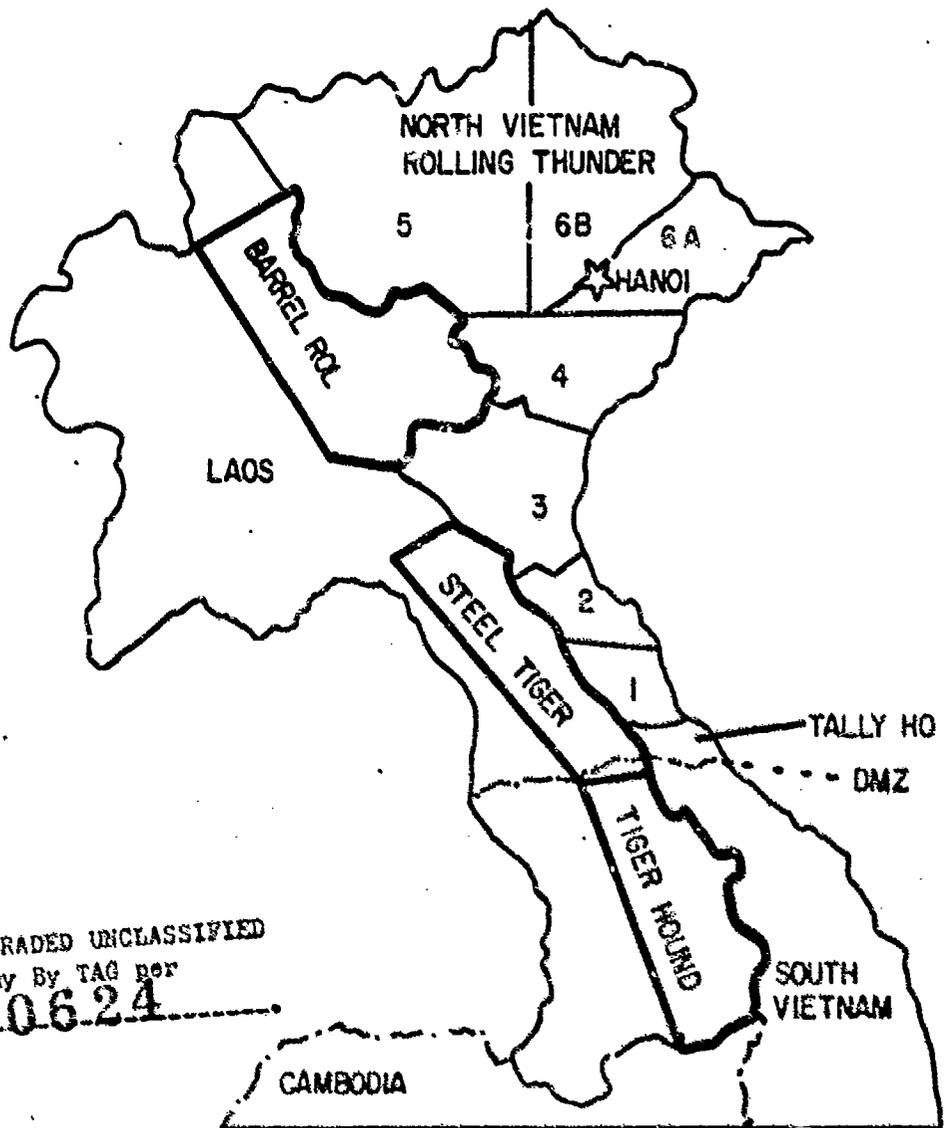
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# SEASIA OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY AREAS



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ROLLING THUNDER: STRIKES IN NORTH VIETNAM

BARREL ROLL: — STRIKES IN LAOS AGAINST PERSONNEL & EQUIPMENT FROM NORTH VIETNAM IN SUPPORT OF PATHET-LAO/VIET MINH.

STEEL TIGER: — STRIKES IN LAOS A AGAINST PERSONNEL & EQUIPMENT FROM NORTH VIETNAM IN SUPPORT OF VIET CONG.

IRON HAND: — STRIKES AGAINST SAM SITES IN NVN.

TIGER HOUND: — STRIKES IN THE SOUTHERN HALF OF STEEL TIGER AREA

TALLY HO: — STRIKES IN SOUTHERN NVN (SOUTH OF 17 30) & NORTHERN HALF OF DMZ

BLUE TREE: — RECONNAISSANCE OF NORTH VIETNAM

YANKEE TEAM: — RECONNAISSANCE IN LAOS.

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area allowed attacks on targets of opportunity—day or night—if located within 200 yds of a motorable trail or road outside of a village, while fixed targets or targets of opportunity could be struck if they were RLAF priority validated, Vientiane or Savannakhet approved, or if AAA/AW weapons were observed firing at friendly aircraft. Special restrictions for Laotian cities established prohibited areas: 25 nautical miles radius of Luang Prabang and Vientiane; 10 nautical miles and 15,000 ft altitude in vicinity of Savannakhet, Attopeu, Thakhet, Saravane and Pakse. No ordnance could be expended in the towns of Sam Noau, Khang Khay, and Xiang Khuang. Bombing, including radar, through overcast was prohibited unless approved specifically.

Campfires and civilian habitations would not be struck. Other restricted areas included NW Laos and the eastern terminus of Route 9. All aircraft were to avoid by at least 25 nautical miles the known flight path of operating sites and airfields when being used by ICC aircraft. Aircraft launched from [redacted] were not authorized to expend ordnance in RVN.

By July boats on the Bangfai River between Mahaxay and Bun Nabok were authorized targets if FAC's identified them as military transports and controlled the strikes. Further extension of the rules permitted: 1) immediate pursuit of hostile aircraft, vessels, and ground forces into Laos and Cambodia.

[redacted]

Within NVN, armed recon strikes on dispersed POL sites were authorized under the following exceptions: 1) within 30 nautical miles of the center of Hanoi, 2) ten nautical miles of the center of Haiphong, and 3) a buffer zone 25 nautical miles from the CHICOM border. With the expansion of the TIGER HOUND concept into the DMZ, these rules brought about the following: FAC-controlled strikes could be conducted against targets of opportunity; coastal armed recon could be conducted south of 17 degrees 03 minutes; and all water craft operating east of the DMZ or within river estuaries or mooring areas of the DMZ would be considered friendly, but firing upon US craft would make them subject to attack as hostile craft. 168A

(TS) The TIGER HOUND operating zone, as defined in December 1965 (see map), permitted predetermined strikes authorized by Vientiane, with established procedures for requesting immediate strike approval from Savannakhet or Vientiane against newly-detected targets with FAC control. FAC personnel operated from forward operating strips at Kontum, Kham Duk, Ke Sanh, and Dong Ha as necessary to meet operational requirements. FAC's were utilized in C-1, AC-47, and A-1E aircraft for both TIGER HOUND and supporting SHINING BRASS operations. Defoliation of infiltration routes [redacted] was underway. COMUSMACV was deeply concerned that the relationship of TIGER HOUND and STEEL TIGER

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would complicate the allocation of sorties available. He anticipated that the available total daily average sortie-level would reduce to 20 for STEEL TIGER and 100 for TIGER HOUND upon resumption of ROLLING THUNDER operations over NVN. 169

(TS) TIGER HOUND operations were intensified in concert with the growing enemy activity along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. By February a frantic enemy effort was underway to get troops and supplies into RVN through these routes. In concentrating attacks on vehicular choke points along roads and through constant pounding both day and night, the TIGER HOUND operation was able to limit drastically the intended enemy buildup of ammunition, POL and medical supplies. This became increasingly evident as the number and type of secondary explosions and number of vehicles actually destroyed increased. Extensive bombing pulverized Laos roads, which with the onset of the SW monsoon in April became quagmires with numerous cuts and landslides that impeded passage further. The enemy was forced to utilize primitive methods of transportation including porters, pack animals, and bicycles. 170

(TS) Meanwhile sortie requirements for Laos in late January continued to receive COMUSMACV's attention. A requirements committee meeting in Honolulu, headed by the MACV J3, had settled upon 4,500 sorties per month for Laos, about half of the number flown during the bombing pause in NVN. During the conference planning sessions considerable resistance was experienced against the higher Laos requirement, based on MACV's inability to "prove" a higher need. MACV's position was that TIGER HOUND alone would require a minimum of 150 sorties per day, which could increase to 200 per day by 1966 year-end. BARREL ROLL and BANGO/WHIPLASH initially would require at least 50 sorties per day and if Vientiane's estimates were correct, support of RLG operations against Pathet Lao forces in Laos would average 30 to 40 sorties per day. COMUSMACV approved the committee's position, adding a requirement either for additional programmed land-based resources, or that CVA aircraft remain committed to support Laos operations. However, due to pending air munitions shortages, only 1,200,000 bombs were available against a requirement for 1,800,000, which in consequence would require scaling down all efforts in-country, in NVN and in Laos. 171

(S) Based on this position, COMUSMACV tasked his staff and component commanders to study means for enhancing air-strike sortie effectiveness. Planned use of air-strike resources both in-country and out-of-country entailed major sortie requirements for in-country, and carrier-based fighters. Their effective use demanded continuing assessment of priorities, allocation of effort, target criteria, and results achieved. There was need to recognize shortages

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PAGE 424 OF 872 PAGES

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in certain categories of air ordnance. Careful and continuing assessment of ordnance selected, weight of expenditures, and results achieved was mandatory for economy and optimum sortie effectiveness. 172

(TS) In order to insure maximum sortie effectiveness, CINCPAC recommended strike aircraft on strip-alert awaiting FAC callup when no specific target was available. He stressed that ROLLING THUNDER strikes should be launched only when there was a good chance of getting to a target, but agreed to radar bombing against specific road choke points in order to keep pressure on infiltration routes during bad weather. Underlining this concept of sortie applications, CINCPAC was anxious that all sorties be designed for maximum effectiveness. 173

(TS) Following through on his constant study of Laos rules of engagement, COMUSMACV met [redacted] on 8 March to consider improvements proposed for air strikes in Laos. Among these were additional ARC LIGHT strike along the RVN/Laotian border,

[redacted]

[redacted] also agreed to request approval [redacted] for use of napalm under PAC control in the southern Laos armed reconnaissance area; to request once more [redacted] the lifting of restrictions in order to resume armed reconnaissance on a controlled basis, particularly at night; to approve expansion of SHINING BRASS operations throughout the TIGER HOUND Special Zone, including cross-border infiltration by helicopters; and to study the denial of rice harvests to NVA/VC forces infiltrating through Laos. Consensus was that while the coming SW monsoon would limit tactical air operations, good cover nevertheless would be provided for B-52 ARC LIGHT strike and other high-level harassment programs in Laos. There was reason to believe that the RLG would then permit expansion of air operations. 174

(TS) COMUSMACV informed CINCPAC that continued use of in-country assets for air operations in Laos was necessary, and assumed that the limitation of 3,000 sorties per month in Laos pertained only to use of out-of-country assets. CINCPAC replied citing the decision reached at the January-February Honolulu Conference that forces needed to generate 3,000 sorties would be provided specifically for Laos operations from CVA [redacted] assets, and that any level of effort above 3,000 sorties in Laos which might be indicated as a result of improved reconnaissance and targeting procedures would be provided at COMUSMACV's discretion from air assets allocated for in-country support. 175

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PAGE 425 OF 872 PAGES

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### Weapons Employment in Laos

(TS) Weapons employment in Laos was a vital factor affecting sortie effectiveness and rules of engagement. COMUSMACV believed that against selected validated RLAF targets, or those targets dictated and evaluated by FAC's, the discriminate controlled employment of napalm in Laos would result in greater target destruction per sortie and subsequently improve overall sortie/munitions utilization. This would also permit diversion of airborne or ground-alert resources from in-country targets to lucrative fleeting targets in Laos, using all available munitions. The critical in-country stock level of some munitions demanded discrete use of most available ordnance. COMUSMACV urgently requested that RLG concurrence be obtained early in January for use of napalm against validated RLAF targets, including those approved for FAC-directed TIGER HOUND strikes. In addition, COMUSMACV expressed interest in obtaining the earliest feasible new type weapons under development. He expressed an urgent need for miniature Dragon Tooth and Gravel anti-personnel mine munitions for airborne saturation dispersal along enemy trails. He was likewise interested in Tetrahedrons (see Annex G.)<sup>176</sup>

(TS) Existing rules authorized use of napalm only when it was absolutely required for significant military reasons in highly critical situations. "Obviously," noted AMEMB Vientiane, "this rule could not be stretched to accommodate COMUSMACV's desire to use napalm as routine ordnance in TIGER HOUND missions." In requesting its use, COMUSMACV had proposed its eventual extension to areas not currently included in the TIGER HOUND controlled strike zone. CINCPAC advised JCS that napalm was a valuable adjunct to the SEASIA ordnance inventory and would be exceptionally effective against specific targets in Laos. He concurred with COMUSMACV's request for use of napalm as routine ordnance on TIGER HOUND missions. SECDEF was informed by CINCPAC that napalm could be substituted for approximately one half of the GP bombs for expenditure in Laos, and thus additional GP bombs would be available for use in other combat areas. SECSTATE did not believe the time appropriate for introducing a new weapon element (napalm) as proposed. However, he agreed to reconsider the question of its use in Laos at the earliest appropriate opportunity.<sup>177</sup>

(TS) By late March SECSTATE believed it appropriate to permit the use of napalm in the Laos Panhandle, citing its increased flexibility for US tactical air operations. AMEMB Vientiane obtained prompt clearance from Premier Souvanna Phouma for use of napalm in southern Laos. He concurred in principle with the release of napalm to RLAF forces, and gave full concurrence to US use of napalm against trucks on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. COMUSMACV was advised by Vientiane that napalm could be

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PAGE 426 OF 872 PAGES

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employed in Laos in accordance with existing BARREL ROLL/southern Laos operating rules. Additional restrictions were that in the STEEL TIGER area, expenditure of napalm would be confined to ELAF-validated targets only; expenditure of napalm would occur under FAC control as defined in BARREL ROLL/southern Laos operating rules; maximum effort by all commanders and air crew members would be necessary to prevent inadvertent strikes against villages, innocent inhabitants, and friendly troop positions; and no publicity would be permitted as to the use of napalm in Laos.178

(TS) Inevitably, errors resulting from the complex rules of engagement\* resulted in instances in which US aircraft mistakenly bombed and/or strafed friendly villages and military installations in Laos. Over a period of several months such occurrences became less frequent, but each mishap militated against efforts to obtain needed relaxation of the rules of engagement. COMUSMACV assured the Ambassador to Laos that his concern over inadvertent attacks on friendly positions was shared by all participants and that efforts were being exerted continually to prevent such occurrences. Meanwhile JCS recommended to higher authority substantive changes to JCS basic rules of engagement in SEASIA, including authority for US forces to conduct immediate pursuit of hostile aircraft, vessels, and ground forces into both Laos and Cambodia; to conduct immediate pursuit of hostile aircraft into Communist China in response to attacks against US forces; and to conduct sea-air-rescue (SAR) operations in Communist China when engagement risk was small, and there were clear prospects for successful recovery of crews.179

#### Photo Reconnaissance Out-of-Country

(TS) Aerial reconnaissance of infiltration LOC's in area contiguous to RVN remained critical as the monsoon season approached. By April Cambodia ranked high on the agenda for reconnoitering requirements. COMUSMACV requested approval to conduct infra-red (IR), wide-looking airborne radar (SLAR), and airborne radio direction finder (ARDF) operations over Cambodia, plus authority to overfly its border to a depth of ten km to accomplish YANKEE TEAM reconnaissance requirements. At the end of May, CINCPAC requested a full statement of COMUSMACV requirements, for inclusion with others, which would enable initial fulfillment of similar requirements without duplication. Unforeseen urgent reconnaissance required for MACV would be flown as directed by COMUSMACV. In view of deteriorating weather in Laos and improving weather in NVN, strike sorties were being diverted on a daily basis for maximum utilization.180

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PAGE 427 OF 822 PAGES

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(S) Late in July TIGER HOUND reconnaissance established first priority for electronic and other intelligence (EBI) to detect and determine the nature of enemy troop concentrations and buildup which threatened friendly positions in Laos and contiguous portions of RVN, and to provide evidence which would confirm or deny reported enemy troop-buildup to tactical strength in these areas.<sup>181</sup>

Extension of TIGER HOUND Concept to NVN Panhandle

(S) Anticipating the ultimate effect of TIGER HOUND operations in Laos, COMUSMACV expressed interest in extension of such air operations control into the southern panhandle of NVN, in areas termed Route Packages (RP) I and II. CINCPAC had delegated air strike control in these areas to CINCPACFLT and CINCPACAF at a time when enemy infiltration involving these two areas in NVN was not a governing factor. However, in 1966 infiltration from RVN had increased dramatically and COMUSMACV informed CINCPAC that enemy activities in those areas bore a direct tactical relationship to operations in RVN and therefore comprised an immediate extension of the ground battlefield. This fact, coupled with the need to shift tactical air operations weight into this area during good weather, underscored his desire to have these operations under single FAC control.<sup>182</sup>

(TS) COMUSMACV provided a plan, under existing procedures, for control of NVN southern panhandle operations patterned after TIGER HOUND. This called for assignment of RP I to 7th AF and RP II to CTF 77. Air operations would be augmented from in-country assets based at Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay, and Phan Rang as required. As weather in southern Laos deteriorated, a portion of TIGER HOUND resources would be shifted to RF's I and II. All appropriate resources available would be focused on this mission in accordance with COMUSMACV's tactical judgment. COMUSMACV requested authority to implement this plan as a matter of operational urgency; authority so granted would bring military power to bear most effectively on enemy approaches to the RVN battlefield for which he was responsible. CINCPAC considered extension of TIGER HOUND procedures into RP I as appropriate. He recognized the success of TIGER HOUND with FAC control, and warned that antiaircraft artillery prevented FAC use in most of NVN. The program, he felt was worth a try in RP I. Accordingly, the northern boundary of RP I was modified to authorize COMUSMACV's use of in-country assets in this area.<sup>183</sup>

(S) In early May COMUSMACV toured TIGER HOUND operations and discussed results shown with planners and operators, including FAC's and strike pilots. From a review and analysis of results since conception of the program, he concluded there were many lessons

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PAGE 428 OF 872 PAGES

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to be headed by MACV and higher headquarters in planning for the immediate future. He stressed the need for a better focus on developing the capability to conduct 24-hour operations, regardless of weather and difficulty of terrain, in order to interdict lines of communication. The value of visual reconnaissance in the interdiction effort could not be over-emphasized. COMUSMACV considered the FAC in a slow-moving, aerial observation platform--familiar with a given area through repeated flights over it--a vital link to success. Approximately 25 percent of TIGER HOUND damage inflicted had resulted from night operations, but it was conceivable that significantly greater results could be achieved with a more advanced state of the art, such as the coordinated use of available sensor-equipped aircraft, flareships and Star Lite scopes.<sup>184</sup>

(S) Ordnance selection had proved to be of importance in TIGER HOUND operations. The GP bombs with both instantaneous and delayed fuzing, napalm, cluster bomb unit (CBU), rockets and 20-mm munitions were all effective when employed against targets suited to their respective characteristics. COMUSMACV stressed the need for insuring a proper mix in ordnance loading in order to gain maximum destruction. Despite the effectiveness of available munitions, a requirement still existed for additional ordnance in the area denial category. The enemy's demonstrated ability to repair road cuts and road blocks in minimum time had confirmed his use of sizable labor forces which had suffered little attrition in accomplishing such tasks. COMUSMACV was heartened by the outstanding results achieved in TIGER HOUND operations, but he considered an increased capability in this area a challenging task well worth the attention of everyone in the USAF.<sup>185</sup>

#### USAF ROLLING THUNDER Operations in NVN

(TS) ROLLING THUNDER airstrikes in 1966 pursued the US objectives of bringing pressure to bear as necessary to cause the GNVN to cease supporting and directing insurgency operations in RVN. From the beginning of ROLLING THUNDER operations in March 1965, it was clear that this was not a classical military air offensive, but rather that the program would evolve from political-military strategy with political factors dominating. Directed JCS restrictions imposed unprecedented control of tactical air operations aimed at destroying progressively selected military targets while providing maximum protection to non-combatants in NVN. By the end of 1965, many of the original constraints which prohibited attacks in specified areas and against specified targets had been relaxed or removed.<sup>186</sup>

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PAGE 429 OF 872 PAGES

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(TS) Prior to the cessation of hostilities over NVN, CINCPAC advised JCS that while it was possible to proceed with the ROLLING THUNDER program beyond the level of 1965, the program would not accomplish its purpose. He stated that the program to air strikes and concurred completely with COMUSMACV's concept that "from a military standpoint no advantages should be expected in a cease-fire affecting RVN." COMUSMACV recommended immediate resumption of offensive air operations. 187

(TS) CINCPAC fully endorsed the concept of ROLLING THUNDER operations with no restrictions on the scope upon resumption of air strikes in RVN. He stated that the program would be a highly armed and well equipped force. He stated that the program would be based on intelligence gained during the past year. He stated that the program had the advantage of the steady flow of aircraft from the South and speed of the program. He stated that the program would be a continuation of land LOC's. CINCPAC also stated that the program would greatly enhance the initial US strike capability against perishable targets moving in the logistical supply routes. Based on extensive studies, major PCL facilities in NVN were considered as most lucrative targets, but had not been struck previously because of NVN signal restrictions. 188

(S) When ROLLING THUNDER operations resumed on 31 January 1966, they were restricted to the area south of Hanoi with primary emphasis placed on moving targets and log infiltration routes in NVN. MIG aircraft were reported to appear during raids over NVN, and friendly aircraft were reported to be aware of the increasing probability of contact with enemy aircraft. 189

(TS) In late February, SAIS advised CINCPAC and COMUSMACV that he considered it probably the best concept for mounting an effective and flexible air campaign against NVN LOC's and infiltration corridors through Laos. Major's doubts on the plan would be any withholding of authority to execute strikes in the Bac Son/Haiphong area and in the III quadrant of NVN where the enemy maintained a sanctuary. CJCS was particularly concerned with the threat resulting from NVN buildup of SAM's, surface-to-air missiles (SAM's) and new MIG's. 190

(TS) On 13 March agreement was reached with the HLG to employ F-5's against infiltration routes in Laos, including possible interdiction of the Ho Chi Minh Trail along the Laos/NVN border, with simultaneous cover strikes over NVN. COMUSMACV requested development of suitable targets and contingency plans for F-52 strikes on both sides of the Ho Chi Minh Trail along Laotian border areas of the I and II CTZ's. CINCPAC issued a basic operation order covering ROLLING THUNDER and related support programs on 1 April, consistent with the implementation of F-5's and F-52's operations in PP I under COMUSMACV direction. CINCPAC advised his component commanders of the respective areas of responsibility for strike operations. 191

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(TS) Elimination of the MIG threat was undertaken beginning in April. CINCPAC directed his component commanders to be prepared to execute attacks against certain JCS targets when directed. Such attacks possibly could result in a MIG reaction of sufficient magnitude that a response would be required. CINCPACFLT and CINCPACAF would plan to counter the MIG threat if authorized to attack NVN air fields. CINCPAC requested a CINCSAC plan for B-52 attacks on Phue Yen and Kep airfields, to include support required from PACOM forces. An urgent requirement also existed for B-66B aircraft in SEASIA to counter the expanded sophisticated air defenses in NVN. Effective jamming of enemy radar had degraded NVN air detection and defense system and thus provided protection for strike aircraft against the threat of SAM and radar controlled AAA sites.<sup>192</sup>

(TS) In response to COMUSMACV's suggested targets for retaliatory air strikes in the event like targets were attacked in RVN, CINCPAC advised on 25 May that current plans provided for reprisal against any or all such targets for which CINCPACFLT, CINCPACAF, and CINCSAC already had effective plans ready for implementation. Current rules of engagement were clear and unequivocal regarding incursions into Communist China, and thus reflected current US Government policy which authorized no pursuit into the territorial sea or air space of Communist China. In the event that Communist Chinese forces became directly involved in hostilities in SEASIA, this rule obviously would require reconsideration.<sup>193</sup>

(TS) Authorization was granted on 16 June to conduct armed reconnaissance strikes on dispersed POL sites in NVN, as contained in ROLLING THUNDER target lists. Authorization was granted to attack all POL storage sites throughout NVN except those located within 30 nautical miles of the center of Hanoi, ten nautical miles of the center of Haiphong, or in the buffer zone 25 nautical miles from the CHICOM border east of 105° 20' and 30 nautical miles west of 105° 20'. The decision to carry out strikes against POL targets in the Hanoi/Haiphong area was made after SECDEF and CJCS had given assurances to the highest authority that every feasible step would be taken to minimize civilian casualties associated with the strikes. CINCPAC was advised that if the missions could not be executed to accomplish this objective of destroying the targets while protecting US crews, he was not to initiate the program. ROLLING THUNDER strikes were executed on 29 June against POL storage targets in the immediate vicinity of Hanoi and Haiphong. Following a review of intelligence and targeting devoted to the destruction of the NVN POL system, CINCPAC augmented a plan of action to accomplish its maximum feasible destruction, while assuring a balanced effort against other facets of NVN's military capability to support the VC.<sup>194</sup>

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PAGE 431 OF 822 PAGES

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(TS) CINCPAC notified COMUSMACV of his plan to relocate DIXIE CVA from DIXIE STATION to YANKEE STATION off the northern coast of central RVN in order more adequately to balance available air assets in light of the prevailing NVN POL target situation. He directed continued support by CINCPACFLT of COMUSMACV from DIXIE STATION through 30 July. COMUSMACV requested a delay in moving the DIXIE CVA until 4 August; CINCPAC agreed and instructed CINCPACFLT to support COMUSMACV from DIXIE STATION accordingly, and commencing 6 August to maintain these CVA's in the vicinity of POINT YANKEE. 195

(TS) COMUSMACV spent 12-14 August at the LBJ Ranch in Texas. Quizzed by the President as to the effect of POL bombings in NVN, COMUSMACV replied that it was too early to see the full impact of this program, but indications were beginning to show up that the enemy had been hurt. Strong signs of this probably would be seen in the near future. Precision of the bombing was to the credit of the USAF and the USN. When asked to explain peak air losses during the previous week in NVN, COMUSMACV assessed it as a combination of bad luck and technical assistance from USSR provided to NVN. The President discussed the possibility of another standdown of the air campaign in NVN. COMUSMACV explained that during the NVN stand-down (24 December 1965-30 January 1966) resulting sorties available were put to effective use in the Laos Panhandle. He realized that some change in the bombing program was about the only trade-off that could be made in the international arena, but urged the President not to consider any cessation of the full bombing program in the north. As a minimum, the air interdiction campaign on LOC's in the extended battle area was essential militarily to the battle in the south. COMUSMACV pointed out that few industrial targets existed in this area and it was important that Allied air power be brought to bear on troops and supplies enroute to the RVN battlefield. 196

(TS) In mid-August COMUSMACV directed his staff to develop a concept and an outline plan that could be implemented progressively over a 12-month period which would place USMACV in position to commence military operations in the Laos Panhandle south of the 17th Parallel. Such a concept would help determine requirements essential to plan execution and provide guidance for implementing preparatory measures. 197

(S) In October CINCPAC presented an analysis of the PL/NVN situation in Laos that highlighted areas of concern, the enemy's plans and priorities in that area. Two especially sensitive PL/NVN areas were indicated: 1) an "area of SE Laos from Nape Pass along eastern perimeter of Laos to Se Kong/Cambodian border junction," and 2) a "political base in Sam Neua/Xiang Kheng provinces." Although RVN remained the primary threat for NVN, any activity affecting these sensitive areas detracted from the military value. The analysis also pointed out "that NVN must consider the all-country reaction to any attempt at major military movements and any new control." This

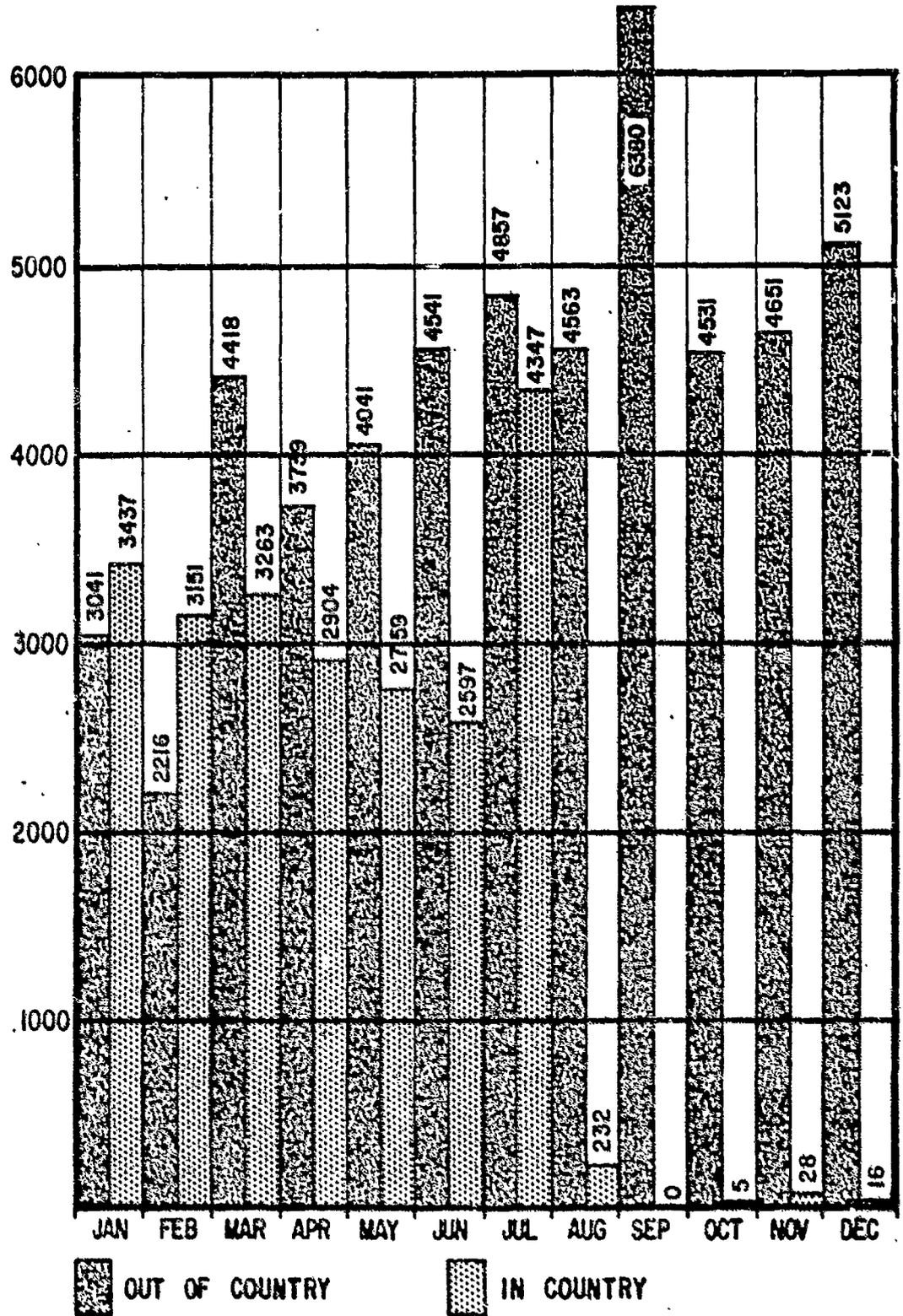
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PAGE 422 OF 872 PAGES

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# USN SORTIES FLOWN 1966



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analysis coincided closely with a MACV study, 3 September, locating VC/NVA logistical base areas and LOC's. 198

(TS) The success of TIGER HOUND operations in the southern Laos Panhandle resulted in virtual denial of viable LOC's available to the enemy during the monsoon season. As a result, NVA infiltration efforts shifted into the southern Panhandle of NVN and undertook infiltration through the DMZ and contiguous areas to include both land and water routes. At his 18 July staff conference (out-of-country air session), COMUSMACV stated:

It is urgent that we now do everything possible to block the enemy use of the roads leading into the extended battlefield of SVN through the DMZ. He has therefore decided to initiate a roll-down operation similar to TIGER HOUND which is to be named Operation TALLY HO. TALLY HO is to be organized and operated similarly to TIGER HOUND but will profit from the experiences, the techniques, and procedures learned during TIGER HOUND.

COMUSMACV's message to CINCPAC and JCS portrayed the above concept and added, "TALLY HO envisions the combined efforts of USAF, USA, USMC, and VNAF strikes and rescue aircraft. Additionally, control and coordination procedures will permit the integration of USN strikes when and if available." 198A

(TS) Because of an increasing use of LOC's by NVA to funnel personnel and supplies southward, 7th AF updated the Rules of Engagement affecting the ROLLING THUNDER, TALLY HO, and TIGER HOUND operations. In a continuing effort to upgrade the interdiction of LOC's, COMUSMACV requesting that his approval authority for operations in Southern Laos be extended to cover RP I. These requests originating in MACV, 7th AF, and AMEMB Vientiane could be granted by COMUSMACV, with CINCPAC still retaining disapproval authority review of OPREP-1 intent reports. 198B

(TS) The increased emplacement of SAM missiles, especially in areas adjacent to the DMZ, was a cause for increased concern toward the end of CY 66. Evaluations of the threat and plans and concepts to counter, retaliate, and destroy the threat were actively pushed forward. A focal point for evaluations was the MACV Science Advisor. With NVN's increased coordination of SAM capabilities with the MIG and AAA capabilities, the FW air effort was seriously threatened. Low-level entries with pop-up delivery techniques exposed FW aircraft to one or the other elements of NVN defenses. With the possible requirement for B-52 forces to operate in areas of SAM environment, PACOM was assigned the multiple tasks of determining the presence of SA-2 units, nullifying

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PAGE 434 OF 872 PAGES

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their effectiveness by ECM, and, when feasible, locating and destroying SA-2 sites. COMUSMACV's role was to evaluate and determine target areas requiring SA-2 support, determine TOT's in coordination with CINCPAC, and develop a support plan capable of implementation on short notice. Aircraft lost in NVN operations were reported by COMUSMACV at the end of the year as 30 lost to SAM's and 10 lost to MIG's.<sup>199</sup>

(TS) The strategy and objectives for the employment of air evolved throughout CY 66, culminating in the creation of targeting concepts for CY 67. CINCPAC in coordination with COMUSMACV in December updated the June 1966 military strategy to accomplish US objectives. In December the conclusion was to "take unremitting war to enemy by selective application of US air and naval" power against military installations and industrial facilities generating aggression, against the conduct of aggression from a sanctuary, and against the NVN support of Pathet Lao and Thai insurgency as well as Laotian LCC's. This would be supplemented in various ways such as: 1) air strikes against NVN ports, power plants, communications facilities, POL, military headquarters, and air defense capability; 2) PSYWAR leaflets employed against NVN, Laos and the Cambodian Panhandle; 3) SAC forces conducting support of combat operations in RVN, as well as strikes against selected targets in Laos and NVN as authorized; and 4) armed reconnaissance in NVN. The major goals would be to convince NVN that a long war was an unacceptable and intolerable proposition, while at the same time, destroying the war goods needed by the enemy in RVN whenever possible.<sup>200</sup>

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PAGE 435 OF 872 PAGES

~~TOP SECRET~~

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PAGE 436 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 442 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 447 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 4 OF 8 PAGES

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PAGE 449 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 450 OF 772 PAGES

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CHAPTER VI

THE US ADVISORY EFFORT

THE RVNAF IN 1966

(C) Although major US emphasis in 1966 appeared to have been on the US buildup and operations, the advisory effort nevertheless received comparable emphasis—it expanded as RVNAF expanded, as RD gained momentum, and as new territory was liberated from VC domination. The USMACV staff continued to function in three areas: as an advisory staff to RVNAF; as a subordinate unified command under CINCPAC; and as the senior US ground tactical headquarters. Separate advisory teams existed for the USMC, USAF, and USN, but the USA advisory effort, except for the field element, was integrated into the joint staff.

(S) In recognition of the problem of joint RVNAF operations, it was felt that advisors should be provided guidelines to assist in improving this important area. It was recognized that there was need for improvement in the operations of mutually-supporting ground, sea and air teams; development of an effective RVNAF joint-operations capacity was seen as one of the salient goals of the US advisory effort. Also recognized, in approaching the task of assisting RVNAF in achieving teamwork among its components, was the fact that RVNAF organization and experiences precluded the application of US Services function and joint doctrine. This required the advisor to become intimately familiar with organization, roles, and missions, not only of the Services he was assigned to, but also of the sister RVNAF Services. Advisors were warned to be alert for differences in organization and doctrine between US forces and RVNAF, and the reasons for them. They were cautioned to exercise great care in relating US joint organization and doctrine to the RVNAF structure, and in discussing joint problems in such a way as to engender dissensions and diminish teamwork among RVNAF elements. An example of this problem was comparing the USA aviation assets to the lack of thereof in the ARVN, or vocally participating in the viewpoint that the VMC and VNAF should enjoy a greater measure of autonomy from the JCS.

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PAGE 45 / OF 722 PAGES

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(S) Guidance was provided in connection with cross-servicing responsibilities with RVNAF, such as logistic support for ARVN, VNN, and VNAF. US advisors working with the supporting forces were encouraged to work closely also with the forces being supported, to facilitate coordination and mutual understanding. Advisors were further directed to attempt to ameliorate any situation wherein problems or attitudes within one RVNAF Service proved to be a detriment to another RVNAF Service; if such efforts were not successful, the problem was to be forwarded to the next senior echelon in the advisory chain.<sup>1</sup>

(S) In developing the details of association between US and ARVN units in III CTZ, US advisors thought that greater improvement could be made in ARVN effectiveness if ARVN were to be given a larger share of US close air and artillery support. Toward that end, communications were established between US and ARVN units, liaison officers were exchanged, defensive concentrations were plotted, and positions were selected to which US artillery could displace to support ARVN units. Combat support coordination centers also were established with the 5th and 25th ARVN Divs to plan and conduct combined operations. Action was also taken to station incoming US artillery units in positions that could readily support ARVN operations. II FFORCEV also planned to establish a combined US/ARVN fire support coordinations element with the 10th ARVN Div.<sup>2</sup>

(S) A measure of RVNAF's increasing effectiveness was evident from a 21 July letter to Chief JGS, in which COMUSMACV stated that "a gratifying improvement in effectiveness of RVNAF combat battalions is now being reflected in reports submitted by US advisors to MACV headquarters." COMUSMACV emphasized, however, the need to improve unit strengths, training, and leadership.<sup>3</sup>

#### The Effect of the US Buildup on the Advisory Effort

(C) The increase in US forces in-country reacted on the advisory effort. The scope and intensity of the buildup eclipsed what had previously been an advisor's "show," and introduced major requirements for the Deputy Senior Advisors (DSA) of the Corps, and Senior Advisors (SA) of the Divisions, as well as for advisors to sectors and sub-sectors in which US forces were located. Of particular impact on the advisory effort were the requirements in the fields of law and order, morale and recreation, post exchange, base development, liaison, and visitor and community relations. With the increase in the advisors' time devoted to these "additional duties" came the inevitable decrease in attention to the primary mission.

(C) Liaison was one of the most demanding requirements placed on advisory teams. Teams at Corps, Division, sector, and subsector level

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PAGE 452 OF 872 PAGES

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were required to furnish liaison officers (LnO) to US units operating in the territorial jurisdiction of the commands which they advised. As the number of US units increased, the LnO requirements increased proportionately. No TD spaces existed for liaison activities within the advisory structure, and LnO requirements had to be provided at the expense of advisory efforts. At higher levels (Corps and sometimes Division) officers were assigned to this duty on a full-time basis. At sector and subsector level the requirement was generally satisfied by assigning the LnO function to an officer as an additional duty. Even when assigned as an additional duty, however, advisors often felt the requirement was a heavy drain on the primary mission. Closely related to the liaison requirement was the need for establishing advisory tactical operations centers (TOC's) at Corps and Division level, and to staff and operate these centers on a 24-hour basis. The TD did not provide spaces for TOC's at these levels and it was necessary to staff them from existing resources, adding to the burden.<sup>4</sup>

(C) The effect of the buildup on the advisory effort became a source of concern to COMUSMACV. Besides the burden created on the advisory groups, it was feared that the influx of US ground combat forces might degrade the role of the DSA in I, II, and III Corps, and later on the SA in IV Corps. Prior to the buildup in I, II, and III Corps the SA's to the Corps commanders were senior USA colonels. With the establishment of III MAF, I FFORCEV, and II FFORCEV, however, the CG's of these elements assumed the title and function of SA to the corps CG in whose area they were located, and the former SA's were redesignated as DSA's. To prevent degradation of the advisory role and to emphasize the importance he placed on the advisory effort, COMUSMACV reiterated his views on the importance of the advisory effort to the senior US commanders. COMUSMACV stated that the load of the advisory system was increasing, and required constant attention, supervision, support, and direction.<sup>5</sup>

(C) The buildup affected COMUSMACV directly, in that US matters and advisory matters competed for his attention. In order to keep abreast of developments at the JGS and the Ministry of Defense, COMUSMACV assigned a general officer as a special assistant responsible for maintaining command liaison between COMUSMACV and the GVN Defense Ministry and Chief JGS. This officer also represented COMUSMACV on combined inspections at general officer level, in order to assess RVNAF training status, RVNAF unit readiness, and RD. In this way, COMUSMACV hoped to continue to provide timely advice and assistance to the GVN military establishment.<sup>6</sup>

(C) The advisory program was affected by the transfer of the support of FVMAF and RVNAF from MAP funding to Service funding. This action, approved in March 1966, caused a realignment of logistics functions and shifted the responsibilities of the logistics advisory effort from MACV to the Services concerned. A USMACV Comptroller study on the realignment

PAGE 453 OF 872 PAGES

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of logistics functions was published on 2 June and was sent to USARV for comment. The study proposed that the entire logistic support effort for FVMAF and RVNAF be transferred from MACV to USARV, and defined conclusions and recommendations in support of this basic position. DCG USARV, however, disagreed with the proposal, taking the position that USARV should assume operation of all logistics functions which were peculiar to the USA or in which the USA had the predominant interest. He departed somewhat from the purely logistical aspect of the problem to recommend that the entire USA advisory effort, functions, and resources be transferred to USARV without fragmentation. USARV envisioned that those advisory elements directly associated with RVNAF tactical operations, although assigned to USARV, would be placed under the operational control of COMUSMACV as long as COMUSMACV maintained control over all combat forces and related intelligence functions. This position was based on the fact that ARVN comprised 95 percent of RVNAF, and that the US advisory effort was proportioned on this basis; USARV maintained that it was only a logical conclusion that an advisory function which was primarily USA-staffed should be transferred to a USA component headquarters. A second premise to the USARV position was that logistical functions could not be separated from training and operational functions, and that these should be maintained under one headquarters.

(C) USARV also took the position that with respect to logistical support of RVNAF and FVMAF, the responsibility for programming, budgeting, and executing the programs should be transferred to USARV, along with the necessary resources to assume the functions. It was recommended that because of the intricate relationships between RVNAF logistics and the logistics advisory effort, the latter should be transferred to USARV in their entirety on a coordinated basis. The purpose of this method of transfer was to prevent the degradation of support for RVNAF and FVMAF and to keep the system intact for possible future reversion to MAP status. In response to a memorandum from the MACV Chief of Staff, USARV prepared a detailed study of how it envisioned the transfer of the logistics function and logistics advisory effort would be accomplished, and planned for the phased transfer of the engineer advisory effort, the Training Directorate, the ARVN advisory effort, and other related USA staff elements.<sup>7</sup>

(C) On 16 July COMUSMACV approved the transfer of the logistics advisory functions only, and directed that a MACV/USARV planning group meet on 18 July to plan the transfer of the logistics advisory effort. The transfer of the logistics advisory functions became effective on 1 September.<sup>8</sup>

(FOUO) To the individual advisors, COMUSMACV addressed himself in a letter in late 1966. He emphasized and highlighted the importance of a sound relationship between the US advisor and his counterpart, as well as the contributions of the advisor in the total spectrum of US/FW assistance to RVN. Massive buildup of US/FW forces during the year had

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 454 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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overshadowed, to some degree, the advisory function of MACV, but this in no way reflected the actual situation in RVN. Gains made by RVNAF throughout the year in terms of strength and combat effectiveness, COMUSMACV attributed, in large measure, to the advisor. The advisory effort was the "heart and soul" of the commitment to RVN; ultimately, the success of that commitment demanded that the Vietnamese develop and maintain a military force capable of defending themselves. COMUSMACV did not believe that the processes of change were so gradual that an advisor would not see improvement during his tour. While perhaps not measurable on a daily or weekly basis, if a year passed without progress, the program could be presumed a failure. Two pitfalls awaited the unwary advisor: an imbalance of effort devoted to the advisory mission, and greater emphasis devoted to day-to-day operational matters than to building a viable military force. COMUSMACV stressed that the primary reason for assignment to RVN was to advise; internal management of the detachment was of secondary importance. The advisor faced a demanding challenge one that could be difficult and frustrating. The key to success or failure was the relationship achieved and maintained by the advisor with his counterpart. In many cases, it was a matter of life or death. The natural tendency of the US professional soldier was immediate reaction and to expect the same of others, but it was necessary to temper counterpart relationships with patience and restraint. Experience demonstrated that imparting the knowledge required for the counterpart to make a decision was more important than simply providing a solution. The result would be a more qualified and competent counterpart, and the establishment of mutual trust and respect.<sup>9</sup>

#### RVNAF Pay Scales

(U) One of the fundamental problems that faced the US advisory program was the unrealistically low pay scale of the RVNAF. This pay scale, plus an inadequate commissary and housing situation, almost forced some RVNAF units to "live off the land" and fostered corruption. Pay for all branches of the Regular Forces was generally the same. The pay scale was a graduated one which took into account longevity, or echelon as the Vietnamese termed it, and was standard for all branches of the RVNAF.<sup>10</sup>

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Echelon</u>	<u>Monthly Pay (Plaster)</u>
General	1	18,224
Lieutenant General	2	17,466
	1	16,706
Major General	2	15,947
	1	15,187
Brigadier General	1	16,731

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 55 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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<u>Grade</u>	<u>Echelon</u>	<u>Monthly Pay (Piasters)</u>
Colonel	5	13,973
	1	11,390
Lieutenant Colonel	4	12,181
	1	9,709
Major	4	10,758
	1	8,345
Captain	5	9,493
	1	6,961
Lieutenant	4	7,278
	1	6,088
First Lieutenant	3	5,251
	1	5,265
Aspirant (WO)	8	4,771
	1	3,619
Master Sergeant I	8	4,113
	1	2,961
Master Sergeant	8	3,783
	1	2,633
Sergeant I	8	3,455
	1	2,309
Sergeant	8	3,127
	1	1,975
Corporal I	6	2,633
	1	1,810
Corporal	5	2,210
	1	1,690
Private I	5	2,080
	1	1,560
Private	5	1,950
	1	1,430

(U) In addition to the basic pay shown above, several supplemental allowances were authorized. The Technical Supplemental Allowance (TSA) was for Aspirant (WO) through Corporal I for technical proficiency in military skills; this special allowance was not authorized for commissioned officers, and the scale ranged from 400 to 600 piasters per month depending on grade. In addition, special allowances for initial enlistment and reenlistment were authorized with the infantry, airborne, VNBC, Special Forces, and Rangers receiving substantially more than the VNF, and other supporting arms. Officers received a proficiency allowance for technical skills and a functions allowance was authorized for all commissioned ranks and for officers performing non-tactical functions. General officers, down to Division level, received a housekeeping allowance for servants, etc. All members of the RVNAF received a family allowance, cost-of-living allowance, retirement benefits, and death or missing-in-action gratuities. The VNBC received a special allowance for the Marine Brigade of 200

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piasters for all corporals and below. These allowances were conceived to afford the best remuneration possible for members of the RVNAF. Considering the economic condition of the government, the pay of the troops was as high as practicable, but was still barely adequate; inflation and a shortage of goods and services combined to create a problem for the troops. A continuing study was being carried on to find ways of improving the livelihood of the individual member of RVNAF. One such effort was the establishment of government-controlled Exchanges where food and other necessary staples were sold at low cost. Continuing efforts were made to improve dependent's housing, to produce food-stuffs locally where possible and to provide low-cost medical care.

(U) The disparity in pay between the Regular/Regional Forces and the Popular Forces had long been a serious concern to COMUSMACV. When the new pay scales were authorized and it was learned that the PF had been left monetarily even farther behind, COMUSMACV in August forwarded a memorandum to Director USAID seeking concurrence in the payment of a cost-of-living allowance (COLA) to members of the PF. It was COMUSMACV's view that a COLA would decrease the great disparity in take-home pay and living conditions between the PF and the RF and Regular Forces, helping to reduce the increasingly serious problem of recruiting and retaining PF personnel. COMUSMACV reminded Director USAID that the continued existence of this disparity could lead only to more serious problems. Higher wages, higher cost of the necessities of life, the generally rising Vietnamese standard of living, and the resultant new demands for labor were creating increased competition for manpower. He also stressed the importance of the PF contribution to the war effort and illustrated the point by showing that the PF suffered 0.75 percent average monthly casualties compared to 0.43 percent and 0.48 percent average monthly casualties for the Regular and RF respectively. If the casualty rates were considered together with the fact that the monthly take-home pay of a PF member was so much lower than the take-home pay of the other personnel, it could easily be seen as a primary reason why recruiting and retaining PF personnel was such a serious problem.

(U) Accordingly, COMUSMACV proposed that a COLA of 600 piasters per month in Zone I and 500 piasters in Zone II be paid to PF personnel. Although there would still remain a wide disparity in cooperative pay, he believed that this allowance would go far toward resolving the current inequities and the recruitment and retention problems. Although the possible inflationary effects of the allowance were recognized by COMUSMACV, he believed that the benefits to be derived would far outweigh the adverse effects on the Vietnamese economy. In addition, it was COMUSMACV's view that since most PF personnel were located in rural areas, inflationary effects would be minimal. On 7 October, having received no response from USAID, a proposal to increase the pay of PF personnel was made by MACV representatives at the Pay Advisory Committee meeting, and on 21 October the committee approved a pay increase amounting to 600 piasters per month for PF personnel in Zone I and 400 piasters

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for Zone II. Subsequently these amounts were changed by the GVN to 580 and 380 piasters respectively, so that the final pay amounted to 2,400 and 2,200 piasters per month. On 5 December the proposed pay increase was included in the GVN Defense Budget for CY 67, which was approved by the Mission Council, and on 7 January the PF pay raise was signed into law effective 1 January 1967.<sup>11</sup>

#### ARVN and Its US Army Advisors

The Army of the Republic of Vietnam has been at war continuously for a period of over ten years. It has, by and large, fought bravely and fought well when properly motivated and led. The enemy has mounted a systematic campaign to destroy its leadership, present and future. ARVN itself has suffered casualties of great magnitude in terms of its total strength. Constant political instability has resulted in job insecurity among ARVN leadership. The fact that ARVN today even exists as an organized fighting force is a tribute to its stamina and morale. It is, by and large, an effective army.<sup>12</sup>

(C) As the year began, the Field Advisory Element of the MACV JTD, submitted for approval on 15 November 1965, was authorized 5,377 personnel. Before this JTD had been approved, a new one was submitted to CINCPAC on 20 January, requesting an increase of 70 spaces, for a total of 5,447. The requested spaces were for 11 additional subsector teams and for increases in Corps and Division advisory staffs and in the Training Directorate. On 21 February CLEPAC validated this request and recommended JCS approval. JCS approved 5,401 spaces of the revised JTD but asked for additional justification for the other 46 spaces. MACV J1 subsequently deleted the requirement for one space and submitted additional justification for the other 45 spaces, bringing the JTD total to 5,446 spaces. In keeping with an August 1964 agreement between JCS and MACV, personnel were requisitioned on the basis of a JTD submission, not JCS approval.<sup>13</sup>

(S) The major internal change within the JTD occurred as a result of a Mission Council meeting on 31 January. At this meeting, the Ambassador expressed concern that an excessive number of US military and civilian personnel might have been committed to the US advisory effort, overwhelming the Vietnamese officials and population, particularly at the provincial and district levels. In response to this concern, COMUSMACV directed MACV J1 to review the JTD to determine whether a reduction of advisor strength could be achieved without detriment to the Command Mission. The review was to analyze the views of Corps, Division, sector, subsector, Airborne, Marine, Ranger, and RF/PF senior advisors

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PAGE 458 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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as to the extent to which their respective organizations might sustain personnel reductions; to consider personnel reductions within the advisory structure by discontinuing whole categories of advisory effort, such as artillery; and to appraise the effect upon the personnel replacement program of terminating selected advisory positions when the incumbent completed his tour.<sup>14</sup>

(S) In order to analyze the views of advisors at all levels, a questionnaire was prepared and dispatched to selected advisory personnel, asking them to comment as to whether advisors were overwhelming their Vietnamese counterparts, how much their respective organizations could sustain personnel reductions without injury to mission accomplishment, and the desirability or feasibility of discontinuing whole categories of advisory effort. Of 510 questionnaires mailed and returned, only five indicated that the Vietnamese were being overwhelmed by advisors. It was concluded that the Vietnamese were not being overwhelmed by regularly assigned personnel, but that occasionally an excessive number of personnel did assemble to observe certain operations; such groups were composed of advisory personnel, visiting dignitaries, observers, and their escorts. It was also concluded that there was more than the minimal advisory effort available at some levels, and that termination of certain advisory positions would not have an unfavorable impact on personnel replacement plans and programs. A MACV J1/J3 team visited each Corps during March and April to make a detailed study of the spaces recommended for deletion, and the results were published in a memorandum on 7 May. The memorandum recommended deletion of 355 spaces and an increase of 67 spaces to the JED, resulting in 288 uncommitted spaces.<sup>15</sup>

(C) There was no absolute uniformity to MACV teams assigned to sector and subsector, each team being tailored to its location and situation. Changes also occurred in the number of teams employed. On 2 February, 12 new subsectors were allocated and three withdrawn for a net increase of nine. Other changes were additions to the Vung Tau and Can Binh advisory detachments, addition of a five-man POW team to each CTZ and to CBR and an increase of 30 spaces to the CBR resulting from an increase in the advisory effort to security units guarding Tan Son Nhut Air Base—based on a study which recommended improved security measures for TSN after the 13 April attack.<sup>16</sup>

(U) Another internal change occurred when SECDEF directed COMUSMACV to furnish 25 officers with agricultural backgrounds to USAID as full time agricultural advisors in selected provinces. It was determined later that only 20 officers were actually required for this study, and it was agreed that the USAID requirement could be satisfied by assigning the selected officers to sector staffs, where they would perform a dual military/USAID advisory role. Deployment of the selected officers began in March.<sup>17</sup>

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PAGE 459 OF 872 PAGES

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### ARVN Effectiveness

(C) One of the more difficult tasks of the US advisor was the quantification of ARVN effectiveness, a difficulty compounded by the necessity of applying meaningful parameters to such measurement. Intangibles such as morale and esprit de corps were, at best, the subjective judgment of the advisor. Other factors, such as authorized vs actual strength, could be tabulated.

(S) ARVN combat effectiveness, as measured by the number of battalions rated as combat ineffective or marginally effective by their US advisors, improved steadily from the lows of April, when the highest number (17) of battalions were rated as ineffective, and May, when the highest number (39) of battalions were rated as marginally effective. October was the peak month of effectiveness, when no battalions were rated ineffective and only seven battalions were rated marginally combat effective.<sup>18</sup>

(TS) May appears to have been the month when ARVN effectiveness began to improve, in spite of the high number of marginally effective battalions, for in that month the trend toward an increasing number of ineffective battalions was reversed. COMUSMACV underscored the increase in ARVN effectiveness in a report to CINCPAC, noting that ARVN forces were, in some instances, developing and using a vigorous rapid-reaction capability, considered significant because successful employment of a rapid-reaction helilifted assault force, in coordination with tactical air strikes and artillery, indicated a high degree of professional competence. An example was the action of the 9th ARVN Div in Kien Giang Province in IV CTZ. In mid-May, intelligence agents reported the location of the VC Tay Do battalion, which had an estimated strength of 500. On 21 May the 9th Div attacked the battalion, killing 224 VC and capturing 44 individual weapons while losing only six soldiers.<sup>19</sup>

(TS) On 18 June, replying to JCS, COMUSMACV stated that there had been no dramatic modification of RVNAF morale from the level that had prevailed during the preceding six months, but that morale had improved in cadence with the US buildup, and increasing combined operations had resulted in improved RVNAF confidence and know-how. Further improvement was hampered by such factors as an increased cost of living, limited promotion and decoration policies, ineffective measures for apprehension and punishment of deserters, insufficiency of family housing, leadership difficulties, and increased casualties resulting from stepped-up operations. The GVN desertion decree and closer association between US and ARVN units were two measures taken to overcome the cause of the problem, and were beginning to produce modest improvements. ARVN combat effectiveness had shown steady improvement, and in measuring effectiveness three ARVN battalions were equated to one USA or USMC battalion.<sup>20</sup>

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 460 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) Low personnel strength was one of the critical factors in the ineffective and marginal ratings; only one of the 22 battalions rated ineffective or marginally effective in July did not report a shortage of personnel. In attacking the continuing problem of ARVN strength and its effect on ARVN effectiveness, COMUSMACV advised Chief JGS to form an inspection team at general officer level to inspect the strength situation of ARVN divisions. The IG, JGS, headed the team and was assisted by COMUSMACV's personal representative. The team began its inspection with the 25th ARVN Div on 7 July.<sup>21</sup>

(S) A comparison was made between unsatisfactory/marginal ARVN battalions and satisfactory ARVN battalions as rated in each case by US advisors. The results showed that over a four-month period, satisfactory battalions had significantly better contact ratio on large unit operations, higher kill ratios and a more favorable weapons captured/lost ratio than unsatisfactory/marginal battalions.<sup>22</sup>

(S) Unit training programs received both their best and worst ratings for 1967 during the first four months of the year; in February, the year's low of 10 battalions was rated unsatisfactory, and in April, the high of 23 battalions was recorded. Unit advisors universally decried the quality of training in their units and the general apathy toward it. One advisor stated, "It is more accurate to describe the training program as non-existent instead of unsatisfactory." Another stated:

Even though the unit advisors have gone so far as to set up a program of training, the unit fails to conduct training. It appears that the battalion commander actually desires the deterioration of the training status of the battalion so that higher authority will place the unit in a training center to be retrained.

The SA II CTZ recommended that the JGS publish instructions requiring Corps commanders to give command emphasis to ARVN training.<sup>23</sup>

(S) Taking cognizance of the situation, COMUSMACV wrote Chief JGS in March:

One of the most effective means at the disposal of a commander to increase the professional competence of a unit and thus, its confidence, pride, and morale, is continual emphasis on the absolute necessity of effective unit training programs. It had become increasingly apparent to me during recent months that this subject requires strong command emphasis. I particularly urge that corps commanders stress the conduct of in-place training, frequent training inspections, and maximum participation of

PAGE 461 OF 872 PAGES

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

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830624

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officers and NCO's when their battalions are undergoing retraining at the national training centers. All of these training activities require the carefully prepared, enthusiastic, and active participation of officers at all levels of command.<sup>24</sup>

(S) Training progress did not change appreciably through 1966 from the level recorded during the first four months of the year. In terms of units having unsatisfactory training programs, the worst month, other than April, was November, when 22 battalions were unsatisfactory; in terms of marginally-trained battalions, December was the worst month when 37 were so rated. At no time during this period were fewer than two battalions considered unsatisfactorily trained. January was the best month in terms of marginally trained battalions, when one was recorded.<sup>25</sup>

(S) Leadership was one of the most critical problems facing RVN during 1966. The problem existed at all levels, from Saigon down to the PF squad leader. Leadership weakness, especially at the junior officer/NCO level, and occasionally at field grade level, was widespread, particularly in the areas of training and discipline. Personnel in positions of authority were often reluctant to accept responsibility or to supervise their subordinates aggressively. The SA 1st ARVN Div said that because of an insufficient number of trained officers and NCO's at lower levels, many units below division level failed to react quickly enough to contacts, failed to recognize where a main effort should be made, and tended to substitute artillery and close air support for fire and maneuver.<sup>26</sup>

(S) Most of the leadership problems were due to inexperience or indifference. Many of the ineptly-led units had new leaders or staff officers who simply did not know what to do, either in garrison or the field. By far the more serious problem was indifference: to security, to training, and to the welfare and morale of the soldier and his dependents. One division advisor stated of ARVN career management:

By and large ~~our~~ commanders at the battalion level are burned out. They are just plain tired as any US type would be after having such a command for five or six years. The only way officers get out of these jobs generally is (1) get killed, or (2) combat fatigue. I have seen both happen often . . . I urge that an accelerated program be established to push young officers up the ladder fast . . . capitalize on youth and new blood.<sup>27</sup>

Another advisor reported: "The battalion commander has shown a deterioration in attitude since the arrival of a new battalion executive officer. Prior to the arrival of the new officer, he was an aggressive

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG por

PAGE 462 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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and dynamic leader. He now shows a reluctance to do anything except play cards and chase women." It was also brought out that the new executive officer was a graduate of Fort Benning and extremely competent. Not stated, but implied, was the fact that he outshone the battalion commander, injuring his pride.<sup>28</sup> This was not an isolated case of such sensitivity.

(C) A regimental advisor stated:

The regimental commander . . . has been nominated to attend the US Army Command and General Staff College, and has departed for Saigon to compete for selection. His qualifications for this selection are extremely limited and efforts should be made to preclude any favorable action. His temporary replacement, a captain, by his mere assignment . . . offers the prospect of a significant improvement in the leadership of this regiment.<sup>29</sup>

(\*) The advisors commented that their counterparts were AWOL, or lacking in initiative, or cautious to the point of being ineffective.<sup>30</sup>

(S) During the period January-September, ARVN battalions were not as active as US battalions in terms of percentage of available time spent on large operations, i.e., those involving three or more companies. Specifically, ARVN forces spent 30 percent of available time on large operations compared to 48 percent for US forces. ARVN forces conducted more large operations than did US forces, but the operations were substantially shorter in duration, averaging 5.4 battalion days per large operation compared to 22.2 for US forces. Of ARVN large operations, 46 percent contacted the enemy, while 90 percent of US large operations contacted the enemy; 71 enemy were killed per ARVN battalion and 336 per US battalion. The ARVN/enemy kill ratio was 3.2:1 compared to the US/enemy kill ratio of 5.4:1.<sup>31</sup>

(S) A factor affecting the effectiveness of ARVN units during April, May, and June was political instability. Most seriously affected was the 1st Div, from which many troops had defected to the "Struggle Forces" in Hue and Da Nang. In reply to a question from CINCPAC as to the probability of active, effective participation of the 1st ARVN Div in combined operations against VC/NVA forces near the DMZ, COMUSMACV answered in the affirmative. The 1st Div was considered reliable; it had shown steady improvement since its participation in struggle movement activities. While there were still vestiges of struggle-force influence within it, none of its units showed dangerous infection, and the political reliability of the division was considered good. The division was combat effective and would participate in combined operations near the DMZ. It was not planned, however, to use more than one battalion of the division in such operations because of other operational requirements it had along Highway 1 and in the vicinity of Hue and Quang Tri.<sup>32</sup>

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 463 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) In September 1965, the prevailing Vietnamese opinion, among civilians and military alike, had been that there was no substitute for military rule, and that continued military participation in government at the highest levels would be necessary even after elections were held. A year later, opinions had changed, almost universally among civilians, and among many ARVN officers as well. The concensus was that ARVN should quit partisan politics because the power struggle, going on since 1963, was corrupting and demoralizing the Army. It was their conviction that each successive wave of generals, seeking to bolster their positions, used government funds to buy off other officers and the pay-off had become almost a way of life along the chain of command. As elections approached, sentiment grew to find ways to insulate ARVN against politics. Opinion was almost universal against the incumbent leaders' using government power to insure their own election, and many urged that future candidates from the Army resign permanently from RVNAF, well in advance of election day. It was felt that officers occupying key Ministries, such as Defense and Interior, should be retired or placed on inactive duty status. Others might remain on active duty but should be relieved of any concurrent command responsibilities. There was rising feeling as well, that ARVN needed to be reorganized and reoriented to a new role of direct involvement in pacification. Not only would ARVN be contributing to pacification, but also it would be so involved in protecting and defending the population that it would have little opportunity or time for coups. Reorganization would eliminate or reduce the Corps and Divisions as the principal well-springs of a corrupt system extending all the way down into the districts. There were even those who suggested that the US, as a condition of its commitment, prohibit any further coups, thus alleviating the insecurity and uncertainty of tenure which encouraged corruption. The entire question of the proper role of the Army, in a country involved in war and lacking a reservoir of skilled civilian leadership, was difficult to resolve. Army leadership had to be used for tasks which would normally be handled by civilians simply because civilian talent did not exist. This, however, did not mean that ARVN must also constitute the political leadership of the country; civilian leaders were available, and others could be drawn from RVNAF on a nonpartisan basis.<sup>33</sup>

(S) In April a study, based on exhaustive analysis of field advisor interviews and reports, was developed and presented to RVNAF. The study concerned itself with the four major problem areas of leadership indoctrination, training, discipline, and personnel management, and presented broad recommendations for approaching each problem. The recommendation on leadership was to develop a program which would emphasize the continuing need for leadership at all levels. The recommendation on training was to improve small-unit leader-training courses and to emphasize leadership training at the RVNAF C&GSC and other highlevel courses. On discipline, the recommendation was to establish a court-martial and non-judicial punishment system down to battalion level, and to establish a functional inspector general system. The recommendations on personnel management included the establishment of a centralized program for officer career management, creation of programs for selection of officers and NCO's based

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per  
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PAGE 464 OF 872 PAGES

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on leadership potential, and the design of promotion, reduction, and elimination procedures to raise leadership and prestige.<sup>34</sup> RVNAF reacted positively and quickly to the recommendations, with the establishment of a committee to develop a leadership program, details of which are covered in Chapter III.

(S) The combat effectiveness of the 5th and 25th ARVN Divs was the subject of a staff study completed on 19 April. The facts developed were that both divisions were confronted by a numerically superior enemy, that both divisions had been either marginal or substandard during the year, that the RF/PF units in Hau Nghia Province were equal to division forces and were rated higher than division forces in Long An and Binh Duong Provinces, that both divisions were plagued by the "Saigon syndrome" (the ease with which members could desert to Saigon), and that the status of RD cadre in Long An, Hau Nghia, and Binh Duong Province was unsatisfactory. Five courses of action were considered: deactivate the headquarters of the 5th and 25th Divs and place subordinate units under the command of province chiefs; exchange the two divisions with two other divisions from other CTZ's; relieve the two divisions of their primary mission of fighting the VC and leave them the secondary mission of pacification; relieve from key positions at any level all unsatisfactory or marginal commanders and staff officers; and, by expression of COMUSMACV's concern and willingness to commit material assets as well as influence, encourage intensification of III Corps advisory (and ARVN) efforts to solve the underlying Corps-wide problems that most acutely affected the performance of the 5th and 25th Divs. The most salient of these problems was command relationship, which severely inhibited the execution of effective leadership, recruiting, training, morale and discipline, and unit dispositions. If no significant change for the better occurred in the two divisions, it was proposed to withdraw all US advisors. If there was still no improvement, the next step would be to withdraw all MAP support. COMUSMACV vetoed this last proposal and had it removed from the staff study. He expressed his guidance when he was briefed on the staff study: avoid sanctions against GVN, intensify the effort to associate and integrate the 5th and 25th ARVN Divs with the 1st and 25th US Divs respectively, and consider the possible needed change in contemplated deployments/redeployments and greater US participation in pacification activities in Hau Nghia and Binh Duong Provinces.<sup>35</sup>

(S) On 8 May COMUSMACV was presented another briefing on ARVN effectiveness, this one aimed at raising the standard of support for ARVN soldiers and their families. One of the main ideas explored was that of US units sponsoring ARVN units, and consideration was given to expanding the concept throughout III CTZ. The briefing identified the US 173d Abn Bde and the 1st Australian Task Force as possible joint sponsors for the 10th ARVN Div. It was hoped that the concept would result in better relations between US and ARVN units, would give the US more leverage over ARVN, and would aid in tactical integration.<sup>36</sup>

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PAGE 465 OF 872 PAGES ----- 830624 -----

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(U) In an effort to upgrade the combat effectiveness of the RF/PF, a joint study was conducted with a view to improving the logistical support system for the RF/PF. The study resulted in, among other things, a requirement for increasing the advisor strength in the Administrative Support and Logistic Company from one enlisted man to a seven-man team comprised of two officers (team chief and deputy), an administrative NCO (E7), and four advisors (E6) in supply, ordnance maintenance, signal maintenance, and medicine. On 4 July MACV J4, in conjunction with MACV J1, developed justification for the spaces, and on 14 July Corps advisors were requested to submit their requirements to J1. (This action could conceivably increase the advisory strength by 258 personnel if Corps advisors chose to have the full augmentation assigned to the AS&L companies in every sector.)<sup>37</sup>

(S) On 27 July Chief JGS pointed out the weak areas in ARVN operations during the first half of 1966. He noted the small percentage of operations with enemy contact when compared to the number of operations conducted, and that about 80 percent of the operations had been of three days' duration or less. In combined operations ARVN usually played secondary roles, such as security of supply routes and installations, and general reserve forces sent to the Corps as reinforcements were used in static security roles in Division tactical areas. Chief JGS wanted the Corps commanders to improve intelligence activities, increase unit strengths, improve in-place training, improve coordination with Allied units, and he wanted ARVN to take the initiative.<sup>38</sup>

(S) Another major problem area confronting ARVN was its lack of effectiveness in contributing to revolutionary development, by assisting in the security of hamlets and by operations against the VC infrastructure. As an example, on the night of 19 August a VC company had infiltrated An Phu hamlet in Gia Dinh Province; next morning they attacked PF and Combat Youth in the area, inflicting several casualties. No real action was taken by the GVN after this incident; the VC infrastructure in the hamlet remained intact, with no detailed or coordinated effort to eliminate it. On 29 August, at a Mission Council Meeting, COMUSMACV stated that the ARVN units around Saigon were not doing their job in this respect and noted that US units might have to be brought in to assist them.<sup>39</sup>

(U) Analysis of the tactics and techniques employed by ARVN in search-and-destroy operations revealed that in many cases they were actually sweep operations. Rigid pre-planning with successive objectives, unrealistic time schedules, inadequate consideration of terrain and weather, and faulty schemes of maneuver all prevented ARVN forces from closing with and destroying the enemy. Search techniques were being conducted improperly; the training program at schools and training centers was revised to emphasize the tactics and techniques of search-and-destroy operations. SA's were urged to stress the importance of attaining

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PAGE 466 OF 872 PAGES

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decisive results from search-and-destroy operations, to ARVN unit commanders as well as to US advisors. All commanders needed to be impressed with the fact that, only the enemy gained from poorly-conducted search operations.<sup>40</sup>

(S) In line with efforts to improve ARVN's effectiveness, it was recommended that a major endeavor be made in the field of dependent housing, where a self-help program could be instituted rapidly. Since the raising of ARVN pay or the purchase of local construction materials would build up even greater inflationary tendencies, the self-help program would not place a further drain on manpower or material resources. The US would furnish technical assistance; construction supplies could be requisitioned by US Army units and not bought locally. Material would flow through US channels and be transferred laterally at the lowest level, to limit rake-offs and diversion of material. Concurrently with dependent-housing construction, the possibility of drawing on USAID foodstuffs for distribution to ARVN dependents was to be investigated. Other US assistance would include medical civic action and technical advice on management of PX's and commissaries. It was cautioned that only the provision of technical assistance would be overt; the remainder of the US operation was to be covert.<sup>41</sup>

(S) On 15 May and again on 14 June, COMUSMACV notified CINCPAC of the proposed actions and requested funds for the project from unobligated funds in the FY 66 MAP. In reply, COMUSMACV was notified that special congressional approval would be required to allow use of DOD funds to support the RVNAF PX/Commissary. COMUSMACV then requested that the necessary authority be obtained to permit the use of DOD funds to subsidize the cost of items purchased by the RVNAF PX/Commissary system.<sup>42</sup>

(S) By 11 July, the 5th ARVN Div had erected 1,900 family housing units, the 10th Div had erected 580 family units, and the 25th Div had erected 1,460. All divisions needed more units. Medical care was furnished to dependents of ARVN and RF/PF soldiers through MEDCAP. No progress had been made in the area of ARVN PX and commissary assistance because funds for this project had not been received.<sup>43</sup>

(C) Several benefits were thought likely to accrue from providing dependent housing. While not equivalent to a wage increase, nevertheless dependent housing would decrease the difficulty and hardship experienced by most RVNAF personnel in housing their families near their duty stations. An improved standard of living would be an incentive to ARVN service, and the ARVN soldier's effectiveness was thought likely to increase as worry about his family's condition decreased. In addition, the ARVN soldier was thought likely to participate more readily in RD if his own family were adequately cared for.<sup>44</sup>

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PAGE 467 OF 872 PAGES

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### Sector and Subsector Advisory Program

(C) COMUSMACV divided the US effort in RVN essentially into two parts: one, the tactical effort to destroy VC/NVA main-force units, and the other, to assist the GVN in developing a viable government able to exercise effective control throughout the country. COMUSMACV felt that this second part of the US effort called for greater attention to establishing security in the villages and hamlets and in the extension of GVN influence and control. He regarded MACV and Special Forces (USASF) sector and subsector advisory teams, working with GVN officials at province and district level, as the primary resources for accomplishing the second part of the mission. "The effectiveness of these teams in advising, influencing and supporting the GVN authorities is a direct function of their ability to work with these authorities on a programmed recurring basis." COMUSMACV indicated that, as a matter of policy, he desired that each sector advisor visit each district in his area of responsibility, and each subsector advisor visit each village in his area, at least once every two weeks, conditions permitting. He amplified this with respect to the National Priority Areas, by directing that these visits would be undertaken on a more frequent basis. He tasked the senior commanders to provide aircraft support for these visits when road security or distances involved precluded use of regular ground transport.<sup>45</sup>

(C) In June, MACV J33 analyzed the sector and subsector program, including the role of USASF, to determine how to improve the effectiveness of MACV sector and subsector advisory teams. The buildup had developed an urgent demand for resources, talent, and command attention to support US units, and care was necessary to insure that the sector and subsector advisory program was not slighted. This program, although small, had a particularly widespread and important influence on the war and its effectiveness depended on quality rather than quantity. In assessing the program J33 analyzed the subsector team composition, team-member training, and command emphasis necessary to have the greatest impact on improving the program. The recommendations given to COMUSMACV were that:

1) The greatest degree of tailoring of the subsector team organization should be encouraged, and the composition of all subsector teams should be evaluated in the light of additional skills available, and altered where necessary to suit the situation of each district (psychological operations advisors, Civil Affairs advisors, Engineer advisors, etc.).

2) Special attention be directed to the selection and preparatory training of officers designated as subsector advisors, including a 12-week language course and a six-week Civil Affairs advisor course. MACV recommended to DA that preparatory training courses for subsector advisors be consolidated at one location in CONUS, to relieve the necessity for

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Order Sec Army By TAG per  
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PAGE 468 OF 872 PAGES

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extended TDY prior to assignment to RVN.

3) Command emphasis to identify the advisory program as a priority program and insure that officers assigned as subsector advisors not be used to fill other spaces in the command, and that officers serving as subsector advisors serve their full tour in that capacity. Any departures from this policy must be approved by HQ MACV.

4) Exact requirements for helicopter support throughout the country for sector and subsector advisors be determined, and a special priority allocation of helicopter resources be assigned to meet those requirements.

In addressing the use of USASF as sector and subsector advisory teams, J33 felt the USASF mission and organization did not lend itself to a sector/subsector advisory role except in instances where teams could be employed with CIDG units in village and hamlet security in more remote areas. J33 recommended that the USASF adoption of the sector/subsector advisory mission be governed by the detachment's long-term capacity to execute such a function without detracting from the CIDG program, and that a survey be made of detachments which were operating in a dual capacity to determine whether either program was being performed at the expense of the other. COMUSMACV was briefed on the study on 1 July, and thought that the recommendations would improve advisor programs at these levels of government.<sup>46</sup>

(S) In the view of COMUSMACV, assignment of US personnel to advisory positions required individuals of dedication, professional proficiency, and judgement. He recognized the difficulties facing the advisors, but he also recognized the efforts, both Vietnamese and American, which were being made to surmount the problem. Addressing himself to the Corps SA's, COMUSMACV expressed his view of the American advisory program.

The purpose of the MACV advisory effort over the years has been and continues to be the building of a soundly organized, balanced, fully trained, well equipped and competently led military force which can defend the population and destroy communist aggressors. To this end, much earnest effort has been devoted, many Americans and Vietnamese lives have been sacrificed, and millions of dollars spent. In assessing the effectiveness of our advisory effort, the question arises as to whether a proper balance exists between the effort Senior Advisors expend on tactical matters of current interest and that expended toward building a viable military force.

In addition to the underlying problem of plaster spending limitations, we have had to accept that the RVNAF does not yet have from either a

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PAGE 469 OF 822 PAGES

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quantitative or qualitative standpoint the required leadership to support a larger force. Personnel management, to include the distribution of personnel, strength accounting, casualty reporting, and desertion control has failed to respond to guidance and direction. Ineffective personnel are carried on unit rolls and the fighting strengths of divisions continue to be dissipated through overstrength headquarters and unauthorized units.

It is imperative that advisory effort be focused on finding and exploiting every conceivable means to improve the combat effectiveness of the ARVN. Basic to this objective is proper personnel management, ensuring that: headquarters and support elements are held to authorized strengths, ineffectives are removed from the rolls, replacements flow to the maneuver battalions without diversion and desertion control procedures are enforced.

Numerous programs have been put into effect by the RVNAF to counter these deficiencies. The command leadership program is a long range effort designed to strike at the root of the leadership problem. Decree Law 15 and the implementing programs should have given field commanders new incentive to stop AWOL and desertions. Modernized procedures in strength accounting and casualty reporting have been sent to the field for implementation. In order to keep field advisors abreast of programs instituted by the RVNAF, translations of all pertinent directives with amplifying instructions have been published and distributed regularly. These programs are further discussed in the J1 newsletter, which is disseminated monthly in English and Vietnamese to all advisory levels. In spite of measures taken to inform field advisors of current programs, inspections and staff visits often reveal that advisors are unfamiliar with current policies, directives and procedures promulgated by the JCS/RVNAF and in which this headquarters has expressed great interest. This leads to the conclusion that some advisory detachments are either not interested in the administrative aspects of their advisory role or are becoming so absorbed in internal detachment matters that the primary purpose of their existence has become a matter of secondary concern.

In reviewing the deficiencies discussed in the Senior Advisors' Monthly Evaluation Reports, it is noted that many items are correctable in command channels at unit, division or corps level; yet, it is not apparent that such action is being taken aggressively at local and intermediate command levels.

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830624

PAGE 470 OF 872 PAGES

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Deficiencies involving policy are referable appropriately to this headquarters; deficiencies involving non-compliance with directives, apathy on the part of a commander, etc., are to be resolved in RVNAF command channels.

The role of the advisor is difficult and often frustrating. It requires military acumen, dedication, selflessness and perseverance. For this reason, the finest officers and NCO's are made available for assignment to MACV as advisors. It is desired that addressees channel the professional abilities of the advisory apparatus into efforts designed to complement tactical advice with improvement in the quality, efficiency and reliability of the RVNAF structure as a whole.<sup>47</sup>

(U) Success and recognition of the advisor could come in unexpected ways. In October, representatives of three hamlets near Thien-Giao, Binh Thuan Province, wrote to COMUSMACV "to expose our aspirations." The letter mentioned the fact that the area around their hamlets was heavily infested with quite active VC. The Vietnamese praised the US advisory detachment for its efforts in fighting the enemy and directing air strikes around the district and in working to strengthen local defenses. The letter concluded by requesting that COMUSMACV dispatch a delegation to visit the local advisors, that he reinforce them and "allow this US detachment to remain at Thien-Giao for another year," since they had gained the Vietnamese hearts, and that he approve awards for the advisors. In reply, COMUSMACV thanked the villagers for the compliments paid to the US advisors, but noted that extension of US personnel in RVN was a complex problem. He assured the villagers that either Vietnamese or US military forces could continue to operate throughout Binh Thuan, which, in conjunction with RD, should improve the security of the area.<sup>48</sup>

(U) All advisory efforts did not turn out so happily. Instead of a bouquet, the SA to the 25th ARVN Div received a brickbat shortly after his departure, when CG 25th Div published an order of the day castigating his former advisor. The advisor was accused of attempting to have the CG 25th Div removed from command; he was accused of attempting to dismiss two other division officers, of bypassing the chain of command, and of destroying "the spirit of cooperation between Americans and Vietnamese." The order of the day went on to say that CG 25th Div had attempted to have the SA removed, and failing that, had requested his own relief, which was also refused. The order of the day ended by quoting a poem which referred to the Vietnamese expulsion of the Mongols, which the press interpreted as a reference to the Americans.

(S) The CG 25th ARVN Div was described as an extremely weak individual who was afraid to command. On the other hand, the SA to

THIS PAGE DEGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 471 OF 822 PAGES

830624

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the division had been a dynamic, competent officer who had been assigned the mission of improving the effectiveness of the division. In accomplishing this task, the SA pursued his objectives in a firm manner. COMUSMACV felt that the incident had received distorted press coverage in the US, where it was portrayed as a challenge to the entire position of the US advisory effort. He noted that the Vietnamese were sensitive to real or imagined infringements of their sovereignty. Great care had to be exercised to avoid even the appearance of violating their pride; an official who yielded too readily to US advice was regarded as a puppet. It was felt that the most effective way to work with the Vietnamese was to discuss matters with them and then to allow them to resolve their problems. The incident in the 25th ARVN Div had resulted from a dynamic US officer's working with an ARVN general considered better fitted for a staff position than for command of a combat division. However, the CG did have redeeming qualities; he was considered honest, and for his stand at the coup trials in the early 1960's, when he accepted punishment while many others were running, he had acquired a sizeable following among ARVN officers. He was, in addition, a boyhood friend of CG III Corps, who was said to recognize the division commander's faults but to feel that his hands were tied.<sup>50</sup>

(S) DEFCOMUSMACV, who enjoyed good rapport with the CG 25th ARVN Div, visited him at the request of COMUSMACV. In a two-hour meeting, the Vietnamese general spoke freely and openly with DEFCOMUSMACV. He displayed genuine and extreme concern, and readily admitted his error in issuing the order of the day. Having already apologized to CG III Corps, the CG 25th Div told DEFCOMUSMACV that he had not intended to derogate the US advisory effort, and that he had always appreciated the advisors' contribution to his division's effectiveness and welfare. DEFCOMUSMACV received the impression that the advisor might have been a little too aggressive with the Vietnamese general, who was supersensitive. When asked what could be done to straighten out the problem, DEFCOMUSMACV suggested that a memorandum be published to the division which would mention that the order of the day had leaked to the press, which had taken it out of context, and that there had been no intention to disparage the US advisory effort. On 21 December CG 25th Div published the proposed memorandum as a means of resolving the incident. The memorandum noted that the past must be forgotten, while looking to the present and future; cadres of all ranks were exhorted to display a warm, courteous, and friendly attitude toward their American counterparts. It appeared that the CG 25th Div had turned over a new leaf. He began to command his division, scheduling visits to subordinate elements and touring the DTA. He sought and was receptive to advice, and he pressed for close rapport and amicable ties with his new SA.<sup>51</sup>

(U) In October the MACV policy on tour lengths and mobility for advisory personnel was described to the Deputy Ambassador. Reassignment within MACV, or the component commands, was to be effected only when in the best interest of accomplishing the immediate command mission. It

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PAGE 472 OF 872 PAGES

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was recognized that many personnel desired reassignment, but their desires had to be subordinated because of the urgency of the command mission, and because of the relatively short tour length in RVN. Personnel were not normally reassigned because of promotion, although if, because of promotion, an advisor outranked his counterpart by two ranks, he was considered for reassignment. The importance of the sector and subsector advisors' functions, and the special training required, made it essential that advisors to these positions serve a full 12-month tour. Reassignments were authorized only for compelling reasons, and COMUSMACV reserved to his headquarters authority to grant such reassignments. Other advisors would be reassigned only when in the best interests of accomplishing the command mission. Permissive reassignment of battalion and regimental advisors to higher-level advisory staff positions, after six months in that duty, was authorized, and was necessary in order to provide staff officers, who had already served at lower levels, for the higher levels. COMUSMACV was concerned with obtaining stability of personnel in advisory positions, and wanted every effort made to insure that these positions were filled by personnel who would provide the most continuity in a 12-month tour of duty. A program was implemented to extend selected officers of unique experience or qualifications in RVN beyond the normal tour length. The officers selected came from all Services assigned to MACV, and could be extended for a period of duty of six or 12 months, on a voluntary or involuntary basis. It was expected that the program would cause an appreciable number of outstanding officers in critical advisory positions to extend voluntarily; when involuntarily applied, it was considered that the officer concerned would recognize his duty and the necessity for his extension. It was not the intent to have an extensive involuntary extension program, but rather a program which would solicit a voluntary response from those designated and nominated as selected officers.<sup>52</sup>

#### The VNAF Advisory Program

(S) In 1966 US military air operations in RVN continued in active support of the RVNAF counterinsurgency effort by supplementing VNAF in support of ARVN and by direct support of US ground forces. The nature of the insurgency has had a major bearing on the evolution and development of VNAF. It is now comparable to a numbered US Tactical Air Force, but tailored to the counterinsurgency role. The tactical wings, one in each of the four CTZ's, are organized so that they support the ground forces, provide a visual reconnaissance and psychological warfare capability, provide liaison control of fighter squadron strikes, and, with helicopter squadrons, provide medical evacuation and a resupply capability.

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PAGE 473 OF 872 PAGES

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The mission of VNAF is to conduct tactical reconnaissance, interdiction and close support operations to bring Communist insurgency in RVN under control and assist in maintaining internal security. They participate in the air defense of RVN and provide airlift resupply and medical evacuation for RVN forces. They defend RVN territory and protect the established government.<sup>53</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV, acting through his USAF component commander gave direction late in 1965 for establishing and operating, in conjunction with the RVNAF, a tactical air control system (TACS) for command and control of USAF/VNAF aircraft and for coordination of USMC/USN air strikes under USMACV control. Conduct of offensive and defensive tactical air operations was to be in accordance with established rules of engagement. Commander 7th Air Force (then 2d Air Div) functions as the air defense (AD) commander under COMUSMACV. In this capacity he exercises operational control over all AD weapons systems assigned, attached, or otherwise made available for the AD of US and Allied forces in the RVN. The AD of mainland SEASIA is conducted in accordance with procedures agreed upon between the US and the Allied governments of mainland SEASIA. The TACS in RVN serves as both an operational and a training vehicle. Allocation and control of USAF/VNAF air resources and coordination of USMC/USN aircraft is exercised through the elements of this system.<sup>54</sup>

(C) US ground force aviation assets were allocated to US Corps and/or Division SA's for employment in ARVN/US/FW forces operations. Aviation resources so allocated were assigned missions, insofar as practicable, in direct support of divisions and zones. Allocations were made on the basis of operational control, direct support, or general support in accordance with concepts of US ground forces. An Army aviation element, collocated with each Corps DASC and each Division TOC, insured coordination of US/VNAF air activities supporting ARVN, US, or FVMAF operations.<sup>55</sup>

(C) In-country mission requests for USAF/VNAF air support were processed according to category--immediate or preplanned. Immediate requests, handled on a priority basis, were normally from friendly elements in contact with enemy forces, or from an airborne observer who had achieved positive enemy identification. Any requests requiring ordnance delivery within three hours after initiation were expedited. The ARVN division commander's approval was required to nominate targets to the appropriate Direct Air Support Center (DASC). Requests forwarded to the Tactical Air Control Center (TACC) were considered tantamount to approval. Because selection and validation of targets by GVN/RVNAF were largely a matter of individual judgment, mission requirements were occasionally developed against targets which did not meet US targeting

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PAGE 474 OF 872 PAGES

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criteria. Strike decision was based on several factors: number of non-combatants, number of enemy personnel, tactical situation, local intelligence of the area, and the actual target estimate subsequent to FAC reconnaissance. US/FWMAF ground forces insured that airborne liaison officer (ALO) and forward air control (FAC) personnel were included in all operational planning in which air strikes were expected. Ground liaison officers (GLO's) assisted in planning air missions for strike aircraft. GLO's were located both at the TACC and at each supporting air base, where G-2/G-3 air officers served as alternates.<sup>56</sup>

(C) On 6 February COMUSMACV updated operating procedures and assigned responsibilities for command, control, and coordination of US operations in RVN. It was not his intent to alter or modify current Service concepts for allocation and control of air resources. All Services, however, operated through portions of the same airspace and were frequently employed on joint and combined operations; each possessed to some degree the capability to accomplish missions normally assigned to another Service. Close cooperation and coordination were required, therefore, to insure integrated complimentary efforts in order to achieve most effective results. USAF resources would be employed under the USAF concept of centralized control and decentralized operations. Allocation and control of USAF/VNAF air resources and coordination of USMC/USN aircraft would be exercised through the elements of the TACS. Aircraft and units operating under the TACS would be allocated through the TACC to the DASC's as appropriate for operations in support of CTZ's. USA aviation assets would be allocated as directed by COMUSMACV. USAF and VNAF resources were subject to reallocation, recall, or diversion through the TACC. Cdr 7th AF, in his capacity as MACV AF Component Commander, would coordinate all US air operations and VNAF activities necessary for the conduct of active air defense; would establish and operate, in conjunction with the RVNAF, a TACS for command and control of USAF/VNAF strike aircraft; and would provide essential training for VNAF in offensive and defensive tactical air operations. CG III MAF, through his tactical air commander, CG 1st MAW, would establish and operate an organic TACS to include a tactical air direction center (TADC). This system would be coordinated with the TACS operated by VNAF/USAF.<sup>57</sup>

(S) The relatively low productivity of VNAF liaison units prompted an examination of its liaison crew composition and the entire concept of liaison aircraft operations. A subsequent recommendation was made to replace VNAF observers with ARVN observers having knowledge of ground tactics. Meanwhile, a new operational concept was under development to improve control of VNAF liaison missions in order to shorten the liaison response time to the needs of surface forces. Emphasis was placed on command and control, and the entry of fully-qualified observers into the visual reconnaissance program.<sup>58</sup>

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PAGE 475 OF 878 PAGES

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(S) COMUSMACV, on 15 May, requested JGS support of a new tactical employment concept which introduced operational control of deployed VNAF liaison aircraft by a VNAF liaison officer assigned to each ARVN division. VNAF, in May, proposed to the JGS major unit changes which included establishment of an Aircraft Control and Warning (AC&W) group and regrouping of the TACC, the ALO, the FAG, and the DASC into one unit to be identified as the Air Operations Command. In addition, VNAF proposed realignment of the 83rd Special Air Activities Group from the 33rd Tactical Wing to HQ VNAF. The JGS gave informal approval to the reorganization proposals. Meanwhile, VNAF's combat capability in helicopters became marginal during May, with only 66 H-34's assigned and 59 on hand; 98 helicopters were authorized, including 13 programmed for the newly-formed 83rd Gp.<sup>59</sup>

#### VNAF Organization

(S) In January 1966, VNAF personnel strength was 1,485 officers, 11,679 airmen, and 521 civilians against an authorized 2,708 officers, 12,052 airmen, and 803 civilians. Aircraft assigned totaled 396, which included 121 A-1H's, 29 A-1G's, 71 H-34's, 85 O-1A's, 44 U-17A's, nine U-6A's, 33 C-47's, three RC-47's, and one EC-47.<sup>60</sup>

(S) By the end of CY 66 VNAF personnel assigned, 14,465, fell approximately 1,500 men short of its authorized force level. The nearly-attained authorized force level for VNAF was characterized by serious dilution of top management leadership and technical skills. Chief AF Advisory Group (AFGP) summarized the over-all VNAF force-structure picture in the following manner:

With the advent of US Force there was no future requirement for major expansion of VNAF since US Forces could absorb the additional requirements of the current conflict, and VNAF force levels are considered adequate for the post-war task and within the capability of the country to support in the future.<sup>61</sup>

(S) In the first three months of 1966, total VNAF combat sorties flown increased from 2,710 in January to 3,106 in March—all were flown in-country. Meanwhile, air munitions stocks at each VNAF base persisted as a daily problem. Inventories, well below the 30-day level, generated many tactical emergency requests, resulting in CINCPAC, AF Logistics Comd, and CSAF being continually appraised of the critical situation.<sup>62</sup>

(S) VNAF operations during May were affected by dissident political turmoil in Da Nang (see Chapter VIII). VNAF's 522d Ftr Sq deployed from

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PAGE 476 OF 872 PAGES

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Tan Son Nhut to Da Nang, where it flew 91 sorties on airborne alert. The 516th Ftr Sq, stationed at Da Nang, cancelled BLACK EYE strike operations over NVN indefinitely on 14 May because of the I CTZ local situation, and flew many airborne alert missions instead. VNAF fighter operations in II, III, and IV CTZ's were hampered only to a minor degree as some fighters were deployed from these areas to Da Nang. VNAF transport operations were heavily affected, however, as airlift squadrons flew 133 percent of their programmed flying hours. On 20 May VNAF rocket fire struck the headquarters building of III MAF at Da Nang AB. VNAF planes attacked Da Nang insurgents on the following day, as US planes deployed to other bases. US aircraft returned the following day after 400 dissident ARVN troops surrendered to the GVN. Chief AFGP underscored the fact that, "from the military standpoint, much of the VNAF contributions to the war effort was diverted during these political crises (March and May 1966)."<sup>63</sup>

(S) Another factor affecting the mission and operations of VNAF during CY 66 was explained in the following manner:

A political factor which has worked to the detriment of VNAF has been the syphoning off of top leadership into positions of trust in the government. This occurred at a time which VNAF could ill afford because the rapid expansion of VNAF to meet war requirements had already diluted their management and leadership skills to a dangerous level.<sup>64</sup>

(S) In June the 516th Ftr Sq at Da Nang resumed BLACK EYE operations over NVN. The added emphasis placed on updated intelligence needed for BLACK EYE strike operations over NVN required additional VR efforts to support both VNAF and USAF during June. A VNAF reconnaissance squadron was activated 1 July at TSN AB with three camera-equipped RC-47 aircraft, one EC-47 equipped for flight facilities checks, 12 photo interpreters, and a film-photo processing capability. Although lacking a high-altitude photo capability, RC-47 experience had proved the aircraft to be an excellent platform for aerial photo mapping and low altitude pinpointing of targets. Intelligence produced from the BLACK EYE missions was incorporated into 7th AF target intelligence programs, providing data that was unavailable before.<sup>65</sup>

(C) Flight accidents continued to be a major concern to VNAF. During January VNAF experienced 18 aircraft mishaps, ten of which were caused by pilot error. Despite extra precautions VNAF aircraft mishaps continued and during April VNAF experienced 25 accidents. During July, VNAF had 23 aircraft mishaps which resulted in 24 fatalities, five planes lost, seven major accidents, and six reportable incidents. Cause factors included 12 accidents due to pilot error, two due to material failure, one to faulty supervision, one to poor maintenance,

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PAGE 477 OF 872 PAGES

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and three to combat.<sup>66</sup>

(S) Five of VNAF's six fighter squadrons increased their strike operations in June. Total fighter hours flown increased by 203 over May, despite the fact that A-1 aircraft available to VNAF, USAF, and USN were below authorized strength. Meanwhile, USA informally requested assistance from VNAF to furnish 34 pilots to help alleviate a shortage of USA UH-1 crews.<sup>67</sup>

(U) During the second half of CY 66 VNAF operational statistics, especially in the area of tactical operations, fell short of the record highs of the first part of the year. The modernization of VNAF, with the commensurate demands for training to accomplish upgrading as well as familiarization with new aircraft, explains the degrading of VNAF's tactical effort.

(C) The 15-month period from July 1965 through September 1966 can be characterized as a period of "coming of age" for the VNAF. "It became possible during this period to begin to shift emphasis from the technique of operating and maintaining aircraft and equipment to the skills involved in commanding, controlling and managing resources . . . ."<sup>68</sup>

(C) The AFGP, working through with its seven Air Force Advisory Teams (AFAT's), continued efforts to modernize the VNAF. AFAT's in the field worked closely with their Vietnamese counterparts to improve the management, skills, and leadership at all levels of VNAF, and to stabilize and professionalize the force. AFAT's were located as follows: one at TSN, two at Bien Hoa, two at Nha Trang, one at Da Nang, and one at Binh Thuy.

The commitment of US forces resulted in the sound decision to place the Air Force Advisory Group under the operational control of the 7th Air Force . . . . This arrangement has permitted the use of 7th Air Force resources and skilled personnel in many areas to augment the advisory effort and to provide training to VNAF through joint operation of facilities well beyond the capabilities of a pure advisory program [e.g., TACC].<sup>69</sup>

(S) F-5 jet aircraft for the VNAF received SECDEF approval in late December 1965 based on AFGP/COMUSMACV/CINCPAC/JCS recommendations. RVN's Premier, Air Vice Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, was also the VNAF Commander, and had repeatedly voiced keen interest in modernizing the force, as feasible, with a jet capability. AVM Ky assessed, confirming COMUSMACV's view, that VNAF could effectively absorb one squadron during 1966, but he did not foresee a requirement for more than two jet squadrons because the A-1H aircraft in the inventory were excellent fighter-bombers for counterinsurgency operations. CINCPAC recommended retaining five A-1 squadrons

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PAGE 478 OF 872 PAGES

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in VNAF through FY 1967 and, in view of the world-wide shortage of A-1 aircraft, close calculation of requirements was necessary in order to maintain a balanced allocation beyond that period. CINCPAC informed JCS of plans for VNAF's standdown early in FY 67 of A-1's converted to F-5's and their use of attrition aircraft in the remaining five A-1 squadrons. COMUSMACV desired early completion of F-5 operational tests, begun early in January by USAF/ARPA/USA field teams operating out of Da Nang and Bien Hoa, in order to fulfill programmed commitments to VNAF in FY 67.<sup>70</sup>

(S) AFGP's concept and program to modernize VNAF, completed in February, was forwarded to all major air commands and military departments concerned to assist in agency planning and programming actions. The \$320.8 million program submitted to CINCPAC in major portion was devoted to aircraft modernization, munitions and herbicide procurement, and construction. Its purpose was to increase significantly the VNAF counterinsurgency effort. COMUSMACV considered the program well conceived and developed, and approved an increase for VNAF's force structure in FY 1967 from 14,760 to 16,073 personnel.<sup>71</sup>

(S) Early in January, the first increments of F-5 strike aircraft were undergoing evaluation at Da Nang AB under USAF/USA/ARPA joint testing in an operation called SKOSHI TIGER. Eight F-5's flew two sorties daily, dropping four 750-pound bombs in pairs on selected targets. All missions were flown with refueling and, by February, were scheduled for 30 sorties per day. COMUSMACV insisted on accelerated tests to fulfill programmed commitments to VNAF as early as possible beginning in FY 1967.<sup>72</sup>

(S) In an effort to alleviate a critical shortage of H-34 aircraft due to attrition, COMUSMACV requested an early 1966 delivery of 13 OH-34C attrition helicopters programmed in FY 1966 MAP (USAF). Response from DA indicated their non-availability because all assets had been issued to high priority Army units, and additional aircraft were not being procured. Meanwhile, a JCS message on 10 February indicated that OASD (ISA) was awaiting CINCPAC's decision on the distribution of worldwide helicopter assets. By 2 March, COMUSMACV submitted a FLAGPOLE (highest priority requisition) item (B-7) on helicopters for VNAF indicating that non-receipt of H-34 attrition aircraft was degrading VNAF's mission capability to a critical degree.<sup>73</sup>

(S) Lack of H-34 attrition helicopters continued to limit the operational capability of VNAF squadrons, and with the activation of the 83d Helicopter Gp such capability was expected to decrease further. Efforts continued during April to secure replacement H-34 helicopters, achieve the authorized strength of VNAF helicopter squadrons, and provide attrition to offset high losses. Sources of available H-34's depleted rapidly as high priority requirements from RVN exceeded the supply.<sup>74</sup>

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PAGE 479 OF 522 PAGES

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(S) Both COMUSMACV and CINCPAC had repeatedly requested an early decision in order to incorporate helicopters into the FLAGPOLE system during March. The shortage of H-34 helicopters could be alleviated by accepting the shortfall in VNAF, accepting a corresponding reduction of USA helicopters in Europe, accepting a reduction in the training base in CONUS, or sharing the shortage of providing increments of VNAF requirements over a period of time from a combination of USA, USN, and USMC sources. JCS preferred the second course of action, with the alternative of using USN reserve assets as the source. Continued delay in decisions was in effect the automatic selection of a course of action—that of accepting the shortage in VNAF.<sup>75</sup>

(S) On 3 August, CINCPAC informed JCS that VNAF had been short of authorized helicopters since October 1965, but no decision had been reached on this critical matter. VNAF's March inventory of 71 helicopters had been reduced to 65 by combat losses; its current authorization was 98 helicopters. The shortage was having a direct impact on the lift capability available to US forces, with a corresponding increase in requirements for US helicopter support for RVNAF. Because of this drain on available assets, CINCPAC advised that VNAF should be provided authorized helicopters from any sources outside PACOM at the earliest practicable date and recommended every effort be made to obtain approval. CSAF informed CINCPAC on 21 September that JCS had approved a total of 39 H-34's at that time (18 for 83d TAC Gp and 21 for FY 66 attrition). JCS's chart for arrival dates reflected this total to arrive in RVN by the end of FY 67. These units would be drawn from Navy sources. CSAF informed CINCPAC that the 20 helicopters previously requested to cover FY 67 attrition had not yet secured approval.<sup>76</sup>

(C) In an early December MACV Command/Staff conference it was noted that VNAF helicopter pilots were undergoing a transition program in-country from the H-34 to UH-1. The school was being run by the USA with 22 in the program and eight graduates to date. It was anticipated that an average of 15 would be in the program at any one time.<sup>77</sup>

(S) A further complication in the helicopter program was the introduction of modernization plans concurrently with the attempt to bring the program up to authorized strength levels. An AFGP message of 30 September had raised the questions of delivery schedules and problems associated with training pilot and maintenance personnel for VNAF UH-1D. CSAF replied that conversion plans from H-34's to UH-1D's at that time would be proceeding on the nebulous broad recognition by SECDEF as the only proper authority. By 10 November JCS could advise only that conversion plans were being staffed and an answer could be expected on 25 November. CY 66 ended on this basis in regard to VNAF helicopter modernization programming.<sup>78</sup>

(S) A detailed programming plan was prepared in July for the conversion from A-1 aircraft to the F-5, C-47 aircraft to C-119, and H-34

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PAGE 480 OF 872 PAGES

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helicopters to UH-1. Long lead-time actions which preceded the approval cycle were necessary in order to meet proposed schedules for program completion. Late in July following JCS approval of VNAF conversion proposals, work began on plans, written simultaneously in both Vietnamese and English, placing initial emphasis on the F-5 program; these required immediate action to provide offshore training for VNAF pilots and maintenance personnel.<sup>79</sup>

(S) Decisions involving fixed wing aircraft, C-119's and AT-37's were in a state of flux during September. USAF informed CINCPAC and COMUSMACV that the VNAF program was to be modified as follows: 1) place in VNAF FY 67 total of 18 UE F-5's, 2) reduction of four squadrons with UE of 25 each, 3) move seven F-5's from FY 66 to FY 67, and 4) apply six U-17A's against a liaison squadron rather than AFGP's advice for a training squadron asset. However, in October CINCPAC had queried COMUSMACV as to the extent of USG commitment to present schedule for VNAF fighter squadron modernization.<sup>80</sup>

(S) VNAF modernization plans for fixed wing aircraft came under a thorough and careful reappraisal during October, as all levels from the AFGP to OSD contributed to the establishment of a realistic and obtainable program. COMUSMACV informed CINCPAC late in the month that the joint VNAF/AFGP conversion plans--F-5 (Plan 66-2A) and AT-37 (Plan 66-28)--had been coordinated through the VNAF staff and signed by Premier Ky. Only the F-5 plan had been distributed among the appropriate USAF and VNAF agencies. By the middle of November, CINCPAC advised that the phased scheduling for modernization was still under consideration by SECDEF. COMUSMACV recommended adherence to the original program developed in July; he felt that any shortfall in the total number of mixed-equipage tactical aircraft would degrade VNAF's in-country war effort and be construed as a partial withdrawal of US support to VNAF's participation. CINCPAC supported adherence to the original programming, but on 10 December informed COMUSMACV that JCS had confirmed that an OSD-modified plan FY 3/67 would reflect the following VNAF tactical aircraft equipage: 1) a total of 90 A-1's and, 2) a total of 18 F-5's. The unavoidable slippage in the modernization program was now confirmed.<sup>81</sup>

(S) The period 10-12 November held in store radical changes in the VNAF F-5 modernization program. JCS, CINCPAC, and SECDEF approved for VNAF one 18 UE F-5, three 18 UE AT-37 and two 18 UE A-1 squadrons. Contrasted with the previous plan for two 18 UE F-5 and four 25 UE AT-37 squadrons, it was apparent that a remarkable slowdown was being instituted. The new proposal was acceptable to USAF if the phasedown to an 18 UE, from the present 25 UE, A-1 squadrons were expedited. This compromise would still accomplish a degree of modernization for VNAF, while serving the added purpose of alleviating the A-1 shortage for USAF. Since these changes would have a significant impact on RVNAF combat capability, COMUSMACV felt that an extensive evaluation is essential.<sup>82</sup>

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PAGE 4 OF 12 PAGES

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(S) Professionalization of VNAF was faced by the following major problems: VNAF was still being run at the squadron level, there were no command posts at Wing and Headquarters level, no maintenance control centers existed, adequate communication facilities were nonexistent, the lack of an effective safety program negated any commensurate corrective action, and the war-dictated emphasis on combat operations obstructed essential training in instrument and night flying. VNAF's in-country training program for 1966 called for formal courses in flying, communications and electronics, aircraft maintenance and general service (support) specialists.<sup>83</sup>

(S) As of 31 January 1966, VNAF possessed 118 A-1H and 33 A-1G tactical fighters. The JCS had approved a reduction of VNAF's A-1 pilot-to-aircraft ratio from 2.0:1 to 1.5:1, together with transfer of A-1 transition training of VNAF pilots to CONUS, based on AFGP recommendations. Three of four groups, each consisting of 10 liaison pilots, departed early in January for CONUS T-38 training—the fourth group was scheduled to depart in April. These pilots would complete an 11-week T-38 course, including 50 flying hours, prior to undertaking A-1 training. In early 1966, VNAF personnel were also undergoing jet training at Clark AFB in the Philippines, where VNAF combat ready crews were schooled to fly with the USAF B-57 unit at Da Nang. Four crews so trained were to be VNAF's initial capability in tactical jet aircraft.<sup>84</sup>

(C) In June USAF's ATC approved for implementation the F-5 TFS training program—less pilot training. During the month a total of 21 VNAF maintenance personnel departed for CONUS to train in basic courses in support of the F-5 program. The pilot-training course was revised to include transition training in the F-5 A/C aircraft instead of jet check-out in the T-38. The 100 class-day course would follow language training. Pilots selected for the 1st F-5 squadron departed in mid-August and were expected to return to RVN during mid-March 1967.<sup>85</sup>

(S) The year ended with VNAF oriented to a long-range modernization program with special attention to training. The incoming Chief of AFGP cautioned: "Careful attention must be paid to the development of joint use bases so that upon cessation of hostilities VNAF will have the properly designed facilities to operate their modern well-equipped air forces in the post war period."<sup>86</sup>

#### US Navy Advisory Program

(C) "Accomplishments in the advisory effort are best determined from a perspective of several months, for progress in this area is achieved in small steps on a day-by-day basis," it was reported in the COMNAVFORV January Historical Summary. However, USN advisors reported

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PAGE 482 OF 872 PAGES

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a gradual improvement in material condition of some VNN ships, and they reported that some commanding officers acknowledged that a training program and some form of preventive maintenance program should be put in effect. The advisors felt that acknowledgement alone was a step forward in solving a heretofore-ignored problem. On the plus side, also, was a report from USN advisors to the Coastal Groups and Repair Facilities, which showed that some tools and spare parts, long on back-order, were finally being supplied.<sup>87</sup>

(C) At the beginning of the year, VNN Sea Force ships were not considered effective. A step forward was taken on 13 February 1966, when a USN Captain was assigned as SA to the VNN Headquarters. This step had been recommended before, but its need increased with expanding operational commitments. The SA was equal in rank to CINC VNN, and it was felt that a new avenue of communications would now be opened, and that personal conversation and personal attention would create better understanding and better cooperation. Additionally, with the SA at VNN headquarters, the other USN advisors would have a better channel of approach in suggested improvements, and, in some cases, there could be expeditious action.<sup>88</sup>

(C) Lack of aggressiveness had been a major problem area for the VNN. However, by March 1966 USN advisors were beginning to report "increasing aggressiveness" of the VNN sea patrol units. Yet there were still critical areas: maintenance and personnel training needed attention; leadership was graded as unsatisfactory, extending into the junior officer and NCO level. One area that needed improvement was from the US side--there was a shortage of advisors. In order to man CTF 115/116 staffs, advisors had been called in from the field. This recall was not considered detrimental to the overall advisory effort, but "we would be less than honest if we did not admit that a replacement in the field must serve an apprenticeship before he can make definite contributions to the advisory program." The number of USN advisors continued to decline, and there were instances of no on-board reliefs, to the detriment of the advisory program in February and March.

(C) By March, Coastal Groups were showing an increase in aggressiveness; there were a number of successful actions, and a growing cooperation with MARKET TIME units was reported. One problem area that remained was the security of the Coastal Group bases. Starting in March, experienced VNN officers were assigned to Coastal Groups under a new policy, and advisors reported that over fifty percent were regarded as capable officers. On the other hand, the twin problems of training and maintenance still remained.

(C) River Assault Group (RAG) operations continued to demonstrate a high capability for small-scale sweep operations. Advisors agreed that such sweeps had several advantages: they could be planned quickly,

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PAGE 487 OF 776 PAGES

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they could be executed quickly thereby preventing security leaks, and they gave quick reaction to intelligence information. As late as March, a limiting factor of the sweeps was unavailability of troops, which had to be assigned by district or province headquarters. VNN headquarters had asked for integration of troops into RAG units to alleviate the situation, but the GVN had not seen fit to grant them this capability.<sup>89</sup>

(C) VNN RAG's were capable of carrying out their mission and demonstrated their ability to execute the tasks assigned them. The extent of RAG participation was primarily a matter of providing troop and cargo lift to the vicinity of operations, landing them and then providing fire power to cover troop movements, to effect fire support for the destruction of targets, and to conduct harrassing and anti-personnel fire against the enemy. The mobility of the RAG's permitted swift displacement of mortars, 40-mm and 20-mm guns, and .30 and .50 caliber machine guns along the river axis, thereby providing extensive area coverage and facilitating flanking movements.

(U) The origin of the RAG's and their development provides an insight into their operational characteristics. After the surrender of the Japanese in World War II, the French began to develop a river assault force in Indochina. The individual units of this river assault force were termed "Dinassauts" (Naval Assault Divisions). These divisions consisted of modified World War II landing craft which were provided with additional weapons, armor, and an increased fuel capacity to permit extended self-supporting assault operations. An infantry landing force was an integral part of the Dinassauts. The total strength of each Dinassaut was 800 men and seven river craft. An LSSL or LSIL was employed as the flagship for the Dinassauts and, occasionally, scouting aircraft were assigned. The basic tactic of the Dinassaut was an amphibious raid into enemy-controlled territory, followed by a quick waterborne withdrawal. The amphibious raid was successfully employed on many occasions, but the Dinassaut was susceptible to ambush during retirement from the operation area. The river assault operations were a major feature of the French war against the Viet Minh, and were often conducted in conjunction with major ground operations. During the period from November 1951 to February 1952, Dinassauts provided support for a major offensive in the Black River area of NVN. Participating French paratroopers were supplied by river barge escorted by the craft of the Dinassaut. Mining and ambushes took a heavy toll of the river craft. On 12 January 1952, the Viet Minh closed the river and turned back a large supply convoy. Withdrawal of French troops to friendly territory was effected by the Dinassauts.<sup>90</sup>

(C) As a result of four operations in April, there were favorable reports on the VNN capabilities. On TEE SHOT III, for example, VNN units were praised by advisors for "outstanding participation." Coastal Groups were judged as "excellent" and two Fleet Command ships provided able assistance on their own initiative. Operation ROUNDUP III was also evaluated as well planned and well executed.<sup>91</sup>

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PAGE 484 OF 822 PAGES

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(C) Owing to leaks of information, the USN officers had been secretive with their VNN counterparts when setting up SEAL ambushes. And, equally so, the VNN guarded their intelligence-operating procedures when setting up their UDT ambushes and would not reveal their areas of operation. Although a firefight between supporting units occurred, owing to this lack of information, it was decided to continue to exclude the VNN from information regarding clandestine ambush operations. For example, even though a curfew had been well posted in the RSSZ, a dishonest village chief allowed violations, because of a financial kickback, with the result that a VNN counterpart informed his USN advisor on one occasion that a group of junks was unfriendly. They were attacked, and it was later discovered that they had been friendly. 92

(C) Performance of VNN commanding officers was criticized by USN advisors in their April reports. There still existed an unacceptable number of officers whose command performance was marginal or unsatisfactory, and it was reported that some had "no passion for improvement." To offset this, CINCVNN and the VNN Fleet Commander instituted a policy of holding commanding officers responsible for poor performance, enforcing it by removal from command. USN advisors thought that this policy, if properly implemented, would lead to beneficial results. The shortage of USN advisors began to be alleviated in April, with the arrival of more replacements. There was still a shortage of VNN technical petty officers, particularly in electronics ratings, and "the mediocre majority continues to present a challenge to advisory personnel." VNN UDT (LDNN) teams were seldom used by the VNN, leading to sense of frustration and lethargy which hurt morale. This was compounded by the lack of a commanding officer, although one was ordered during April. 93

(C) Coastal Zone commanders were regarded as good to excellent by their counterparts, in April reports. One zone commander was rated as outstanding, another as "aggressive in planning and a strong leader," and there was hope that advisory efforts would begin to pay off during 1966. Maintenance and supply, in April, remained as vexing problems. Base defense, especially at remote coastal areas, continued to be serious. River Forces of the VNN continued to ignore the threat of mines, and followed doctrine only when intelligence reports indicated the possibility of mining. Advisors were continuing, in April, to bring an awareness of the potential of ship's company to perform maintenance and repair, yet there was a continuing refusal of most ships to make their own repairs, a problem also noted in previous months. 94

(C) The reorganization of the VNN, which was nearing completion in April, came to a standstill in May. The main reason was internal politics, centered around a possible shift in top billets within the service. Some of the higher-ranking officers were sent to attache billets overseas, others to schools in the United States. Even though CINCVNN made many inspections during May, the follow-up action on

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PAGE 485 OF 822 PAGES

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830624

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correcting discrepancies was minimal. Senior VNN officers, who were aware of these problems, promulgated orders in an attempt to correct the shortcomings, but the orders were rarely carried out.<sup>95</sup>

(C) There was a slight improvement in Fleet Command ship maintenance during May. However, advisors reported that engineering practices continued to be lax. Personnel distribution, lack of experienced technicians, aging ships, and a long lead time for spare parts—all added up to maintenance problems of the Fleet Command ships.<sup>96</sup>

(C) The beginning of an upsurge in the operational aggressiveness of the VNN in May, and subsequent additional aggressiveness in the following months, (see Chapter V) went hand in hand with other improvements. Although there were numerous changes in senior officers and little progress in reorganization, there was the beginning of an improvement in personnel accounting procedures in several areas that had been pointed out by the advisors. Leadership, it was reported in July continued to improve, owing probably to increased exposure to USN units, more experience, and the replacement of poorer officers. Counterpart relations, especially among the junior officers, was regarded as satisfactory. Advisors were aware of a potential problem, that the increasing USN presence might begin to overwhelm the Vietnamese, but were doing what they could to alleviate it. Maintenance and logistics remained as problems that hampered sufficient operations of the VNN.<sup>97</sup>

(C) Constant attention by USN advisors began paying off by July, when encouraging improvements were noted in several areas. The overall ability of the VNN to perform its missions was satisfactory; new commanding officers of some ships of the Fleet Command were proving to be more aggressive and more responsive to advice, with a noteworthy improvement in several of the PGM's, not only in operations but in maintenance. Although there was still no progress in the reorganization of the VNN throughout July, there were some improvements in personnel distribution, owing to close attention by advisors. For example, Third and Fourth Coastal Zone HQ were overmanned by 100 percent. CINCVNN gave verbal authority to the zone commanders to reassign personnel within their zones, but no action was taken. Advisors then made an attempt, with some success, to have the CINC issue written authority. While the personnel training picture was not bright, it was reported as "adequate" at the Recruit Training Center, Cam Ranh Bay, and a small cargo ship (AKL) had been assigned as a training ship for the VNN Naval Academy in Nha Trang. Significant improvements were reported in training procedures aboard Fleet Command ships as they made efforts to accomplish more underway training. Advisory efforts were directed toward officer of the deck training, in-port damage control training, general maintenance, gunnery training, and instruction in English. To offset the lack of a training program for marksmanship and small boat handling in the Coastal Groups, efforts were being made to establish regular training programs. Morale continued to be good on all but a few Fleet Command units, which advisors thought was caused not only by the monetary incentive

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Order Sec Army By JAG per  
830624

PAGE 486 OF 872 PAGES

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for capturing VC weapons and material, but by the favorable publicity received from the display of the VC trawler captured on 20 June with a consequent upsurge in prestige and morale of the VNN.<sup>98</sup>

(C) During July, also, Fleet Command maintenance showed an improvement as some of the new commanding officers began taking concern for operation and maintenance of hitherto neglected equipment, such as water evaporators. For example, on 21 July, engineering personnel of FGM 601 worked through the night to replace a main engine camshaft, without recourse to shipyard assistance, as hitherto, and enabled the ship to meet her patrol commitment. Also, LST 500, during an in-port period, completed an overhaul of one main engine using only ship's force. Maintenance of Coastal Group boats remained barely satisfactory, mainly because of a lack of minor spare parts, while maintenance of RAG craft remained satisfactory.

(C) In two other areas there was a decided improvement during July. The recently-formed Fleet Command Supply Assistance Team (USN advisors) helped LSIL 328 in inventorying engineer spare parts, and in packaging, labeling, and placing them in storage boxes. An informal inspection during a spare parts inventory aboard LST 500 was held and the method of inventory was found to be satisfactory. A logistic lift conference was held on 25 July with ARVN and VNN officers and advisors attending. It was decided that scheduling of logistics lifts was to be done by the VNN N-4, after receipt of the cargo from the Army. During July the amount of cargo carried by VNN logistic lift ships doubled over that carried during June, although the number of troops carried remained the same. There still remained the problem of limited pier space.<sup>99</sup>

(C) As new US advisors became accepted by their VNN counterparts, some slow improvement in the effectiveness of the VNN was shown. One encouraging trend was the increased number of material casualties being repaired by ships' force without outside assistance. A major detriment to this program was the supply system in use. Advisory efforts to speed distribution of supplies and to establish supply depots at the repair bases have not been fruitful.<sup>100</sup>

(C) Personnel distribution showed some improvement during the latter part of the year, but was still unsatisfactory, with some units 100 percent over strength and others barely operational due to shortages. On the brighter side, desertions declined from July on, attributed to the increase in morale of the VNN as the reports of action against the enemy and success of VNN operations were disseminated.<sup>101</sup>

(C) Leadership changes were rapid and numerous. On 1 September Capt Tran Van Phan was relieved as CINCVNN by the Chief of Staff, Cdr Nguyen Van Anh. On 8 September the Chief of the Joint General Staff,

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Order Sec Army By IAG per

PAGE 487 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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Lt Gen Cao Van Vien, assumed the additional duty of CINCVNN. The initial feeling in the VNN was that the Navy had lost face, but later feelings were that an Army general officer might give the Navy a better voice in the JGS. Gen Vien was relieved by Capt Tran Van Chon, VNN, on 31 October. Capt Chon was a graduate of the Naval War College and had had experience in Regional Force Boat Groups. His stated objectives were to improve morale and discipline in the VNN.<sup>102</sup>

(C) As the year ended, the Naval Advisory effort was stressing the development of basic skills and management practices directed toward improved material conditions in the VNN. The presence of advisors on Sea Force units on a permanent basis was resulting in more effective leadership by VNN commanding officers and more aggressive action by them. There were still many areas which had to improve to become even satisfactory, primarily personnel management and distribution. The picture was not bright, but there were hints of light around the edges. The Coastal Force--the "junkies"--were the most consistently effective force, with the RAG's close behind. The Sea Force continued to be plagued with materiel problems, but was making an effective contribution to operation MARKET TIME.

#### US Marine Advisory Program

(C) January 1966 saw the Marine Advisory Unit begin its 12th year of service to the Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC). Activated in 1954, the unit had had a slow but steady growth to 27 officers and five enlisted by the end of 1966, an increase of two officers over the end of CY 65.<sup>103</sup>

(U) The function of the Marine Advisory Unit was to advise the Commandant VNMC in all matters pertaining to the organization, employment, and internal functions of the VNMC. In executing these responsibilities the Senior Marine Advisor (SMA) was responsible to the Chief US Naval Advisory Group for the USMC advisory effort to the VNMC. The SMA, assisted by 27 officers and five NGO's, was responsible for the submission, and coordination with the Naval Advisory Group, of contributions to the Joint Strategic Operation Plans and other plans concerning the projected growth, organization, and employment of the VN Marine Brigade. The SMA also provided policy and guidance and supervised the preparation of the Military Assistance Program, Force Structure Plans, supporting material, construction, and schools plans, including annual revisions.<sup>104</sup>

(U) As CY 66 began the Commandant VNMC, Maj Gen Le Nguyen Khang, had four principal positions of responsibility within the RVN and RVNAF. He was a member of the National Directorate, Commander of the Capital Military Region (CMR), Military Governor of Saigon, and Commandant VNMC. In May, however, the Commandant was appointed CG III Corps. Although still

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
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PAGE 488 OF 872 PAGES

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responsible for the CMR, he was assisted in that position by a deputy who also assumed the position of Military Governor of Saigon. However, the Marine Advisory Unit offered advice and assistance to Gen Khang only with respect to the military employment of the Marine Brigade. There were no apparent significant problems encountered by the Marine Advisory Unit in carrying out its assigned functions and responsibilities. A prime reason for this was the very strong and capable VNMC Brigade CofS, who enjoyed the personal confidence of the Commandant.<sup>105</sup>

(C) During the first six months of 1966 there were no significant changes in the organization of the VNMC. It consisted of the Brigade HQ, two operational task force headquarters, five infantry battalions, one artillery battalion, one amphibious support battalion, and the VNMC training center. The authorized strength on 1 January 1966, was 6,540 officers and enlisted men. By 1 January 1967 this strength had increased to 7,189 officers and enlisted men, with the authorization of the 6th Inf Bn which was activated during the 3d quarter of 1966.<sup>106</sup>

(C) Training within the VN Marine Brigade was not as comprehensive in some areas as was desired by the Advisory Unit, for many reasons. Its role as an integral part of the general strategic reserve found the battalions of the brigade constantly in the field, in every tactical zone of the country. These employments, coupled with an increasing commitment to extended combat operations in answer to various emergency situations, both military and political, took most of the time of the brigade, precluding its settling in base areas long enough for a formal training schedule to be carried out. One example of this was the dispatch of two battalions to Da Nang in April and again in May, the first time as a show of force and the second time as a projection of GVN strength in that area to overcome the dissident rebels of the so-called "struggle movement" (see Chapter VIII). Time was not sufficient to permit the formal training desired. Gradually, however, by the end of 1966, the various battalions had initiated a program, long advocated by their advisors, to utilize the time between operations for a short "rest and relaxation" period, followed by an intensive retraining and reorganization period. The benefits of this program were easily discernible in the proficient manner in which the battalions tackled the next deployment.

(C) The activation of the 6th Bn on 1 September gave promise of helping to overcome a part of the problem of base area training. The addition of the new battalion was approved by force structure planners to allow a better rotation system to and from the field, permitting at least one battalion to be in base camp at all times. This afforded the battalions an opportunity to conduct necessary training which undoubtedly increased the effectiveness of the brigade.

(C) While there were shortcomings in the training of the brigade, it was improving gradually. VN Marines, assisted by US Army engineers from the nearby 1st Inf Div camp, built a fine rifle range near Saigon;

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PAGE 489 OF 521 PAGES

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its use markedly improved VNMC marksmanship. In addition, continuous on-the-job training was conducted within the organization. One of the most successful efforts in OJT was the increase in efficiency of staff functioning; from a very poor situation in 1965, there was a marked improvement during 1966. One cause was the personal attention paid to it by the VNMC CofS. Another was the formation of the two Task Force organizations, Alpha and Bravo.

(C) VNMC task forces are similar to USMC task forces in that they consist of two or three infantry battalions, or more if necessary, and the following supporting elements:

- Task Force HQ, commanded by a LTC.
- 105-mm How Btry.
- Recon Platoon.
- Motor Transport (as required).
- Engineer Det.
- Det, Landing Support Co (for helicopter or amphibious operations).
- Signal Det.
- Medical Det.
- Military Police Det.

(C) Because of the requirement, set forth in 1965, that VNMC units were to be utilized only in multi-battalion-size forces, efficiency in staff functioning became a prerequisite for successful operations. Although there was room for improvement, the progress made was encouraging. In addition, programs were in effect for sending qualified NCO's and officers to CONUS for training. 107

(C) The basic logistic support for the VN Marine Brigade was its amphibious support battalion (ASB). This unit contained all the essential elements necessary to supply and support the brigade on an austere basis for any type of operation, including an amphibious assault. The logistic support for the task forces operating under the control of ARVN units in combat was the responsibility of the command to which attached. Plans were made for the eventual break-out of some of the components of the ASB as the brigade evolved into division size. As of May 1966 these plans called for making the medical, signal, engineer, and combat support/service companies into battalion-size units in order to support a division organization. However, a manpower restriction forced a revision of these plans, and the reorganization of the ASB into a HQ Bn, Medical Bn, Signal Bn, Engineer Bn, and Service Bn had not taken place by the end of 1966. 108

(C) Throughout 1966 the morale of the VN Marine Brigade was good. The organization was consistently praised as one of the elite combat arms of the RVNAF. It was a purely voluntary organization, with the attendant advantages of such a unit. The brigade, as with the airborne units, was a heavy organization. Its battalions were considerably larger than ARVN infantry battalions, and their staying power in combat was increased

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accordingly. The VNMC battalions were committed to combat operations (days in operations compared to 365) on 1,612 battalion-days, or 88 percent of the time. Despite this, the Marine battalions during 1966 were the only RVNAF units to take to the field at all times with more than 75 percent of their on-board strengths. The Marines also maintained a favorable 1:6 kill ratio in operations against the VC.<sup>109</sup>

(C) There were problems, of course. The limited award of decorations and medals caused some disappointment within the brigade. Advisors frequently stated that their particular units were not getting their proportionate share of awards for successful operations, while some allegedly less-deserving units were getting more than their combat contributions merited. Variation in awards depended on which CTZ the unit might be attached for a particular operation and the policy of that CTZ commander; some Corps commanders were more liberal in such matters than were others. The brigade was able to overcome this situation in some instances, but the matter had not been resolved fully at the end of 1966. It was believed that this problem would continue as long as did the policy of deploying individual units to the various CTZ's for operations.<sup>110</sup>

(C) The problem of dependents' housing was continuous, as Marine dependents were billeted adjacent to each base camp. There had been some improvement in this area, but many dependents were living in small, poorly-constructed quarters. By Vietnamese standards they were not necessarily sub-marginal, but when contrasted to the new housing built for other dependents as funds became available, there was considerable difference, which caused some dissatisfaction. Lack of funds was the biggest problem; it was expected that the situation would improve in time, but not in the near future. However, a continuous self-help program was in effect to improve the lot of dependents, and most of the dependents' housing was designed and built by the brigade engineers themselves. This aspect of improving the morale of the members of the VNMC was a source of pride to the Commandant, who made available as much material and equipment as possible.

(C) On 10 August COMUSMACV visited the base camp of the 1st VN Marine Bn at Thu Duc and found the battalion in excellent shape and obviously well-commanded. He walked through the dependent housing area which, in his words was "far better than most, but not fully satisfactory as to standards." Later in the week J4 of JCS called on COMUSMACV to discuss the logistical problems in RVN, whereupon COMUSMACV emphasized the importance of providing building materials for RVNAF dependent housing and for subsidizing the PX/commissary through the provision of rice at the outset, and COMUSMACV urged the visiting JCS representative to see if he could get such a program indorsed at the Washington level.<sup>111</sup>

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PAGE 491 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) Problem areas found within the VNMC, other than those mentioned above, were primarily in the operations area. Rapid and frequent commitment to operations precluded the execution of a necessary training program. Coordination and control on operations needed improvement. On one operation during April, contact was made with a VC unit in a jungle area. One of the battalions moved aggressively for a time, but soon bogged down and lost the initiative, with a resultant delay in operations. This allowed the enemy force to inflict heavy casualties on the Marine attacking force and to withdraw with unknown casualties. Assertive leadership by junior officers was not always what it should have been, and was a matter of continued concern that was consistently stressed by all advisors. <sup>112</sup>

(C) Staff functioning continued to be one of the most perplexing problems of the brigade. It was customary for some time to assign the most capable officers to command billets, and the staffs suffered accordingly. By USMC standards, the functioning and coordination of the various staff sections left much to be desired. A ray of hope became visible with the appointment of a CofS, who began to give the staff members a chance to use their initiative. This proved to be an invaluable step in increasing the efficiency of this important aspect of military functions.

(C) Four basic deficiencies were apparent in the tactics of the VNMC infantry battalions. They were related to dispersion, maneuver, control, and use of fire support. Many tactical objectives were based on out-dated intelligence supplied by the supporting ARVN divisions, and this fact was often known by the battalion commander. A consistent weakness was the tendency of a battalion to march through assigned objectives in route column. When contact was made, often the leading elements were pinned down, and the formation could not maneuver quickly and effectively. When the attack was mounted, often it was executed by frontal assault with attendant high casualties. In heavy contact, evacuation of casualties bogged down some operations; initiative was lost and the enemy escaped as the commanding officer ordered contact to be broken. The use of artillery and close air support, while better, in the opinion of all advisors, than other RVNAF organizations, was often against indeterminate targets. The Marines were reluctant to call in close air support closer than 2,000 meters of friendly positions, and artillery fire closer than 500 meters. This became a major goal of advisors during 1966, and during operations in October, November, and December, greater confidence in the accuracy of supporting arms and increased use of close-in defensive fires were noticeable. In several instances, tactical air strikes were called in within 500 meters of Vietnamese Marines.

(C) There was some progress in related problem areas. Recognition finally was given to the importance of the communications, engineer, motor transport, and combat service support functions, as well as to the assignment of certain officers as special staff officers.

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830624 PAGE 192 OF 872 PAGES  
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Intelligent and energetic staff officers found their way into all staff sections. They were given increasingly more latitude and their opinions and recommendations were received and given consideration. Staff officers, general and special, began to make field trips and developed their status as brigade staff officers with cognizance over all aspects of their specialty, i.e., communications, engineering, motor transport, throughout the entire brigade. Their acceptance by all brigade members as the cognizant authority in their specialty, equal in importance to field commanders, was a heartening experience for the advisors. This latter change in attitude was probably the most significant improvement of the VNMC during 1966. 113

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PAGE 493 OF 872 PAGES

8-3-06-24

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PAGE 495 OF 872 PAGES

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CHAPTER VII

PACIFICATION AND NATION-BUILDING

FROM RURAL CONSTRUCTION TO REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT

The Rural Construction Program at Year's Beginning

(U) Although 1965 had been a year of decision in the GVN/Free World reaction to the military threat posed by the VC main forces and the infiltrating units of the NVA, the problem of countering the VC guerrilla at the level of hamlet and village remained. As a Presidential advisor later reported: "The Viet Cong have been able to sink their roots deep into the fabric of rural Vietnam. Insecurity, poverty, low health standards, lack of opportunity, social injustice, and land inequities have enabled the VC to exploit a rural feeling of alienation from the government."<sup>1</sup> The problem had been recognized dimly for years, but little success had been achieved toward a solution until the fall of the Diem regime. In February 1964 the GVN had published its Chien Thang (Victory) National Pacification Plan, which established the "spreading oil spot" concept in two phases—restoration of security (clearing and securing) and development—and outlined military support for the 1964 pacification effort. But the overall military and civil aspects of the 1964 plan lacked coordination, and many of the definitions lacked the clarity and detail necessary to describe the totality of pacification activities. The plan also failed to spell out clearly the roles and missions of the various forces involved.

(U) The 1965 pacification plan corrected some of the weaknesses of the Chien Thang program. Benefitting from Mission Council proposals to improve definitions of roles and missions, improved civil-military coordination was achieved, but because of the instability of the GVN in 1965, funds for the pacification program were not released until April and the program got off to a slow start. In an attempt more closely to define the program, the term "pacification" was changed to "rural reconstruction" in April and to "rural construction" at the end of July. The death of the Minister of Rural Construction (RC) in August was a set-back to the program, but was also the indirect cause of revitalization of the whole RC process: the Ky government, recognizing the enormity of the problem if not all

of its ramifications, appointed the talented and energetic Maj Gen Nguyen Duc Thang as the new minister of RC.

(C) Gen Thang proved a fortunate choice; under his ministry the RC program jumped to life, and efforts were made to extend the philosophy of the program into every province and down to every village and hamlet in government-controlled areas. The path was by no means smooth, however, for the Vietnamese peasant had seen similar programs before and recalled all too clearly the fate of many such efforts under the Diem regime. It was apparent that nothing could be accomplished in any area, on any level, until enemy main military forces had been defeated and driven off, adequate local security had been established, and the remaining VC guerrilla threat had been neutralized. Nevertheless, the last quarter of 1965 saw considerable progress, as GVN officials analyzed the many factors that had impeded progress in the past and devised plans to insure greater progress during the coming year. The 1966 Pacification Plan, issued as GVN Circular 3041 on 11 November, was implemented by JGS Directive AB 140, issued 14 December, which spelled out in detail the GVN military plan in support of pacification/rural construction, and by RVNAF/MACV Directive AB 141 of 31 December, which delineated the combined RVNAF/MACV actions to be undertaken in support of the 1966 Pacification Plan.<sup>2</sup>

(C) One of the most significant actions taken by the GVN prior to the end of 1965 was the issuance on 10 December of Central Executive Committee Directive 1535/XDNY, which established the Rural Construction Cadre.

The Vietnamese word for cadre, Can Bo, came into the language from the Chinese during World War II. It was used in Vietnam initially by the Viet Minh to designate those voluntary, highly motivated, and courageous individuals who operated clandestinely in French controlled areas to first indoctrinate and then to organize the population to support the resistance to French colonial rule.

Because of the position of honor and respect these Can Bo occupied in what became a historic and successful revolution, the emerging governments of both North and South Vietnam attempted to capitalize on the goodwill associated with the Can Bo and so designated those lower level government employees who worked at the village and hamlet levels.<sup>3</sup>

Gen Thang and his assistants had for some time realized the need for a new kind of cadre, or team, which would be more effective in stabilizing and beginning construction in those hamlets classified as "undergoing securing." The new cadre group was envisioned as a specially-trained team, with high motivation, which could defend adequately the hamlet to which it was assigned; it was thought that the cadre group would remain in one hamlet for about three months. The basic problems in developing

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the cadre-team concept involved the size of the teams, the number of teams to be trained, and the allocation of trained teams. A year-end decision was reached to train 80 teams of 50 men each. Every effort was made to start the training program early in 1966, and to insure that funds from the initial budget for the 1966 Rural Construction effort would be in the hands of the province chiefs by 1 January. MACV and USAID representatives from all levels had participated in the review of these plans and related actions. Upon approval of the plans, the Minister of RC required RVNAF Division and Corps Commanders and Province Chiefs to sign statements that at least 75 percent of the planned programs would be accomplished in 1966. US advisors also were required to sign these documents to signify mutual understanding of the minimum goals for 1966.

(U) The 1966 RC program was thus initiated with much enthusiasm. On 5 January the Congress of the Armed Forces met to review the RC plan and to approve its budget. On 6 January the Directorate considered the GVN policy for the next 18 months and studied the plan for "democracy building" which had been prepared by the Directorate's Secretary General Brig Gen Phan Xuan Chieu. Included in this plan were provisions for the creation of an Advisory Council which would function as a Constituent Assembly. On 14-15 January, over 1,400 military officers participated in the Second Convention of the Armed Forces, which examined and approved the GVN's RC, economic and "democracy building" plans.

#### US Planning for RC Support

(S) Senior representatives of the US Mission in Saigon, the Vietnam Coordinating Committee in Washington, and other USG agencies met on 8 January in a four-day session at Warrenton, Va., to determine the future course of the joint US/GVN RC program. The conference took steps to eliminate manpower, material, and transportation shortages in RVN, and to designate priorities and mechanisms for control and allocation of resources. It was agreed that the military situation, although not critical, was nevertheless grave, with the prospect of several years more fighting at least on the current scale before the GVN would be in a position to exercise effective control over substantially all of RVN (except VC base areas). It was noted that there had been some instances of weakening VC morale, but the VC, buttressed by continuing infiltration from the North, continued to be a dangerous and effective fighting force. It was accepted that the Ky government, which was relatively stable, was willing and in a limited degree able, to take certain necessary measures to improve its domestic and international position, but it was fragile, and was failing to live up to its "revolutionary" billing as originally presented by Premier Ky. In view of this evaluation and particularly because of the inter-dependence of military

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PAGE 503 OF 872 PAGES

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operations and RC, it was recommended that a special National Intelligence Estimate be produced on the probable development of the politico-military situation over the next two years, based on present estimates of enemy capabilities and GVN and Allied deployment plans, with particular attention to certain outside factors which could produce unanticipated shortfalls in the execution of present plans. The Warrenton conferees noted the encouraging GVN actions to develop, in consultation with the US Mission, promising concepts to provide an agreed basis for the RC effort; to issue detailed instructions on the operation of the RC program, including provision for continuous coordination between the civilian and military branches at national, corps, division, and provincial levels; and to organize cadre teams and groups designed to see the effort through from the conclusion of large-scale military action to the point at which reconstituted governmental and social institutions could resume their functions in cooperation with a receptive population.<sup>4</sup>

(C) Brig Gen J. L. Collins, in a report to COMUSMACV, commented that perhaps the most important benefit of the conference was the education that was provided Washington officials on what was actually happening in Vietnam. The meeting apparently generated an enthusiasm which pervaded Washington, where, according to Ambassador Porter, the watchword was "pacification and cadres."<sup>5</sup>

(S) Some of the basic requirements emanating from the Warrenton meeting which were placed on US agencies in Vietnam were:

- 1) Submit by 31 March an evaluation of prospects for successful execution of 1966 goals in the GVN National Priority Areas (NPA's).
- 2) Consider immediately the advisability of designating US team chiefs to head the US advisory effort in the four NPA's.
- 3) Review roles and missions of national police, RF/PF, cadre, CIDG, and the relation of these to each other and to regular forces, in the light of budgetary and manpower limitations, considering the possibility of eventual negotiations and the need for an expanded police force in such circumstances.
- 4) Review the RC concept papers and develop updated concepts for use as a training aid or handbook on RC.
- 5) After receipt of additional assumptions and instructions from Washington, the Mission would provide a draft strategy paper to cover the coming 3-5 year period.
- 6) The Mission would collate findings of various surveys on the primary needs and attitudes of the rural population for use, in conjunction with VNCC findings, as a basis for allocating resources and developing US programs.

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PAGE 504 OF 872 PAGES

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7) Undertake continuing review of all construction programs, taking account of their economic impact and of limitations on available manpower and materials.

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9) Direct US activities particularly to youth in urban areas, and examine how US might expand its educational and cultural activities to serve this purpose, to include a survey of specific projects which private US groups could undertake.

(C) From 17 January-6 February, a planning conference was held at HQ CINCPAC to reassess requirements and capabilities for the deployment of additional US and other forces to PACOM during CY 1966. A concept was also developed to provide strategic guidance for the conduct of the war in Vietnam; it included the objectives, mission, and the military tasks to be executed in or with respect to the Thai-Indochina area and the military strategy to be pursued. The concept recognized the inseparable political, economic, sociological and military factors and exploited the strengths of friendly forces and weaknesses of the enemy.

(U) During the ensuing conference in Honolulu attended by top US/GVN leaders from 7-9 February, President Johnson reaffirmed US steadfastness in its commitment to the Vietnam conflict and discussed plans for the improvement of the health, education, agriculture, social welfare, and economics of RVN. The talks stressed the need for accelerating progress in stabilizing the economy and in the RC program. President Johnson also cited the need for an effective method of measuring progress.

(S) On 17 February Ambassador Lodge designated Deputy Ambassador William J. Porter as the Coordinator of all aspects of US support of RC activities. The problem of organization and relations between US agencies dealing with RC activities had been extensively discussed at Warrenton and various solutions had been proposed. The need for direction from top level authorities in resolving this problem had been recognized in late 1965:

Friction appears to be developing within the mission in the areas of roles, missions, organization and responsibilities. This factionalizing can place us back where we were one and a half years ago. The talents extant in the Lansdale group should be harnessed and the reins controlled by one person who can direct the effort along the same path as the rest of the team. A coordinating committee, with General Lansdale and

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one member from each of the mission agencies forming the nucleus, could be formed which would address every aspect of the rural construction effort. This committee would be required to present splits to the Mission Council for resolution.<sup>7</sup>

COMUSMACV was pleased with the designation of Ambassador Porter to this role and felt this was a fortunate development.<sup>8</sup>

### The Ministry of Revolutionary Development

(U) By Decree 70-CT/LDQG/SL, dated 21 February 1966, the National Leadership Committee redesignated the Ministry of Rural Construction as the Ministry of Construction, an action intended to eliminate the implication that the program concerned rural and not urban areas. Since the literal English translation of the new Ministry title did not describe adequately a program with the broad objectives envisioned by the GVN, the English term, "Revolutionary Development" (RD), was coined by Premier Ky. to refer to the activities conducted by the Ministry of Construction. As developed jointly by the US and the GVN, the definition of "Revolutionary Development" was as follows:

Revolutionary Development is the integrated military and civil process to restore, consolidate and expand government control so that nation building can progress throughout the Republic of Vietnam. It consists of those coordinated military and civil actions to liberate the people from Viet Cong control, restore public security; initiate political, economic and social development; extend effective Government of Vietnam authority; and win the willing support of the people towards these ends.<sup>9</sup>

(U) On 24 February COMUSMACV, with the approval of Deputy Ambassador Porter, directed that Col Joel M. Hollis, Chief RD Division (J33 MACV), assume an additional role as Advisor to Ambassador Porter for RD matters. He was to act as the focal point for all MACV RD affairs which required coordination with the US Embassy. He would present MACV views to the Ambassador, insure appropriate interrelationship of MACV programs with those of other elements of the Country Team and serve as an information source for the MACV staff.<sup>10</sup>

(U) In order to provide Deputy Ambassador Porter current information on RD, Joint Directive 1-66 was published on 18 March, outlining the procedures for a special report. In addition, a completely revised MACV

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PAGE 506 OF 723 PAGES

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Directive 335-10 was issued on 23 March to improve the system for evaluating progress in the RD program. It provided instruction for the preparation and submission of the MACV Monthly Report on RD and the Population and Area Control Overlay, data from which were to be used in the preparation of the Monthly Special Joint Report on RD submitted directly to the Deputy Ambassador. Criteria and terms used for hamlet status and area control were provided in Annex B of MACV Dir 335-10.

(C) In mid-March the Mission Liaison Group (MLG) was reconstituted under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Ambassador. Members of the group were senior officials from each US agency authorized to represent their agency chiefs on matters dealing directly or indirectly with RD. The VC radio promptly commented that General Lansdale (Senior Liaison Officer to the Ambassador) had been dismissed because of "failure of rural pacification program" and expressed determination to counter strenuously the activities of the rural pacification program. By National Security Action Memo of 28 March 1966, Special Assistant to the President Robert W. Komer was charged with the responsibility for directing, coordinating, and supervising in Washington all US non-military programs for peaceful reconstruction in RVN. He was also made responsible for mobilizing US military resources in support of such programs, and for programs for combat-force employment and military operations.<sup>11</sup>

(FOUO) Meanwhile, GVN authorities were also trying to accelerate progress in RD. The Joint Cadre Operations Control Group (JCOCG) had been established on 26 January 1966, when responsibility for the RD cadre was placed within the (then) Ministry of RC. It was composed of designated senior US officials from the US Embassy/GAS, USMACV, JUSPAO, and USAID, and senior Vietnamese officials from the Directorate of Rural Operations and Training of the Ministry of RC (now RD). The JCOCG was a joint GVN/US staff-coordination and liaison activity concerned with the operations, plans, and support of the RD cadre program. Its mission was to monitor the advisory and support activities of GVN and USG agencies concerned with the RD cadre program, to assist in the maintenance and operation of the RD Cadre Operations Center in the Directorate of Rural Operations and Training, Ministry of RC, and to provide guidance and support to the National Training Center for cadres.

(U) On 26 January 1966 the GVN Central Executive Committee had published Decree 137/XDNT which provided instructions on the administration, employment, and functions of the RC (now RD) cadre. Superseding a decree of 10 December 1965, it defined the changes in the pay scale, cadre qualification criteria, and medical benefits. According to the new decree, the RD Cadre Group was to be headed by a Group Leader, assisted by a deputy, and in principle might consist of the following teams: People's Action, Census Grievance, Civil Affairs, and New Life Development. The group could be strengthened by a number of technical service cadre or by other special cadre as required. RD cadres

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PAGE 507 OF 872 PAGES

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must have a self defense capability in order to carry out their responsibilities. The People's Action Teams met the various urgent needs of the rural population in social welfare, health, and education fields, detected and destroyed the VC infrastructure in rural areas, explained the pacification policy, studied the area projected for pacification, and organized and trained a people's self defense force. The Census Grievance Teams surveyed, identified, and classified the people, determined the grievances and aspirations of the people, monitored the thought and activities of the friendly and enemy infrastructure, and trained hamlet members to continue this activity after the teams departed. The Civil Affairs teams helped to strengthen the village/hamlet governments and might temporarily conduct the administration of such units when necessary, urged the people to organize themselves into groups on a regular basis, encouraged them to help in organizing the election of administrative committees and village councils, and provided training for hamlets and village officials when necessary. The New Life Development Teams instructed the people in the various type of benefits offered by the GVN, such as materials provided for self-help projects and roads and market-development projects; they managed direct GVN assistance (technical information, improved fertilizer, etc.) and provided basic social services such as schools and clinics. RD cadre candidates were recruited at the provincial level and had to pledge to work for at least two years. Upon successful completion of training at the National Training Center, they were returned to the province from which they were recruited. They received a basic salary ranging from 2,500 piasters a month for those in Step 1 to 4,500 for those in Step 11. Team and Group Chiefs received 1,000 and 2,000 piasters more, respectively, as a position allowance; cost of living allowances were also authorized as appropriate. While serving as a RD cadre, the individual was exempt from the military draft. Three types of previously existing cadres--New Life Hamlet, Mobile Administrative, and Rural Political cadres--were merged into RD Cadre Groups in accordance with the transitional provisions stated in the decree.<sup>12</sup>

(S) On 21 February (the day on which "Revolutionary Development" was used to describe Rural Construction) 4,800 cadre candidates, the first class to be trained under the new program, entered the National Training Center at Vung Tau. At least one 59-man team entered from each province; provinces with priority areas were required to send more.<sup>13</sup> Subsequently 73 candidates were rejected largely for medical reasons and five were dismissed. During the third week of the course, 91 candidates were listed as AWOL; this represented the highest number of AWOL's of any class and was attributed to the large input of Mobile Administrative and Rural Political cadres, who were not aware that they faced possible pay reduction until they arrived at Vung Tau. As of early April, the training of instructors at Vung Tau was not proceeding satisfactorily; only 74 of the expected 150 instructors began their training and four of them were eliminated during the first week. This problem was considered very serious, as plans for the second group of cadres called for doubling the number of specialist personnel to be trained. The failure of instructor trainees to

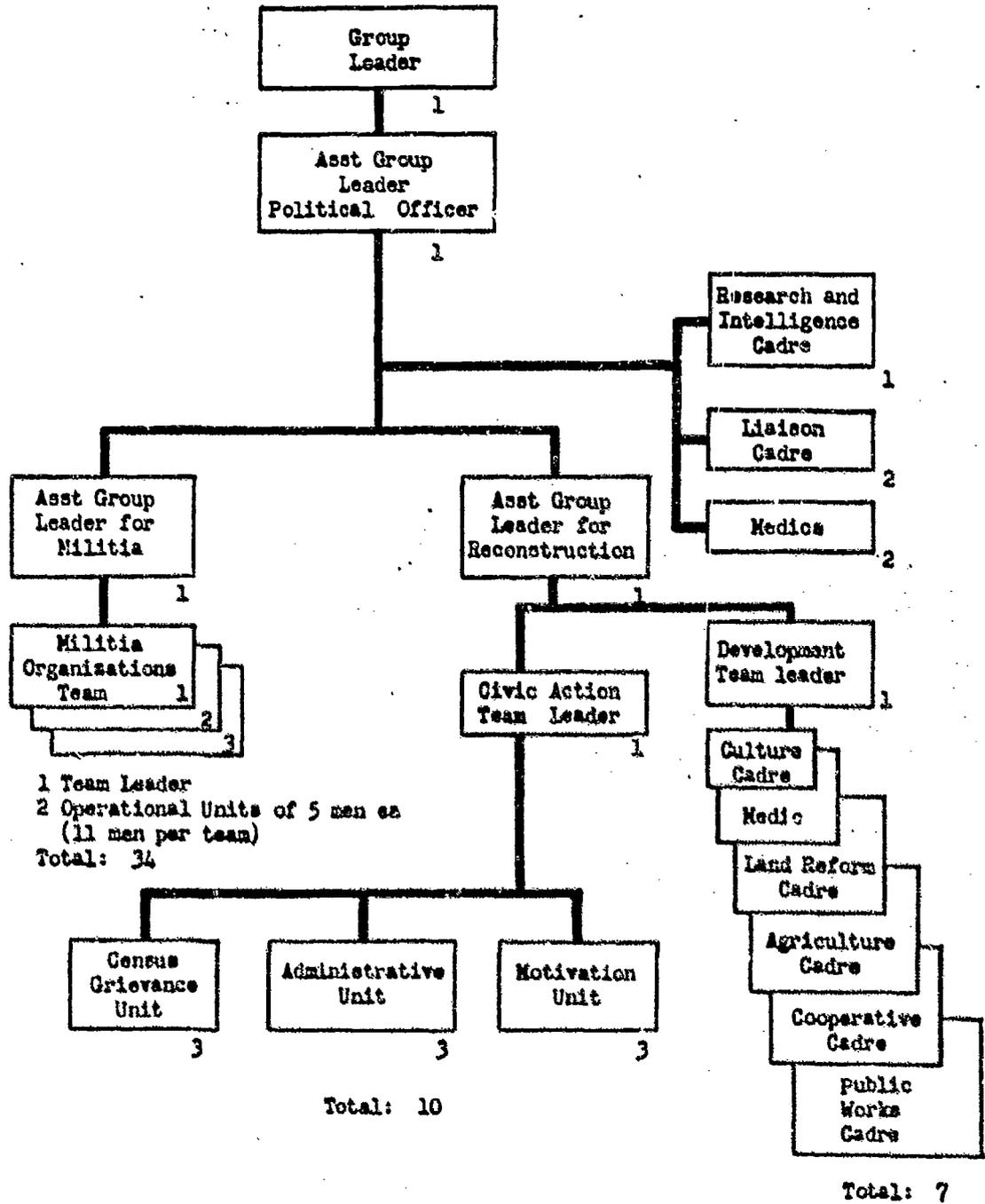
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PAGE 503 OF 872 PAGES

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REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT CADRE GROUP



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report to the center was attributed largely to recalcitrant province chiefs. Quotas for 3,200 specialist and 1,800 People's Action Team (PAT) personnel were prepared by the US/GVN Cadre Committee and disseminated through Vietnamese channels on 30 March.<sup>14</sup>

(C) During the last week in February, RD Minister Thang and his staff had visited the provinces in the IV CTZ; they interviewed cadres, checked actual progress against the Provincial RD Plan for 1966, held seminars with Provincial RD Council members, and fixed specific provincial goals to be achieved by 31 May 1966. During March the Minister and his staff completed visits to each of the provinces in the nation and planned to make similar tours in early June to inspect results.

(U) To promote coordination and integration of RD activities, the GVN established a series of RD Councils in February extending from the national level down to the district, with the chairman at each echelon a member of the council at the next higher level. The RD Minister is the Secretary General of the National Central RD Council and his Ministry serves as the Council's Executive Agency. These councils met periodically to review projects and program progress, to suggest program improvement, and to give emphasis and direction to the program.<sup>15</sup> The Ministry of Defense also published the TOE's for the permanent bureaus which serve as the executive agencies of their respective RD councils. Permanent bureaus were established at Corps, division and provincial levels and in the NPA's, at the district level. Authorization was given for 1,198 military and 150 civilian positions. Students of the National Institute of Administration (NIA) were made available to the RD Ministry to perform management duties with these bureaus. After one year of training at the NIA, student officials were to be assigned to the field for the second year and then return to the NIA for the third year. Then, after successfully completing six months of supervised probationary work in central government agencies, they were to be graduated as "field administrators." By mid-March, the RD Minister had approved a new inspection corps consisting of nine seven-man teams, five for the Central RD Council and one each for the four CTZ's. Members of the OCS at Thu Duc were screened to provide the main body of the inspection corps, but each team was to have two civilian members.<sup>16</sup>

#### The PROVN Study

(S) In March 1966, a DA staff team developed a conceptual study entitled "Pacification and Long Term Development of Vietnam" (PROVN), which was kept within military channels and not disseminated above the JCS. The study was presented in the CINCPAC Command Center on 17 May to military authorities in Hawaii and to COMUSMACV. At COMUSMACV's request, this subject was presented in the MACV conference room on 21 May to senior representatives from USARV, NAVFOR, 7th AF, and the MACV

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PAGE 510 OF 872 PAGES

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Joint Staff. COMUSMACV's comments at the conclusion of the Hawaii briefing had been that most of the recommendation in the study already had been acted on. Coordination among US agencies in Vietnam in RD activities was good and there had been only isolated cases of conflict of interests between US military and non-military agencies; the prospects for progress in RD were good, although there were complicating problems such as the qualitative and quantitative RVN manpower base and the leadership of the national government; and the RVNAF/USMACV Campaign Plan AB 141 was already in effect to provide military support to the RD program. He noted that the central theme of PROVN already had been accepted by the US Embassy in Saigon. He disagreed with the suggestion that the Mission Council be abolished, and emphasized that particular care should be exercised to avoid conditions which would cause RVN officials to be branded as US puppets.<sup>17</sup>

(S) In response to a JCS request, COMUSMACV made detailed comments on the PROVN study on 27 May. PROVN, he felt, was an excellent overall approach in developing organization, concepts, and policies to defeat communist insurgency in RVN. It recognized the need for the common GVN/US objective of a free and independent nation, proposed integrated procedures in support of this objective, and addressed detailed actions for implementation. PROVN appeared to recommend two major initiatives--the creation of an organization to integrate total US civil-military effort, and the exercise of greatly increased direct US involvement in GVN activities. COMUSMACV agreed with the PROVN concept of achieving full integration of effort in attaining US objectives in RVN, but felt that the US organization in Saigon was evolving towards this goal; the Deputy Ambassador had already established a special task force to draft mission-wide statements of strategy, objectives, and priorities which, in effect, was performing functions that under the PROVN concept would be done by a supra-agency staff. The PROVN proposal for designation of a single manager with a supra-staff was a quantum jump which could not be realized by evolution in Saigon but would need to be directed by highest level in Washington. COMUSMACV agreed with PROVN that immediate and substantially-increased US involvement in GVN activities, in the form of constructive influence and manipulation, was essential to achievement of US objectives in Vietnam. PROVN emphasized that "leverage must originate in terms of reference established by government agreement," and "leverage, in all its implications, must be understood by the Vietnamese if it is to become an effective tool." COMUSMACV felt that there was a great danger that the involvement envisioned could become excessive and boomerang on US interests; US manipulations could become an American takeover justified by US compulsion to "get the job done." COMUSMACV considered that any major reorganization such as envisioned by PROVN must be phased deliberately to avoid confusion and slowdown in on-going programs; the PROVN organizational recommendations did not address sufficiently the restructuring of PACOM and JCS command lines. In such an action, problems concerning logistical, administrative, intelligence and planning support would be difficult to resolve. PROVN's proposed separation of the advisory effort (JUSMAAG) from the major military command

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PAGE 511 OF 872 PAGES

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(USFV) required careful determination to ensure effective supervision and support for proposed JUSMAAG. The apparent overemphasis on military control in PROVN could be undesirable. The Senior US Representatives should not all be US military officers, as stated in PROVN, but should be selected on the basis of major tasks, local program emphasis, and other local considerations, particularly at the province level. The proposed increase of US personnel in the RD program, at sector and sub-sector levels, was complicated by the shortage of qualified civilians who desired duty in Vietnam, and might result in the use of military personnel not only for added military positions but also for many civilian functions as well. The PROVN proposal for GVN agency fiscal and procedural reform must be implemented not only for RD activities but as a coordinated effort for the programs of all GVN Ministries. PROVN proposals for improvements in logistics support for RVNAF were desirable; supplies should continue to flow through RVNAF channels in SVN rather than US channels. The advisor staff in these commands was being strengthened in order to control commodities to insure effective distribution and utilization. COMUSMACV saw the advantages in removing ARVN divisions from positions of command over provinces, and attaching some of their units to provinces, but this action would require a major shift in Vietnamese attitudes. Assignment of ARVN units to provinces in the past had had limited success because of restrictions on employment and command jealousies.

Regardless of what US might desire, however, our efforts to bring about new Vietnamese organizational structure must be tempered by continuous evaluation of the pressure such change places on Vietnamese leaders. Our goals cannot be achieved by Vietnamese leaders who are identified as US puppets. The US will must be asserted, but we cannot afford to overwhelm the structure we are attempting to develop.

Accordingly, MACV recommends that PROVN, reduced primarily to a conceptual document, carrying forward the main thrusts and goals of the study, be presented to National Security Council for use in developing concepts, policies, and actions to improve effectiveness of the American effort in Vietnam. 18

(S) The PROVN study, which was basically a staff exercise for the contingency that the US military at some future date, might be directed to assume many functions hitherto within the purview of civilian elements of the US Mission, contained the seeds of controversy. For this reason, it had been considered by DA and JCS as an "in-house" paper for contingency planning only--hence CINCPAC's recommendation that the study be kept within the military establishment. Nevertheless, the existence of the PROVN study became known to the civil side of the US Mission, and early in the following year Ambassador Lodge requested a copy of the document, indicating that he had immediate need for the study and was prepared to go above SECDEF for release if necessary.

#### The RD Cadre Program Develops

(C) Toward the end of March, a new pilot hamlet program was developed which featured agricultural demonstrations, model health and information stations, and self-help projects. Provinces were authorized to

PAGE 512 OF 872 PAGES THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED

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**PAGE 513 OF 761 PAGES**  
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commit as much as 15 percent of their total RD efforts to these pilot hamlets. The RD Ministry also was considering a special budget for pilot hamlets. At the national level, the Ministries of Agriculture, Public Works, Information and Chieu Hoi, Interior, and Education all appointed full-time liaison officers with the Ministry of RD and thus fulfilled the greatly-needed inter-Ministerial coordination and co-operation. RD Minister Thang himself represented the Ministry of Defense.<sup>21</sup>

(C) In April, "County Fair" operations, an innovation developed by the US Marines in I CTZ which involved the combined resources of USMC, ARVN, RF, and RD Cadre, were conducted to accelerate and reinforce pacification efforts. USMC forces would surround completely a specified village while ARVN forces would call the inhabitants to gather in an area apart from the village. While a complete census was taken in a festive atmosphere (sometimes including a military band), small gifts distributed and the sick treated, ARVN troops searched the entire village for suspicious persons or hidden caches. On subsequent occasions, the same operation was repeated without warning. Missing or new persons were noted and explanations for their absence or presence required. By this procedure, an increasingly smaller number of villages could harbor VC personnel or store their weapons and supplies. COMUSMACV regarded the County Fair concept as an excellent approach to neutralizing VC elements and infrastructure, but felt that there could be greater exploitation of opportunities created by these operations.<sup>22</sup> That the County Fair was not the complete answer to the RD problem seemed evident after a group of selected RVNAF staff officers was invited to view an operation in the Binh Dinh Sector; a MACV observer reported as follows:

County Fair 1-21 was an extremely well executed operation which reflected close coordination and cooperation between US and RVN forces. The lasting effect of the operations was diminished considerably due to the inability of RVN to provide government and military forces to control the village after the operation. Undoubtedly the village will immediately return to VC control.

Of particular note was the lack of interest displayed by the JGS delegation in the conduct of this operation. The delegates appeared to make no effort to inspect or evaluate the effects of each county fair event. It is doubtful that the JGS delegation departed County Fair 1-21 with a complete understanding of either the purpose of the operation or the importance of the coordinated and detailed planning that is necessary between US and RVN forces to insure maximum success in this type operation.

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PAGE 514 OF 872 PAGES

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It is the opinion of [redacted] that the arrogant and undisciplined conduct of the Vietnamese Rangers is such that the success of operations such as this are gravely jeopardized.<sup>23</sup>

(C) Deputy Ambassador Porter in a memorandum of 6 April, [redacted] to Presidential Assistant Komer, proposed that the RD Cadre training program be expanded rapidly, by construction of a new training center to increase the annual training rate of RD cadre from 19,000 to 39,000 per year by the end of 1966; by manpower priority for recruitment of RD cadre at the expense of PF; [redacted] and by US Government agencies, largely the military, making available promptly [redacted] any personnel and material needed for the new training center, particularly a Seabee unit and shipping facilities. COMUSMACV recognized the importance of the program and found the objectives of the proposal laudable, but he cautioned the Deputy Ambassador concerning some of the assumptions involved, particularly those which related to MACV resources. Since the Vung Tau Training Center could not expand its training load for the class starting in June, COMUSMACV suggested implementation of a phased input schedule, similar to that used in US Army training centers, particularly in view of the limited instructors available at the center. He also felt that if RD cadres were introduced into areas in which there were inadequate RF/PF personnel, the RD cadres would be compelled to devote much effort to security and real progress of the RD program would be hindered. He noted that the PF was about 35,000 below its planned strength and could not meet the requirements for personnel even in the NPA's while if the Montagnard School were to be expanded to train 59-man cadre groups as well as PAT's, this could involve another requirement for additional facilities and training support. In view of these problems, COMUSMACV strongly recommended that a study group be established to examine the proposed expansion in detail, to determine the requirements for RD cadre in areas where RD could be pushed forward, the related requirements which would be generated, the feasibility of satisfying such requirements in light of their impact on ongoing programs, the possibility of better utilization of current facilities, and the time factors involved in the expansion of the cadre training program.<sup>24</sup>

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(C) In response to a JCS inquiry on this subject, COMUSMACV noted that he had suggested the formation of a study group to Deputy Ambassador Porter, who had approved this suggestion. To a JCS question on the effectiveness of the RD cadre, COMUSMACV replied that as no RD cadre had yet graduated from the new program, there was no experience factor by which to judge the effectiveness of the program. However, of the some 400 PAT's that had been trained at Vung Tau and had been deployed during the last two years, those which were properly motivated, supervised and employed had been successful. The successful results demonstrated by some of the PAT's had been a major consideration in the development of the

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RD Cadre program. The RD cadre groups then functioning in the country were ad hoc groupings of PAT's and other cadre who had not been through the new RD Cadre program training. COMUSMACV saw no indications of any major problem in maintaining instructor quality at the National Training Center in Vung Tau. The required 270 instructors and assistant instructors were on had to instruct the 4,800 enrolled. These instructors had been through an eight-week training course and about 120 recently-discharged Vietnamese officers and warrant officers had been interviewed and accepted as additional instructor trainees. COMUSMACV believed that additional [redacted] or MACV personnel should be assigned as monitors to ensure maximum effectiveness of instruction. 25

(S) The [redacted] of the PF, COMUSMACV felt, should remain as stated in Rural Construction 1966 plan, AB 140. During the securing phase, the PF platoons and squads worked in or immediately adjacent to the villages and hamlets from which, ideally, they had been recruited; the PF leader was directly responsible to the civilian leader of the community. If PF were not available, Regional Forces (RF) had to be used until PF could be recruited. COMUSMACV informed JCS that as of 24 April, no US Mission review of the roles and missions of RD Cadre, National Police, PF, RF, and CIDG forces, as contemplated by the Warrenton meeting and directed by SECSTATE on 26 January had as yet been undertaken. COMUSMACV felt that a clarification of the roles and missions of these forces prior to a major expansion of the RD Cadre program appeared to be logical. 26

(S) JCS had also requested an estimate of the impact which RD Cadre expansion would have on the PF and other military Forces programs. COMUSMACV believed that the impact on the PF would be considerable. The higher pay, better allowances, weapons, and equipment of the RD Cadre increasingly would attract the PF soldier, particularly the leaders, both actual and potential. Frequently the areas from which RD Cadre groups should be recruited were the very areas where recruiting for RF and PF units was most difficult. Though RD Cadre groups were essential for progress, they would find it difficult to perform their primary missions without sufficient ARVN, PF, or RF to provide the minimum security in their assigned areas. COMUSMACV hoped that the study group which he had proposed and which deputy Ambassador Porter had approved would be able to develop a balance of forces needed by specific area.

(S) JCS queried further: if the majority of support was provided from military resources and if the program was to be coordinated with military operations, wouldn't the RD objectives be achieved more rapidly by placing the US portion of the program under COMUSMACV [redacted] COMUSMACV answered that since RD was primarily an economic, political and sociological undertaking, it appeared appropriate that direction for the program should remain with the civilian agencies. [redacted]

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COMUSMACV felt that the disadvantages of MACV's assuming control of the program would outweigh the advantages. In conclusion, COMUSMACV saw little meaning in organizing excessive numbers of RD Groups if this would impact on the RF and PF to the extent that they could not provide the security needed for the RD Groups to operate. Assuming that the US Mission Study Group would be able to develop sound and balanced requirements, COMUSMACV hoped that SECDEF would postpone signing the blank check presented by Presidential Assistant Komer until realistic estimates could be provided. CINCPAC concurred with the comments of COMUSMACV with some amplifications. He supported cross-utilization of resources by various elements of the US Mission, including, if required, use of MACV personnel as advisors to cadre.

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(U) The first class of RD cadre, consisting of 80 groups with 4,518 personnel, graduated from the National Training Center at Vung Tau on 21 May and were returned to their respective provinces to implement the new RD program. Quotas for cadre trainees were allocated to the provinces for an expected enrollment of 5,400 in the second class, which commenced as slated on 13 June.<sup>28</sup>

(S) On 20 May, Presidential Assistant Komer proposed that MACV, through USARV, assume logistic responsibility for supplying ordnance requirements for the RD Cadre during FY 67.

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COMUSMACV noted on 1 June that USAID was planning a full takeover of RD Cadre support, based on the assumptions that transfer of the RD Cadre program to USAID would be completed by 1 January 1968 and that the existing RVNAF logistical organization would become responsible for support of all military-type items such as field equipment, weapons, ammunition, and vehicles. USAID had expressed strong support for using the GVN logistic system, and MACV questioned the necessity for duplicating the existing system. In response to a JCS request, CINCPAC estimated that the cost of the ordnance items for each 59-man cadre team would be \$9,205.24; calculating on the basis of the projected cadre strength of 68,000 for FY 67, total costs would be \$10.6 million, not including packing and handling costs. CINCPAC concurred with the [CAS] recommendation.<sup>29</sup>

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(U) On 13 July, Mr. Henry L. T. Koren was named the Director of Deputy Ambassador Porter's staff. As cited in Ambassador Lodge's Memo of 17 February 1966, this staff was charged with the management and control of all US civilian agency activities supporting RD, and the maintenance of close consultation with the MACV staff on the

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relation of non-military and military requirements. In response to the Deputy Ambassador's request for a permanent military member on his staff to assume the major responsibility for coordination and liaison with all MACV sections on RD affairs, Brig Gen Willis D. Crittenberger, Jr. was designated Military Assistant to the Deputy Ambassador on 10 September. In the meantime, on 25 July Col Marcus L. Powell, Jr. had succeeded Col Hollis as Chief, RD Division (MACJ33) and MACV member of the MLG and the Economic Warfare Committee.<sup>30</sup>

#### A Critical Evaluation of the RD Program

(U) The Washington Daily News on 27 June had published an article which alleged that political turbulence at the Vung Tau Training Center had obstructed launching of the new pacification program. It claimed that the first class of 4,500 which graduated on 21 May was not trained according to the new program, but like the PAT's under the old discredited Strategic Hamlet Program. The article alleged that in January 1966 the GVN decided to assume control over the school, fearing that the cadres might become a new political force uncontrolled by the government. US officials reportedly acquiesced to junta control since GVN support of the pacification program was considered vital. Although a new center commander had been appointed in February, the Government discovered in May that the old instructors and officers had refused to use new manuals and techniques. On 18 July, the New York Times published an article by Charles Mohr which alleged that GVN officials had taken control of the RD cadre training program from CAS because CAS-employed ARVN Major Le Xuan Mai had (apparently without the knowledge of US officials) directed the indoctrination of the RD cadres in support of a highly-nationalistic political society (Duy Tan Sect of Dai Viet Party) whose doctrine was neither pro-communist nor pro-GVN. In the ensuing struggle after discovery, the article claimed, Major Mai's retention at Vung Tau was urged [by CAS] but RD Minister Thang opposed such a compromise and CAS agreed to Mai's dismissal and the GVN's greater control of the cadre program. Many CAS employees remained in the cadre program because they were irreplaceable, but CAS reportedly was not unwilling to take a less prominent part in what had become the largest overt program in its history.

(FOUO) The Department of State suggested that US officials draw on the following background in response to press inquiries: the GVN and US had cooperated in the training of the RD cadre since 1964, and the program had always been under the direct control of the province chiefs. Training at Vung Tau had been under the control of the Ministry of RD, and assignment of personnel both there and in the provinces was a responsibility of the GVN. The US role had been to support this program with funds, logistical support, and advisory personnel; responsibility for US logistical support was in the process of being transferred

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PAGE 518 OF 872 PAGES

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to the USAID mission in Vietnam. As CAS was the primary agency responsible for this program and held closely those indicators which might reflect adversely on its project, the statements made in the cited newspapers could not be confirmed or denied. However, US military observers were generally of the opinion that the newspaper statements were not without some basis.<sup>31</sup>

(S) In mid-July the Director General of the National Police and the Military Security Service, Col Nguyen Ngoc Loan, who had played a leading role in the GVN actions against the struggle elements in I CTZ in June (See Chapter VIII), appeared interested in assuming control of the RD cadres and converting them into an arm of the National Police. Deputy Ambassador Porter found this proposal unacceptable.<sup>32</sup>

(S) In response to Ambassador Porter's 27 May directive, Director JUSPAO made Col George Jacobson available to act as chairman of a study group to define RD strategy and the roles and missions of the various elements. The group, which included representatives from MACV, CAS, USAID, and JUSPAO, was joined in its efforts by the Senior Liaison Officer and members of Ambassador Porter's office and commenced its study on 15 June. From 1-6 July elements of this study group visited III and IV CTZ's to gain direct experiences of the field operations of the various RD elements.<sup>33</sup>

(S) At a special Mission Council meeting on 25 August, Col Jacobson presented the findings of his group. He explained that the study was "still highly tentative and preliminary" and had focused on direct experiences at the provincial level. The study deliberately was uncoordinated with any of the US agencies, to avoid speculative influences, and had sought the "why" of recommendations rather than the "how" of implementation. The study contained 81 separate recommendations affecting every element of the US Mission as well as the GVN. Examples of the major findings were:

1) The varied elements and echelons charged with ferreting out and destroying the VC infrastructure within the provinces were confusing; a special branch of the National Police should have primary responsibility for this mission, with other elements in supporting roles.

2) Although the RD cadres were doing a good job, they alone could not provide the element necessary for success. Certain reforms within the GVN, including its basic attitude toward the citizenry, were necessary before any real forward thrust could be expected. Many rural residents believed that the US condoned corrupt practices, as they saw so little effort made to check irregularities.

3) FW forces were commended highly for their military achievements as well as for their contributions to the RD program; they could

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PAGE 519 OF 872 PAGES

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help RVNAF improve its performance in RD. The study recommended that with the increasing strength of FW military forces, ARVN forces be encouraged to participate in pacification activities to a greater degree.

4) The RF/PF should be developed into a constabulary-type organization. A primary advantage of this change would be to legalize the status of GVN security forces in the event of negotiations and a cessation of military operations.

5) The group was singularly unimpressed with the Ministry of Security and suggested that the RF/PF be placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of RD. Logistic support of these forces would remain under the Ministry of Defense; the Police Field Forces would be integrated into the constabulary and the latter could be given police powers.

6) The CIDG, advised by US Special Forces teams should be positioned only in remote areas.

7) The Vietnamese Information Service (VIS) cadres were not effective at the local level, and it was recommended that these cadres be given a supporting role.

8) A Directorate of Intelligence should be established to coordinate all intelligence activities, military and civil.

9) The reinstatement of the MACV Subsector Advisor Fund was urged; the usefulness of the fund in enhancing the District Chiefs' effectiveness was particularly noted.

10) The ARVN Divisions (and eventually the Corps) should be removed from the chain of command in RD affairs; it was noted that there was neither a USAID, JUSPAO, ~~representative~~ representative at the Division level, nor was there likely to be such a representative.

11) Because of the general bad behavior and attitudes of the Ranger units, the study recommended that they be dissolved and that some Ranger personnel be reassigned to ARVN units on an individual basis. 34

(S) On 7 September COMUSMACV made the following comments, among others, on the recommendations made by the Jacobson team:

1) Actions had been undertaken to increase ARVN's participation in RD, but removal of the Division from the chain of command in RD activities appeared to be illogical; if ARVN combat battalions were dispersed to all 43 provinces, the Corps' span of control would probably be ineffective, and this arrangement would risk having these units defeated in detail. The proposed placement of battalions under

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the sector commander was feasible only in some areas; forces employed and techniques of employment should be considered on an individual basis. The 1967 Combined Campaign Plan would clarify the functions, responsibilities, and relationships of the Sector and Division Commanders with regard to the operational control of the battalions participating in RD. These plans and other actions such as the "buddy system" between US and ARVN units were realistic ways of accomplishing the goal envisioned by the study without drastically reorganizing ARVN.

2) The recommended disbandment of the Ranger battalions would seriously reduce ARVN combat strength. They should be retained and reoriented under a new commander to accomplish their original mission of deep penetration patrols and raids.

3) The suggested recruitment of PF personnel for the RD cadre would weaken the major hamlet security force. To siphon off the few capable leaders among the PF to enhance the quality of the RD Cadre would render the PF even less effective. Although ultimately the RF/PF should be converted into a Provincial/District Constabulary, in the immediate future RF/PF could be employed effectively by establishing a clear-cut chain of command from JGS to the operating units, increasing their logistics support, and increasing their motivational and leadership training; actions had been undertaken by JGS and MACV to accomplish these objectives. The advantages of RF/PF's being a constabulary in the event of negotiations were clear, but they were not sufficient to launch an immediate program of conversion without a complete, coordinated plan to accomplish the conversion; an initial MACV study on this subject was to be completed soon.

4) Although the study recommended that the responsibility for identifying and eliminating the VC infrastructure be given to the National Police, the nature of the insurgency and the deeply-rooted VC infrastructure dictated that all US and GVN military and quasi-military elements contribute to this important goal.

5) The idea of a single director of intelligence seemed sound theoretically, but it was not realistic to expect to amalgamate in RVN the subordinate elements [redacted] when it was not done in Washington. The same result could be obtained through increased emphasis on coordination among all agencies at all levels.

6) RD required both civilian and military participation and was an integral part of military operations in RVN; it could not and should not be separated from other military operations. Since RD encompassed actions in every area of staff responsibility, it was not feasible to separate RD from other normal staff functions. Furthermore, such a separation probably would have an adverse rather than beneficial effect upon military participation in RD. All staff sections, unit commanders, and advisors had a specific responsibility to assist in implementing the GVN RD Program, and

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they were discharging this responsibility in an effective and efficient manner. Continued emphasis on military participation in RD program would be given, but suggested major changes in the MACV organization made by the study did not seem necessary.<sup>35</sup>

#### Methods to Improve Revolutionary Development Support

(C) In a study entitled "Increased MACV Support for the US/GVN Effort at District and Province Level," dated June 1966, the RD Division of J3 MACV noted that for the US subsector advisory function to be profitable, much time and effort was necessary to develop a district staff capable of managing the many RD problems and of discharging satisfactorily the responsibilities of local government. The study pointed out that lack of security was the greatest single obstacle to RD advancement, but that real security could ultimately be achieved only by the people's willingness to participate actively in their own defense. On 2 July Chief RD Division pointed out to the MLG that there were no plans or policies for the transition of secured districts from US military advisor to US civilian advisor, nor were there adequate plans for GVN civil agencies to assume responsibility for ongoing social, economic, and political/administrative programs in these areas. He felt that it was inadvisable arbitrarily to remove subsector advisory teams from secured districts, as such action might have a detrimental effect on the entire program, and recommended that planning be initiated for the transition of secure districts from US military to US civilian advisory responsibility.<sup>36</sup>

(S) A MACV proposal for eventual civilian control was presented to the MLG on 7 July, and the MLG requested MACV to arrange a conference to formulate detailed recommendations. At a meeting attended by MACV and USAID representatives on 15 July, three major areas of consideration were outlined as necessary to formulate a detailed recommendation: GVN civil governmental organization for the District, GVN programs for secured Districts, and US presence and advisory structure. Other considerations included criteria for determining a "secure" district, to permit transition to followup programs of nation-building; provisions and resources associated with security, law, and order; and control of the NP, PF, and local Self-Defense Forces. On 9 July COMUSMACV directed that a long-range plan be developed for a GVN security structure to be operational when hostilities ceased. Such a plan was to consider the establishment of a constabulary, reduction of RVNAF in terms of other nation-building requirements, the role of the Corps Commander, and the role of the RD cadre.<sup>37</sup>

(U) On 12 July Gen Thang, the highly-successful Minister of Revolutionary Development, was elevated to the position of Commissioner-General for Revolutionary Development. Retaining his own

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PAGE 522 OF 872 PAGES

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Ministry, he was now given supervision over the Ministries of Public Works, Agriculture and Administration (formerly Interior). In his relations with MACV, however, he was usually referred to as the Minister of RD.

(S) By the summer of 1966, the buildup of US/Fw forces had reached a level which allowed consideration of greater ARVN support to the RD program. In July, at the suggestion of COMUSMACV, the Chief JGS issued two directives requiring ARVN to increase its support of RD and to increase the tempo of its operations. ARVN commanders were informed that military efforts in support of Plan AB 140 during the first half of 1966 had been encouraging, but less than desired. It was pointed out that intelligence was non-existent or ineffective; pacification operations were not continuous, and usually lasted only one day; unit commanders tended to neglect civil affairs activities; and the behavior and discipline of some troops were not consistent with the mission of cultivating the people to support the GVN. ARVN commanders were enjoined to assign the same importance to pacification operations as to search-and-destroy operations, as pacification required patience and special attention by all ranks to intelligence, continuity, and night operations; to execute the policy of befriending the populace by civil affairs activities; to improve the behavior and discipline of the troops, who serve the people; to augment the RF/PF in a timely manner; to instruct responsible military personnel to coordinate closely with administrative organizations to achieve a uniform plan of action and to supplement one another; and to encourage other military activities relating to pacification.<sup>38</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV directed advisors to encourage ARVN field commanders to comply with the JGS directives, to insure that ARVN efforts were in direct support of RD through clearing and securing operations. He felt that at least 50 percent of ARVN forces in I, II, and III CTZ should be employed in direct support of RD. Advisors were to urge ARVN and RF/PF to operate at night to "take the night away from the VC," to execute small unit operations based on timely intelligence, and to carry out saturation patrolling of long duration. They were to assist ARVN to establish an education and training program at all levels, to orient ARVN attitudes towards RD and towards cooperation and coordination with the RF/PF; the training program was to include tactics and techniques of military support for RD, and to emphasize the need for cordon and search operations to destroy local guerrillas and the VC infrastructure. Finally, they were to assist ARVN in developing a troop indoctrination program to improve conduct of soldiers toward the people, and to emphasize psyops targeted at local guerrillas. Also necessary, in COMUSMACV's view, was a program to orient all US/FWF as to their role in encouraging ARVN personnel and in developing operational plans that would provide maximum direct and indirect support to the RD program in conjunction with ARVN plans.<sup>39</sup>

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PAGE 523 OF 822 PAGES

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(S) The following views were presented to the US Mission Council by J3 MACV on 8 August: since the Vietnam war could not be won by military operations alone, the RD program seemed to offer the only real solution; all US/FW/RVN resources and efforts should be harnessed to provide maximum support for this program. The aim of the RD program was to gain the support and involvement of the people in the GVN's efforts to control the country and build a nation. Progress in this program was dependent to a great degree on a secure environment. The loss of many qualified leaders over the years, political meddling in the appointment of officers to key positions, the lack of incentives to induce initiative, and the general Vietnamese reluctance to serve in the military forces, had all contributed to the problem of adequate leadership in the RVNAF. The organization of ARVN also contributed toward the difficulty of encouraging regular units to undertake RD activities. Designed for offensive actions, the ARVN Divisions were commanded by ranking officers who disliked diluting their combat strength by deploying these forces in a series of small-scale operations. ARVN personnel generally considered local security operations as degrading to their prestige, as this mission was already assigned to the less well-paid and well-equipped RF/PF. Furthermore, it was not in the make-up of the Vietnamese soldier, and particularly the Vietnamese leader, to be concerned with the people's welfare, and it was difficult to illustrate the importance of military operations designed purely to assure the security of a segment of the rural population. Increases in US/FWMAF had made it possible to release ARVN from some of its other tasks, and to direct its attention to local security operations in support of RD. As laid down in the 1966 military campaign plan (AB 140), the military missions in RD had been too broadly stated, and MACV and JGS now realized that in order to make the program meaningful, positive and intelligent action at all levels was necessary to change the habits, attitudes, and obstacles which were retarding this effort. MACV and RVNAF efforts toward this end included the establishment of a combined RVNAF/US inspection team to examine the strength, morale, welfare, training, logistics, and effectiveness of each of the Divisions; the promulgation on 1 August of Decree Law 15, which prescribed severe penalties for desertion, ranging from five years in a front-line labor unit to death; a freeze on further activation of units for an indefinite period so that existing units could fill their ranks to their authorized strengths; and revision of the draft law by lowering the draft age and liberalizing recruiting restrictions in certain provinces to allow them to recruit RF/PF.<sup>40</sup>

(S) In response to the decreasing effectiveness of the ARVN 5th, 25th, and 10th Divs, the US 1st and 25th Divs and the 11th ACR were associated with these ARVN divisions respectively, to encourage a wholesome motivation and to portray to ARVN commanders the potentials of their command and leadership responsibilities. In August 1965, the USMC had developed the Combined Action Company to improve hamlet and village security, gather intelligence, conduct civic action, and

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train the PF. A Marine squad had been employed with a PF platoon for a 6-12 month period, and the results were excellent.<sup>41</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV had advocated in early July that a Directorate for RF/PF affairs be established and be placed under the Ministry of RD. He believed that this development would serve to focus attention on the needs of the RF/PF and the potential which these forces offered in the problem of local security. He suggested to GVN officials that the National Police and the Police Field Forces also be placed under the Ministry of RD.<sup>42</sup>

(S) In early August, the US Mission Council studied the recommended measures for strengthening the improving the role which the Vietnamese military forces could have in the pacification effort. One of the major problems involved the adjustments which were believed necessary in the ministerial control and employment of the RF/PF. Assistant Deputy Ambassador Koren believed that the struggle-for-power factor among key figures in the GVN should not be overlooked in these considerations; as an example, General Thang might well be planning his own ascendancy by developing a power base. Mr. Koren queried MACV officers in determining the type of force which could best fill the needs of pacification; he was more inclined toward utilizing ARVN personnel, working more closely with the Province Chiefs on security matters, than with the RD Cadre Groups. He was interested particularly in the plans for training the RF/PF, the availability of additional leaders to fill the shortages, and the extent of competition for this manpower among the various agencies. He wondered if putting RF/PF under the RD Ministry would make them more effective because of better support.<sup>43</sup>

(U) On 10 August COMUSMACV strongly endorsed the Chief JGS's concept for increasing the role of ARVN forces in direct support of RD. He considered the concept so important that he felt the 1966 Campaign Plan should be revised to emphasize the primary importance of local security operations in direct support of RD. COMUSMACV believed that joint inspection teams consisting of representatives from JGS, MACV, and other GVN agencies responsible for RD should visit all the divisions to determine their understanding of, and compliance with, the concept of direct support for RD. To that end, COMUSMACV suggested that all RVNAF schools and academies include specific instruction on the concept of RD and on the tactics and techniques of providing the required military support, and that combined operations between ARVN and US units conducting security operations be extended and increased, with emphasis on training in the conduct of night operations and saturation patrolling.<sup>44</sup>

(C) At the Mission Liaison Group meeting on 18 August [redacted] discussed cadre desertion in terms of comments made by the Minister of RD on the subject. [redacted] pointed out that no specific criteria existed for desertion, which could more properly be termed as dismissal or resignation. Discipline was generally lenient and varied from province to province. [redacted] could not rely on GVN figures and planned to develop [redacted]

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its own, an estimated 4.6 percent of the total cadre reportedly had deserted since April 1966. Among measures being considered to improve this situation were better selection procedures for cadre-trainees, improved motivation training, and closer Ministry of RD surveillance. The JUSPAO representative noted that the youthfulness of the cadre then in training in Vung Tau would reduce their credibility when deployed in the hamlets. The Deputy Ambassador suggested that a levy be placed on the Province Chiefs to select older candidates.<sup>45</sup>

(S) Apparently contrary to Deputy Ambassador Porter's expectations that by September the first class of graduates from Vung Tau might begin to "take hold,"<sup>46</sup> New York Times bureau chief in Saigon, Charles Mohr, reported in late September that:

No one expected perfection, but the performance of many teams has been marginal. One hard-bitten source estimates that only two out of five teams are effective. A more optimistic source guesses it might be seven out of twelve.

Responsible South Vietnamese officials have, in official studies, found considerable fault with performance. Recruiting requirements were met "in quantity but not quality" one source said. This same source added that "cadres... were not enthusiastic toward their work and toward the aspiration of the people." Above all, these studies said, some teams failed in the most vital task of all—that of creating genuine enthusiasm and trust among the hamlet residents.<sup>47</sup>

(S) On 28 October COMUSMACV informed CINCPAC and JCS that while the effectiveness of the RD cadre would determine largely the outcome of the RD Program, [redacted] did not have the assets or resources necessary to influence significantly the effectiveness of the RD cadre at district level and below. In response to Deputy Ambassador Porter's charter of 23 September, which called for an expansion of the role of the MACV Subsector Advisory Team to include monitoring the activities and effectiveness of the RD cadre, COMUSMACV proposed that at least one additional specially-trained EM be assigned to those districts in which RD cadres were deployed. He recommended that the USA Civil Affairs School determine the feasibility of establishing a special CA course for RD cadre advisors and that direct contact be authorized between the CA School and MACV to determine the detailed curriculum of the course. An estimated additional requirement for 200 RD cadre advisors per year was indicated.<sup>48</sup>

(C) In September COMUSMACV had proposed to Chief JCS that as a means of enhancing military support for RD, a joint JCS/MACV team be

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formed to prepare appropriate directives to establish Mobile Training Teams (MTT's), provide guidance to field commanders, and organize a detailed two-week program of instruction for all ARVN maneuver battalions, less the general reserve. Chief JGS accepted the proposal and MACV representatives met with an ARVN counterpart working group on 3 October to develop a program of instruction. On 5 October the Chief of the Central Training Agency (CTA), Major Gen Vy, chaired a high-level joint conference during which the purpose and objectives of the program were clarified, administrative tasks were assigned, and a schedule of required actions were developed. A joint MACV/JGS team visited a few ARVN division headquarters during October to survey the extent to which these units had increased their support for RD as directed by the JGS directives. The team found that personnel of the divisions visited had not understood the requirements and thus had not undertaken the actions directed.<sup>49</sup>

(C) On 24 October, MACV published Directive 350-5 on RD training to provide information and instructions on the RVNAF RD Training Program to all MACV personnel, who were enjoined to support this program on a priority basis. A program to instruct RD MTT's was conducted during the period 1-15 December in Saigon. A twelve-officer team from each ARVN corps and division received instruction on the concept of RD, role of the RVNAF in support of RD, support of civilian agencies in RD, and methods of teaching RD oriented subjects. Gen Thieu, Chief of State; Lt Gen Vien, Chief JGS; Maj Gen Vy, CofS JGS; Maj Gen Thang, Minister of RD; Ambassador Porter, and COMUSMACV were guest speakers. Premier Ky delivered the graduation address. During the period 12-15 December, three US officer advisors for each corps and division received orientation on subjects designed to assist them in advising the MTT's. During the remainder of December, MTT's finalized the two-week concentrated training program which will be given to all ARVN maneuver battalions. This training will start in early January 1967 and will be completed during August. A similar program for training RF and PF is planned for implementation in early 1967.<sup>49A</sup>

(S) At the end of August USAID, in coordination with DOD and State, asked Mr. Joseph P. Holt, a former member of Congress and ex-Marine reserve officer, to visit RVN for two or three months to study and analyze the military and USAID contributions to RD and the relationships between them. Apart from studying the pioneer operations formulated by US military forces in their pacification efforts, e.g., the Combined Action Company, his chief area of interest was to be the effectiveness of military-civil cooperation in the Civic Action field. On 2 October COMUSMACV requested commanders of units to be visited to submit summaries of observations and comments made by Mr. Holt, both favorable and unfavorable, which related to any US agency or activity. During his first visit (8-15 September) to III MAF, Mr. Holt expressed criticism of Army units in other areas, appeared to be looking for spectacular examples of inefficiency in USAID, expressed very strong displeasure over riding in H-34 helicopters, made the observation that

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PAGE 527 OF 722 PAGES

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senior III MAF officers "were not leveling with him" and that the III MAF staff was shallow and ignorant of current activities, and stated that people did not know who he was and that he was treated better by the Army. During his second visit (21-30 September) to III MAF, his attitude seemed somewhat improved. He complimented the III MAF County Fair and Combined Action Company concepts and efforts, but criticized in general terms the military's efforts in pacification and working with the Vietnamese, and remarked that he had gathered a lot of ammunition that would be useful to the Republican Party.<sup>50</sup>

(TS) CINCPAC pointed out in a document entitled "Military Strategy to Accomplish US Objectives for Vietnam," dated 5 September, that the success of US military strategy in Southeast Asia was dependent on a coordinated and persistent effort to destroy the war-supporting capability of NVN, to seek out and destroy communist forces and infrastructure, and to pursue aggressively the building of the RVN.

Military operations will provide a steady improvement in security throughout the country permitting extension of government control and creating an environment in which the civil aspects of Revolutionary Development can proceed. The Government of Vietnam's Revolutionary Development program is vital to the attainment of free world goals in South Vietnam. Our forces will vigorously support and participate in the program in such areas as logistics, sanitation, medical care, construction and resources and population control. Military personnel having skills will assist in political, economic and social development programs. The sub-sector advisory program will be bolstered. Increased military resources and support will be provided for the Revolutionary Development program. Every effort will be made to encourage and assist the South Vietnam government progressively to assume responsibility for all aspects of building a free, independent and viable nation.<sup>51</sup>

(S) On 17 September White House staff members expressed interest in the proposals to give a new thrust to RD by increasing military support, and requested current data concerning military forces engaged in support of RD so that the potential impact of the proposals could be evaluated. A clarification of the meaning of terms, particularly those relating to reporting categories in support of RD, was also requested. In his response to this request COMUSMACV noted that the differences in terms were created as the RD concept evolved, and that they were being resolved in the combined campaign plan for 1967 and in changes being implemented in current reporting procedures. The current US/GVN concept of RD was defined as:

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. . . the integrated military and civil process to restore, consolidate and expand government control so that nation building can progress throughout the RVN. It consists of those coordinated military and civil actions to liberate the people from VC control, restore public security, initiate political and economic development, extend effective GVN authority and win the willing support of the people toward these ends. The primary role of military forces in support of RD is to attain and maintain a requisite level of security in and around selected areas so that civil aspects of RD and nation building can proceed. Security is achieved by military forces conducting clearing and securing operations.<sup>52</sup>

At the MACV Staff Conference of 26 September, COMUSMACV directed that a study be made of means to provide greater publicity to the "nation building" activities of the command, as contrasted with the military activities. He desired human interest stories as a means of dramatizing the "nation building" aspects.

(TS) When proposals for the construction and manning of an infiltration barrier were being considered in September, CINCPAC supported COMUSMACV's position on the need for concentrating on the RD program in RVN:

Without the introduction of large numbers of additional forces into the theatre, a major effort would have to be diverted if the barrier envisioned is to be a continuous one. Such action would not only delay Revolutionary Development in the south but would make its subsequent accomplishment much more difficult. Revolutionary Development in South Vietnam is now getting underway, though it may seem painfully slow. It must be pushed relentlessly and not be allowed to bog down or regress in anyway because of diversion of resources to other programs less vital to its objectives in South Vietnam.<sup>53</sup>

(C) On 23 September the Minister of RD (and Commissioner General for RD Activities), Gen Thang, assumed additional duties as Assistant to Chief JGS for Territorial Affairs and Pacification. He was now responsible for developing the policy and concept of military activities in support of RD and of organizing the territorial security structures; supervising the execution of the policy and concept; supervising the employment, disposition, and training of the RF/PF; and supervising, expediting, and inspecting the territorial posts system and strategic bases. However, MACV authorities could not as yet determine precisely how the implied reorganization of the RF/PF would affect the RD program.<sup>54</sup>

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PAGE 529 OF 872 PAGES

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(U) MACV Directive 10-12, published on 13 September, directed major field commands to establish an RD staff element (G33) as a counterpart of MACJ33, under the supervision of the G3. CG II FFORCEV commented that the functions of his G5 section, expanded in RVN to include psychological operations, encompassed all aspects of RD except military combat operations in support of RD and would normally include political, economic, and social matters as well as public security and the restoration of local government. He felt that establishment of a G33 element would not only duplicate functions already assigned to G5, but would also downgrade the functions of RD from a staff section level to a branch level. CG II FFORCEV submitted that "the most practical and efficient method of incorporating the functions of RD into a TOE staff structure was to assign these functions to an ACcFS for Revolutionary Development (G5)." This would place RD functions at the general staff level and would thus be consistent with the intent of MACV Directive 10-12 to emphasize RD; a G5 planning element, working in conjunction with the G3, would develop plans and programs on the tactical aspects of RD. CG II FFORCEV's views were recognized as valid, and the MACV directive was revised to permit this latitude in application. The principal concern was that military support for RD would be adequate and that complete integration of military and civil activities would be insured.<sup>55</sup>

(U) COMUSMACV pointed out in a command letter of 22 October that a special effort by commanders at all levels was required to portray appropriately the importance of RD and civic action in the US mission in RVN.

"Revolutionary Development" is the term adopted by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam to describe the entire range of activities which will bring this war-torn nation to a state of economic, political and sociological viability. It encompasses not only building modern power sources and industrial plants, but improving living conditions and working methods for all of the people. It involves building schools, training teachers and publishing books; developing civil administrators for the hamlets and villages, public servants in the cities, and government systems under which they can work efficiently. It means generating public attitudes which are at once appreciative and respectful of the central government, and cooperative and democratic at the local level. It is, in effect, moulding a proud, courageous and individualistic people into a modern cohesive, strong, free and self-governing nation.

Our goal must be to produce a positive coordinated command and public information effort, aimed at bringing into public balance the combat

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PAGE 530 OF 822 PAGES  
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action/nation building equation. While internal credit for US ingenuity and effort is encouraged, it is important that outside publicity given to civic actions stress the cooperative, or joint aspects of nation building. Wherever possible, in hometown news stories, general releases, or discussions with newsmen, full credit should be accorded to the Vietnamese Revolutionary Development efforts, and to Vietnamese individuals involved in them. Only thus can we hope to dispel the frequent assertion at home that the effort in Vietnam is largely an American operation.

It should be a goal of each component's Command Information program to so indoctrinate our servicemen that they will "talk up" Civic Action and Revolutionary Development, not only when talking to newsmen, but in their letters and on their return to the United States. If this is done, we will accelerate progress on the task we have set for ourselves here in Vietnam.<sup>56</sup>

(FOUO) DEPCOMUSMACV noted a less-than-satisfactory RD situation in late October in Dinh Quan District, Long Khanh Province. COMUSMACV directed that a case study be made of this subsector, to include an investigation of the circumstances which resulted in the failures and deficiencies noted. He directed that J33 monitor the study, which potentially should become very useful if MACV were given more RD responsibilities. J3 MACV was assigned on 31 October the project of preparing a handbook for future use on lessons learned in RD.<sup>57</sup>

(S) In response to CINCPAC's request, the following RD summary was presented in early November:

Present Organization: The Deputy Ambassador has directive authority over all US civilian RD activities; military activities in support of RD were subject only to coordination. Authority and responsibility below the Saigon level for total US RD effort are not fixed, and the big problem in RD concerns the integration of civil-military planning; the RD effort has been pursued along individual program lines rather than as a single integrated program, and in many cases several agencies have been competing for the same resources and have similar goals and objectives. The real RD gains are accomplished at the hamlet level, but only MACV had advisors at that level; advisors of civilian agencies did not reside at that level and their program suffered accordingly.

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PAGE 531 OF 872 PAGES

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Efforts to Increase Coordination: The Joint US Agency Planning Group, which was established in July 1966 to coordinate joint and combined planning for RD, has developed general concepts, guidelines, and priority areas for 1967. So far, this group has made a significant contribution to the coordinated RD effort, but it is only a coordinating body and has no review authority over US agency plans. The team chief experiment, which involved the idea of an overall chief of each US province team, was conducted from June 1965 - January 1966 at SECDEF's direction. Chiefs were appointed in three pilot provinces to determine whether this would improve provincial coordination; the results were inconclusive and the US Mission Council's recommendation to place team chiefs in each NPA was not implemented, as assignment of province team chiefs without a corresponding arrangement at higher levels would have resulted in the province team chiefs having four supervisors--one from each US agency. Regional Councils have been established on an ad hoc basis to improve coordination of the civil/military effort at Corps/Regional level, and Joint and MACV Directives have been published towards this end.<sup>58</sup>

(U) On 7 November COMUSMACV directed the establishment of a MACV Revolutionary Development Support Directorate (RDS) under the staff supervision of J3. Initially this directorate absorbed all the functions and personnel of MACJ33 (Revolutionary Development Division), and its further evolution was to be determined after a study of the full range which military support for RD was to assume. Brig Gen William A Knowlton, MACV SJS, was designated as the Director of RDS, Col Powell becoming his deputy. In the interest of parallel staff terminology, the RD Divisions of the major subordinate commands were also similarly redesignated.<sup>59</sup>

(TS) In October JCS recommended to CINCPAC that consideration be given to developing plans for accelerating US military support of a post-hostilities RD program, particularly in terms of civic action and assistance in major reconstruction projects. JCS assumed that in such a period, troop labor could be used for civic action projects, and some combat support and services support units could be employed on major reconstruction projects; major planning requirements would be an assessment of additional military assets available for civic action and reconstruction assistance, the development of long-range requirements with priorities and material requirements listed, and the development of coordinated plans for each province/district. In response to CINCPAC, COMUSMACV recognized that substantial US military assets would be

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PAGE 52 OF 872 PAGES

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available at the termination of hostilities, and indicated that studies would be conducted in the following sequence: 1) a long-range projection for the RVN security structure which the US was prepared to support, including an assessment of RVNAF capability to maintain internal and border security and support of RD, an assessment of manpower and material resources available as a result of termination of hostilities and reduction of RVNAF strength, a proposed design for deployment of GVN security forces, and a proposed activation of an internal security force (constabulary) using RVNAF manpower and material assets; 2) survey of potential US military support of post-hostilities RD and nation-building to include numbers, types, and locations of US construction and civil affairs units, supplies, and materials; and 3) specific construction matters, to include assessments of roads, railroads, port facilities, warehousing, water systems, and irrigation systems; priorities for construction, based on overall impact on the economy; and analyses of construction material requirements and US unit availability by province. In fact, the first two studies had already commenced and broad concepts of the projected GVN security structure had been presented to the US Mission Council on 7 October.<sup>60</sup>

(S) US authorities in Saigon were concerned over the Manila Conference statement which had proposed withdrawal of US troops from RVN within six months of cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of NVA forces. The need for current planning on RD to anticipate such a contingency was keenly felt. They noted that there were no provisions for advisory personnel to remain in RVN, and felt that the civilian elements of the Mission should be strengthened, with particular emphasis on CAS and USAID activities. The Ambassador felt that MACV should be made responsible for the immediate organization and intensive training of a national constabulary which would draw on RF/PF for its manpower requirements. Even if this effort were interrupted by the US troop withdrawal, at least it would have been started. Although it was highly doubtful that Hanoi would react favorably to the Manila proposal, COMUSMACV concurred with the Ambassador's views as a matter of prudent planning.<sup>61</sup>

#### The US Mission Reorganizes for Better RD Support

(U) The Manila Conference of October 1966, although it produced no startling developments, sharpened the focus of attention on RD support. The joint communique issued by the participating governments on 25 October included several pertinent references to pacification and RD, some general, a few specific:

The participating governments concentrated particular attention on the accelerating efforts of the government of Vietnam to force a social revolution on hope and progress. Even as the conflict

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PAGE 533 OF 872 PAGES

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continues, the effort goes forward to overcome the tyranny of poverty, disease, illiteracy and social injustice.

The Vietnamese leaders stated their intent to train and assign a substantial share of the armed forces to clear-and-hold actions in order to provide a shield behind which a new society can be built.

In the field of revolutionary development, measures along the lines developed in the past year and a half will be expanded and intensified. The training of revolutionary development cadres will be improved. More electricity and good water will be provided. More and better schools will be built and staffed. Refugees will be taught new skills. Health and medical facilities will be expanded.

The Vietnamese government declared that it is working out a series of measures to modernize agriculture and to assure the cultivator the fruits of his labor. Land reform and tenure provisions will be granted top priority. Agricultural credit will be expanded. Crops will be improved and diversified.

The Vietnamese leaders emphasized that underlying these measures to build confidence and cooperation among the people there must be popular conviction that honesty, efficiency and social justice form solid cornerstones of the Vietnamese government's program.<sup>62</sup>

(C) The progress of RD during September and October was dampened somewhat by the necessity for GVN officials to prepare for the national elections, and subsequently by the need to prepare detailed plans and estimates for 1967. The Minister of RD planned to issue basic guidelines in early October, to be followed by visits to all provinces, accompanied by a joint ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ briefing team to explain the program to American advisors. Gen Thang began his series of visits on 14 November, announcing that he hoped that all provincial RD plans for 1967 would be approved by 25 December. At the same time, during the period 14-22 November, civil-military planning sessions were held in Saigon under the direction of Deputy Ambassador Porter; the main purpose of these sessions was to have US provincial advisors present their plans, including specific objectives and goals for 1967; a secondary purpose was to inject into the provincial plans new ideas on participation of ARVN units in RD, employment of the RD Cadre, the assignment of priorities, and coordination of the civil and military aspects of RD.<sup>63</sup>

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(U) In connection with these planning sessions, but as a result of prior study and discussion, came an operational reorganization of the US Mission for improved support of RD activities. On 21 November Ambassador

5 SEP 1984  
PAGE 534 OF 872 PAGES  
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Lodge announced the formation of a new Office of Civil Operations (OCO), under the supervision of Deputy Ambassador Porter, which would be directly responsible for the Mission's civil support of the GVN RD effort, and for all civilian operations and personnel in the regions and provinces. Mr. L. Wade Lathram was appointed Director of OCO. Excerpts from the OCO terms of reference, published 1 December, were of particular interest to COMUSMACV and the military RD support effort:

CHARTER

The Office of Civil Operations of the U.S. Mission reports directly to the Deputy Ambassador, and to the Executive Officer of the Deputy Ambassador's office during the Deputy Ambassador's absence. It is responsible for the Mission's civil support of the Vietnamese Revolutionary Development effort. Its purpose is to obtain a fully-integrated, enhanced and intensified U.S. civil contribution to that effort at all levels.

\* \* \*

ORGANIZATION

1. The Director: The Director of the Office of Civil Operations . . . will attend meetings of the Mission Council, but not be a member. The Director of Civil Operations will direct and command all personnel and projects within his office and in the field, to include the Regional Directors and Province Representatives. \* \* \*

2. Region and Province: The Director of Civil Operations will be represented in the four regions by Regional Directors. They will be selected by the Director with the approval of the Deputy Ambassador. The Regional Directors will be responsible to the Director of Civil Operations for the direction of all U.S. civilian activities and personnel in the Regions and Provinces. \* \* \*

There will be a Provincial Representative in each Province responsible to the Regional Director. He will be designated by the Regional Director in consultation with the Director of Civil Operations. He will be responsible for all U.S. civilian activities and personnel in the province. Until Province Representatives are designated, individual agency Province personnel will continue to perform their assigned duties . . . .<sup>64</sup>

(C) Just prior to undertaking the reorganization of the Mission effort in support of RD, Ambassador Lodge had instituted a pilot program for unified direction of the RD effort in Long An Province. After

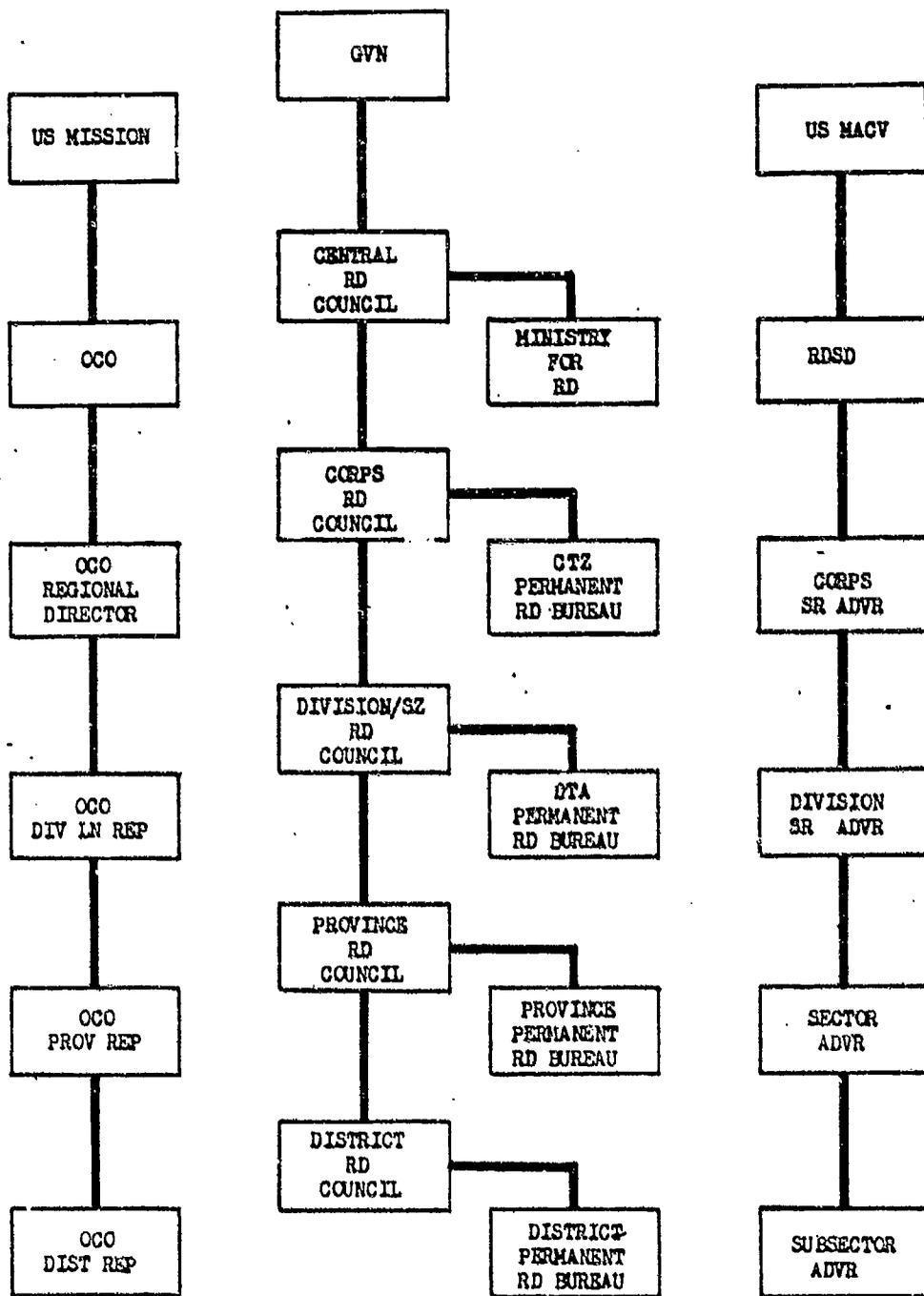
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PAGE 535 OF 872 PAGES

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COMBINED ORGANIZATION FOR RD



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prior consultation with COMUSMACV, the Ambassador on 9 November designated Col Sam Wilson, a USA officer on loan to the Mission, as Team Leader in that province. At the Ambassador's request, COMUSMACV issued instructions placing MACV advisory elements in Long An under Col Wilson's operational direction, directing the US battalion commander in Long An to maintain close liaison with Col Wilson and to "be responsive to his operational advice in all matters pertaining to support of Revolutionary Development."<sup>65</sup> COMUSMACV also directed CG II FFORCEV to monitor the Long An situation closely and to support the Team effort to the fullest, indicating that he proposed to have Col Wilson report to him on military matters through CG II FFORCEV. By the end of 1966, however, a complete evaluation of the effectiveness of the Team Leader concept in Long An remained to be made.

(U) In implementation of the establishment of the Mission's OCO, Ambassador Lodge on 6 December notified COMUSMACV of the appointment of Messrs Henry L. T. Koren, John P. Vann, and Vincent Heyman as Regional Directors of Civil Affairs for the Regions corresponding to I, III, and IV CTZ's, respectively. On 16 December Ambassador Porter advised that Col George Jacobson would assume the position of Regional Director, Region II, on an acting basis. In compliance with Ambassador Lodge's request, COMUSMACV in turn notified CG III MAF, CG I FFORCEV, CG II FFORCEV, and SA IV Corps of these appointments and requested all necessary assistance to the Directors in establishing their new offices and carrying out their newly-assigned duties.<sup>66</sup>

(S) One of the basic problems facing all elements of the Mission was the advisory situation at sector and sub-sector level. As COMUSMACV pointed out in a memorandum to MACV sub-sector advisors, MACV advisors were the only US personnel actually residing at the district level, and the only advisors in constant contact with the district chief on RD cadre matters; as such, they were expected to make a continuing review and evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses, and accomplishments of the RD cadre in the same way they did for other RD programs.<sup>67</sup> Of other Mission elements, ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ turned to their Washington agencies for increased personnel with which to staff the lower levels of the OCO, but it became evident that their personnel requirements could not be met either quickly or easily. SECSTATE advised Saigon that top priority would be given to OCO personnel needs and that he was confident the Washington agencies would make the maximum efforts

but realism indicates that, for early results all of us desire, main reliance must be on re-organizing staff and reassigning officers now in-country. They have experience and will benefit by new supervisory arrangements and pinpointed responsibilities. But above all, they are there. Even if new candidates can be found in numbers desired, transfer problems and lack of current familiarity with Vietnam would mean loss of momentum in many cases in early months [of] their new tours.<sup>68</sup>

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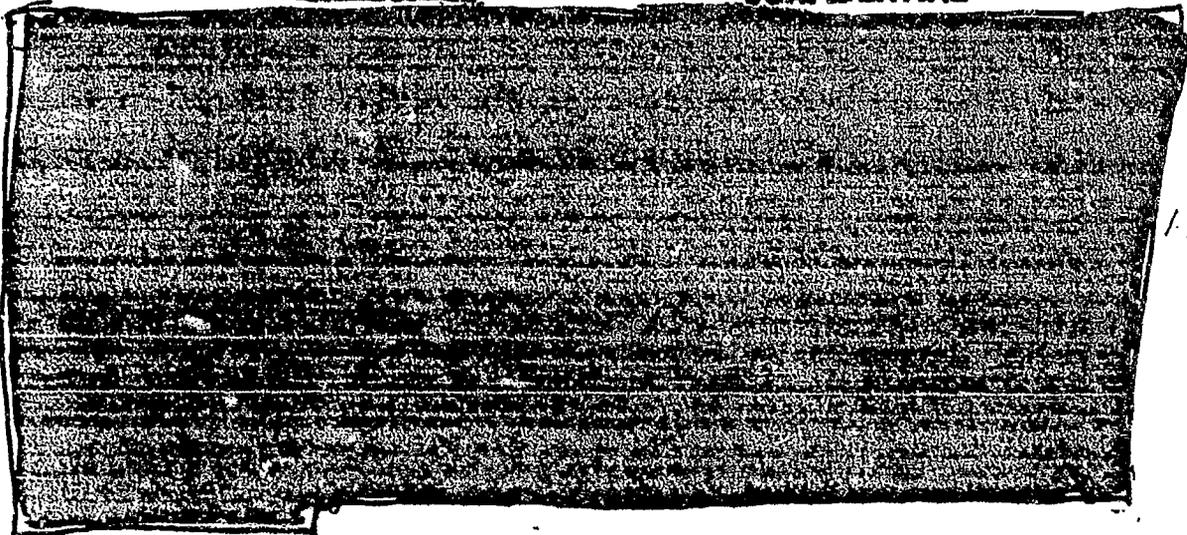
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(S) COMUSMACV had already foreseen a need for additional military advisors at the sub-sector level and had notified CINCPAC, JCS, and DA of his plan to add one EM to each district to which a RD cadre was deployed; as already noted, he had recommended that the USA Civil Affairs School establish a special course for such RD cadre advisors. Although by the end of 1966 no definitive action had been taken, it appeared that favorable consideration was being given to COMUSMACV's plan; CINCPAC, in a message to his component commanders, noted that the purpose of the plan "is to provide continuing review and evaluation of RD cadre in view of inability of USAID and OSA provide personnel to influence RD cadre program at district level and below. Prior to deployment it is planned that EM selected would undergo special Civil Affairs training."<sup>71</sup>

(C) An interesting study prepared by the ACoFS, RD, II FFORCEV, in late October, reached the conclusion that ARVN divisions were not receiving sufficient command emphasis on the RD program, and that "within each ARVN division, it is desirable to establish an additional Deputy CG as the Deputy CG for Revolutionary Development with primary responsibility for planning, coordinating and supervising military support of RD programs in the DTA. In view of the current ARVN grade structure it is not feasible to assign a BG to this position." This study, concurred in by DSA III Corps, was forwarded to COMUSMACV and was studied carefully by the MACV staff agencies concerned. COMUSMACV replied on 4 December to CG II FFORCEV, expressing his appreciation for the study, but concluding that:

. . . the interest and energies of all commanders in the division, from the division CG to the company commanders, must be devoted to the RD program if significant improvement is to be made. To recommend the establishment of a Deputy CG for RD could imply that it is unnecessary for the division commander to

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become involved personally in the RD program. This must be avoided. The effectiveness of ARVN units in support of RD is related directly to the interest and aggressiveness displayed by the division commander and his staff in this program.

The primary mission of the division, to include support for revolutionary development, remains military in nature. There is no US civilian advisory structure established at this level and no plan to establish such a structure. The creation of a Deputy CG for Revolutionary Development could tend, however, toward too great involvement of the division in civilian functions, a relationship which may be difficult to break in the future as civil government replaces the essentially military governmental structure in existence now.<sup>72</sup>

(S) At year's end another organization change in the US Mission structure was taking place, a change designed to bring more closely together the civil and military support of RD. This was the appointment of a senior military officer to the position of Deputy for RD in the Office of the Deputy Ambassador. COMUSMACV agreed entirely with Deputy Ambassador Porter's suggestion, and proposed as the first incumbent the former CG 173d Abn Bde, Maj Gen Paul F. Smith. The Deputy Ambassador accepted this nomination and in turn proposed terms of reference for the new office. The wording of these terms of reference caused some difficulty, whereupon the Deputy Ambassador submitted two possible solutions; the alternate terms were as follows:

The Deputy for RD will assume charge in the absence of the Deputy Ambassador of all Mission civil side activities in support of RD.

The Deputy for RD will be directly responsible for maintaining effective liaison with MACV in matters pertaining to US and RVN military support for and protection of RD.

Because RVNAF will carry the main burden of military support for RD, the Deputy for RD may have direct liaison with RVNAF on matters within his purview. However, MACV will remain the channel for conveying official U.S. advice on such matters to RVNAF, with appropriate participation of Deputy for RD as discussed below.

To help achieve systematic civil-military RD planning and evaluation, the Deputy for RD will supervise the coordination and evaluation of civil/military RD plans. He will also be responsible for civil side participation in the development of such plans. He will in conjunction with MACV advise the GVN on developing a similar and if possible joint system for coordination and evaluation of civil/military RD plans.

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PAGE 539 OF 822 PAGES

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The Deputy for RD will assist, and when necessary represent, the Deputy Ambassador in the conduct of periodic GVN-U.S. reviews of RD progress. He will assist the Deputy Ambassador in supervising the execution of RD by frequent field visits.

The Deputy for RD will coordinate visits by high-ranking officials looking into the RD program and will assist the Deputy Ambassador in establishing effective contact with the press on RD matters.<sup>73</sup>

COMUSMACV accepted the alternate terms of reference, with one proposed change in the third paragraph:

Although the terms of reference . . . indicate that MACV will remain the channel for official US advice, I am concerned that the present wording may lead to confusion on the part of the Vietnamese and possible conflicts of guidance. At the same time, I have no desire to restrict MG Smith in the contacts he may have with elements of RVNAF while on inspection trips. I therefore recommend that the two words direct liaison in paragraph 3 of the alternate terms of reference be changed to the one word contact.<sup>74</sup>

CINCPAC was advised of this agreement, with the change noted, and indicated his concurrence to JCS in early January 1967.<sup>75</sup>

#### Measurement of Progress

(3) The problem of how progress in RD activities should be gauged was not a new one. Over the years, many yardsticks had been used to indicate achievement in various ways. Each proposal for a new way of measuring had been accompanied by recognition of the limitations of past systems and methods, yet each in turn had been superseded; in a sense, some progress had been made in terms of the successive recognitions of the limitations of past and current systems. In November 1965, both RD Minister Thang and SECDEF McNamara had expressed dismay at the lack of progress in the pacification effort, but both looked forward optimistically to a new chapter.<sup>76</sup>

(4) At the top-level US/GVN Honolulu Conference (7-9 February 1966), President Johnson himself had expressed the need for subsequent meetings "to assess progress from the date of the conference."<sup>77</sup> Even before the Honolulu Conference, the MACV Chief of Staff, at a briefing on the Warrenton Meeting (8-11 January 1966), had brought up the question as to how progress could be measured and had proposed that "consideration

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PAGE 540 OF 822 PAGES

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might be given to the number of schools built or established, teachers trained and/or employed, number of additional children in school and similar information.<sup>78</sup>

(U) A few weeks after the Honolulu Conference, a newsmen reported from Saigon that:

[US and Vietnamese officials in Saigon] feel that if hopes for political and economic progress through the pacification program and other measures are raised too high, the ultimate result of the Honolulu Conference and of the immense publicity surrounding it could be disillusionment.

Recalling past failures, these officials also fear that if Washington applies too much pressure for reports of specific results, American and South Vietnamese officials in the provinces may begin producing the kind of "paper progress" that plagued previous programs and contributed to their failure.

As an example, Maj Gen Nguyen Duc Thang, . . . is known to be worried that President Johnson may call upon him to report visible results in June, when the next Honolulu meeting is contemplated. General Thang is reported to feel that he cannot produce substantial progress in so short a time.<sup>79</sup>

(TS) Following the Honolulu Conference, new attempts were made to reexamine criteria and coverage of data used to measure progress. MACV began development of its system of evaluation based on the "McNaughton Memorandum" an unofficial document prepared during the Honolulu Conference, which listed basic programs and goals. By increasing the strength of RVN, US, and FW forces in RVN and expanding the offensive actions of such forces, while providing essential defense, the following was to be achieved in 1966: Increase the population in secure areas from 50 to 60 percent; increase the critical roads and railroads open for use from 20 to 50 percent; increase the destruction of VC/NVA base areas from 10 - 20 percent to 40 - 50 percent; ensure the defense of all military bases, political and population centers, and food-producing areas now under government control; increase the pacified population in the four selected high-priority areas by 235,000; and attrit, by year's end, VC/NVA forces at a rate as high as their capability to put men into the field. In consonance with this outline, MACV developed a system of evaluation, approaching the problem by examining major programs, breaking them out in terms of tasks, evaluating progress made in accomplishment of specific tasks and, finally, analyzing the separate results in the context of their contributions to the total effort. Reporting requirements evolved by this system of evaluation were listed in detail.<sup>80</sup> This system of evaluation, to measure progress in the military effort in RVN in relation to the specific goals and programs established at

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PAGE 541 OF 772 PAGES

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the Honolulu Conference, appeared to be sound and comprehensive. COMUSMACV noted optimistically; "We have tried this many times and I hope on this occasion that we have developed a system that will be practical, meaningful, and, needless to say, reflect the progress which will be ours."<sup>81</sup>

(S) In late March 1966, COMUSMACV was still cautiously optimistic regarding the measurement of progress: "I received a briefing (on 26 March) on the first progress measurement following the benchmark of 8 February established by the President in Honolulu. I believe we have a practical measurement system which is beginning to show some slight progress although admittedly some of the data are very questionable."<sup>82</sup> He was referring to investigations conducted in March which required major adjustments in RD statistics:

In order to provide an accurate basis for the measure of progress during 1966, a review of US and GVN statistics submitted as of the end of December 1965 revealed wide variances in the province "total planned hamlet/population" figures. In addition, the "number of hamlets/population secured" reported by US Sector Advisors did not agree with the "number of hamlets complete/population under control" reported by GVN. This might have resulted from a difference of interpretation of the terms "secured" and "incomplete."<sup>83</sup>

Ministry, MACV and USAID agreed hamlet numbers gave not true index progress RD Program. Hopefully, revised six point criteria effective this month and reversal past policy neglect constructed hamlets favor new hamlets may change bleak record of repetitive cycles pacification gave hamlets, and produce more reliable statistics.<sup>84</sup>

COMUSMACV noted that sometimes other factors resulted in less-than-objective evaluations: "A Vietnamese evaluation on the security/pacification status of hamlets in Gia Dinh Province resulted in the downgrading of . . . 64 hamlets, 38 of which were allegedly because of deteriorating security. It was noted that this action may be related to Ministry of Revolutionary Development policy of terminating grants when a hamlet is considered secured."<sup>85</sup>

(U) The so-called Six-Point Criteria for Secured Hamlets had been developed jointly by MACV and the Ministry of RD as a means of assessing the degree to which a given hamlet had been converted from VC to GVN control. In mid-1966 these criteria were as follows:

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 542 OF 872 PAGES

~~TOP SECRET~~

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1. A census of hamlet residents has been completed; the Viet Cong infrastructure has been discovered, identified, and destroyed or neutralized; and an intelligence net has been established to deter its recurrence.

2. Adequate Popular Forces or paramilitary forces have been recruited, trained, armed, and are qualified and available for operations.

3. Hamlet security is effective with an integrated defensive system to include methods of requesting reinforcements.

4. Hamlet inhabitants have been questioned and have expressed their grievances and aspirations, and some economic and social development projects have been initiated to satisfy people's desires.

5. Hamlet inhabitants have been organized for self-defense and Revolutionary Development tasks.

6. Hamlet chiefs have been elected or appointed, trained, and are supported by the majority of the people in the Hamlet.<sup>86</sup>

(C) Statistical data on area and population control for March 1966 reflected extensive reevaluation of hamlet status and population density, based on more realistic criteria and a reconciliation of GVN and US control data. A decrease shown in the secured population in the NAP's of about 28,000 reflected the application of more stringent criteria rather than a real loss. It was anticipated that fluctuations in statistical data would continue for some months until a common data base for realistic and valid measurements of the RD Program could be established. During April, the country-wide decrease of 93 secured hamlets and 0.7 percent secured population resulted primarily from a revision of statistical data in the three provinces of Quang Nai, Darlac, and Gia Dinh, rather than an overall decline in the effectiveness of the RD Program. Small but significant progress in 24 provinces was not sufficient to counterbalance the large scale "paper" shifts and was not readily apparent if only Corps or country totals were considered. In spite of slight country-wide reductions in both secured population and area, the overall population and area control situation was viewed with reserved optimism. The large "undergoing securing" population foreshadowed significant gains during the latter half of 1966 if political stability and continued military pressure on the VC were maintained. On 21 May, the first RD Cadre Groups were graduated from the National Training Center at Vung Tau. The country-wide deployment of these groups was expected to improve materially the progress of the RD Program. Although the actual impact of the groups would probably not be felt before July.<sup>87</sup>

(C) A number of reports in May indicated that GVN local officials had a tendency to accept substandard construction and security in order

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 543 OF 872 PAGES

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to meet Minister Thang's deadlines, specified during his visits to the provinces in March. US authorities in Saigon were concerned over the evolution of a "Potemkin syndrome" (showpiece without substance) which had plagued the Strategic Hamlet Program and other pacification efforts, and hoped to advise GVN officials that it would be better for the RD program to be long on time rather than short on quality.<sup>88</sup>

(FOUO) On 2 July, at a meeting with selected correspondents, COMUSMACV cited the following accomplishments achieved during the first half of 1966: In the RD program, secured areas had increased by 2.4 percent while areas controlled by the VC decreased by 9.0 percent; the population living in secure areas increased by 390,700; and the number of Chieu Hoi ralliers doubled that of the same period in 1965, with 9,500 ralliers counted up to 24 June.<sup>89</sup>

(S) On 1 August President Johnson requested a detailed report on activities and plans affecting the civil side of the conflict. The report was to include statistical data wherever feasible and to be organized in terms of what was accomplished during FY 65 (the year before the buildup), FY 66 (the first year of the major US buildup), and FY 67 (what we hope to accomplish during the second year of the buildup). Subjects were to include progress in destroying VC infrastructure, pacification, RD cadre and activities, the Chieu Hoi Program, population control and identification program, strengthening of civil management, refugees, and a study of roles, missions and priorities. Presidential Assistant Komer believed that this report, which would be in effect the first overall post-Honolulu summation, would serve as a useful measure of progress and a basis for prospects for 1967.<sup>90</sup>

(S) J2 MACV was directed in late August to keep cumulative data on areas in RVN--by grid square--which had been searched, entered, swept, or examined. These data were to be used primarily by troops in locating VC bases, but they also served to express another facet of MACV activity and to provide an added indicator in the measurement of progress. During this period there was considerable discussion regarding alternate means of grouping USMACV tasks and in analyzing both quantitatively and qualitatively what tools would be required to perform these tasks. The CINCPAC Automatic Data Processing Survey Team visited MACV from 22-27 August to assist in expediting response from higher headquarters and to measure the progress made in MACV. Its tentative findings were to complete the existing and proposed survey projects and to increase the use of the CINCPAC and ICS Data Systems.<sup>91</sup>

(S) At the Mission Council meeting on 5 September, Deputy Ambassador Porter revealed that RD Minister Thang was under pressure to report numbers of newly pacified hamlets within specific time frames. The Ambassador expressed concern over the danger of "falling back into the numbers game where we will once again be trying to win the war with statistics."<sup>92</sup>

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED

Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

PAGE 544 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) In response to a request from SECDEF, COMUSMACV had commenced in February 1965 the submission of the FISHNET report, which contained statistics on key civilian officials assassinated or kidnapped by the VC throughout RVN. Prior to February 1965, various agencies in and out of the US Mission had maintained data, but they were largely estimates and, in the case of GVN figures, usually greatly inflated. Statistics maintained by different elements of the US Mission were often incompatible and could not be resolved because of differing criteria. Deputy Ambassador Porter in July 1966 had directed that statistics of assassinations, abductions, and terrorism be gathered centrally for all Mission agencies by USAID, through its Public Safety Division, beginning with data for the month of August 1966. COMUSMACV assigned a J2 MACV officer as MACV representative to the Mission Coordinating Group to achieve better coordination in the reporting system. Categories used were: 1) selective deaths (i.e., government officials, government employees, RD cadres, and certain elites among the general population); 2) general or unspecified deaths (i.e., deaths from attacks by persons presumed or known to be VC but not from military actions or from accidents); and 3) the abductions of Vietnamese, listed in terms of government officials, prominent citizens, etc. The establishment of this data base ended the inconsistencies and variations within the US Mission, but the matter of coordination and rationalization of figures between the US and the GVN remained unsettled. SECSTATE expressed the view on 21 September that there were advantages in describing the victims in terms of professions and occupations rather than as government officials and prominent citizens, as these new terms would stimulate greater identification, and thus sympathy, by the audience of such information reports.<sup>93</sup>

(S) On 10 October, in a statement during the briefing for SECDEF, Ambassador Lodge noted that he believed that progress was being made on the various fronts of the war, but felt that progress was "quicker with some than with others."

The mileage of roads which are open to all categories of persons is just about what it has been; the percentage of the population living under secure conditions is only a little bit greater than it was; the percentage of the population under VC domination is not substantially diminished, but still stands at about 20%; every day brings its rolls of public officials being assassinated, kidnapped and tortured, with certainly no dramatic diminution; and MACV believed that the Viet Cong can still impress men at the rate of four battalions a month in South Vietnam.<sup>94</sup>

(S) A new system of evaluating hamlets with respect to meeting RD goals was proposed by Mr. George Allen, a former member of the US Mission, in November, and was tentatively approved by State, Defense, CIA, USAID, and

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 545 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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USIA. Mr. Allen presented his system to the Mission Council on 13 December, noting that it had been field-tested in RVN by an inter-agency team from Washington. Deputy Ambassador Porter reported the results to SECSTATE:

Mission Council . . . approved implementation of hamlet evaluation system to begin with month of January.

. . . Approved system retains basic characteristics of grid concept developed in Washington, using same six factors and five grade levels. Checklist reduced to three indicators for each factor. Field tests showed simplified checklist produced results comparable to those of initial checklist in terms of a reasonably reliable evaluation of hamlet status. Refined system, with automated procedures, will also be much less time consuming than initial system.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mission plans to brief General Thang on evaluation systems at earliest opportunity, and to suggest that his Ministry might find it useful to adopt same system.<sup>95</sup>

(S) In connection with evaluation of RD progress, CINCPAC advised COMUSMACV on 16 December that he had been briefed in the Malaysian national operations room at Kuala Lumpur; the room had been a command center during the confrontation period and had been converted to use as a nerve center for the Malaysian Rural Development Program. ADM Sharp believed the method might be useful for the RD program in RVN, and urged COMUSMACV, other US agency officials, and GVN representatives to visit the operations center. COMUSMACV replied on 23 December that he appreciated the information, as he had just learned from Chief of State Thieu that the GVN was in process of establishing a suitable operations room in the new palace; COMUSMACV indicated that a team headed by MACV Director of RD Support, Brig Gen Knowlton, would visit Kuala Lumpur as soon as arrangements could be made, after which visits by GVN officials and those of other US agencies would be encouraged.<sup>96</sup>

(C) To Deputy Ambassador Porter's proposal of 13 December on a reporting system for RD, COMUSMACV concurred with reservations:

Your proposal to have a Special Joint Report submitted each month by the Regional Director of Civil Affairs and the Corps Senior Advisor should provide us with a good overview of the Revolutionary Development program from each of the geographical areas.

Although I concur in the report, I am concerned that we are singling out specific items, such as ARVN effectiveness, and not addressing ourselves to other equally important activities which have

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 546 OF 872 PAGES

Order Sec Army By TAG per

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830624

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a definite impact on Revolutionary Development progress. I refer to such items as the effectiveness of National Police, Revolutionary Development Cadre, land reforms, corruption, RF/PF effectiveness and the general ineptitude of Government administrators from hamlet to Saigon level. I feel we must look at the whole problem and attack the deficiencies on all fronts. As I am sure you realize, ARVN must be evaluated and improved, not only in its mission of supporting Revolutionary Development, but in all aspects of its military efficiency as it relates to the total war effort. This is being accomplished on a priority basis.

As a final point, I feel that the message could be handled best as a joint Embassy/MACV message, i.e., from Porter and Westmoreland. This would reflect our mutual interest in this matter. A revised draft message is attached for your consideration. If you desire, the message can be transmitted by MACV. 97

The draft message proposed by COMUSMACV, which would take effect for the month of January 1967, advised both civil and military advisors of the new joint reporting procedure:

(U) The special Joint Revolutionary Development Reports from the US advisors at each of the provinces and autonomous cities have been most valuable in identifying problems and describing RD progress, with the reasons for success or failure. However, in view of the recent reorganization affecting the civilian agencies and the need to refine and improve our reporting procedures, the Office of Civil Operations and RDS, MACV, are making appropriate revisions to this report. The revised Provincial Special Joint Report format should be distributed in time for reporting on January RD activities. The new format will have three parts: a routine evaluation of monthly RD activities; a statistical annex concerning civilian progress and activities; and a new reporting procedure for hamlet evaluation. (The hamlet reporting procedure currently being used in the MACV Monthly Report will continue in effect until the new hamlet evaluation system has been perfected.) Further information and instructions

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By IAG per

PAGE 577 OF 872 PAGES

830624

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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on these new reporting procedures will be published in the near future and will be followed up with trips to the field explaining the new reports system.

(C) In addition to the Provincial Special Joint Report, a new Special Joint Report will be prepared by the Regional Directors of Civil Affairs and Corps Senior Advisors or their Deputies. A specific format is not prescribed, rather the two senior US officials involved will cover for the Corps/Region their overall impressions of RD to include important innovations, main areas of progress, principal unsolved problems and recommendations, in an informal and informative narrative. An evaluation of ARVN's performance in support of RD and identification of GVN officials whose performance is detrimental to the RD effort will be addressed in the report. This report will cover a calendar month and will be submitted to reach the Office of the Deputy Ambassador and MACV RDSO by the tenth of the month following. The first report will be submitted by 10 February 1967.<sup>98</sup>

#### RD Planning for 1967

(C) During the spring of 1966, using experience gained in the previous planning cycle, MACV began to formulate concepts on which to base 1967 planning for RD. On 11 May representatives of JGS, the Ministry of RD, and MACJ33 met in a preliminary planning session to discuss development of National Priority Areas (NPA) and military and RD plans. In late June a joint US planning group (JPG), to participate with GVN in combined RD planning, was approved by MACV and the Mission Liaison Group (MLG); MACJ33 presented the tentative 1967 RD concept to this group, and all agencies concerned began to develop estimates for 1967. For a clearer understanding of the problems, the Minister of RD and members of his staff visited all provinces, beginning in June; in July a JGS team, accompanied by MACV and USAID representatives, visited each Corps to discuss military plans in conjunction with the RD program.<sup>99</sup>

(C) Early in the planning cycle the JPG selected its recommended NPA's which were approved by the MLG for submission to Ministry of RD on 8 August; Ministry of RD and JGS approved these NPA's together with recommended guidelines to provide the basis for planning by individual provinces, on 10 August. The 1967 NPA's were generally the same as the 1966 areas, with some expansion: I CTZ contained no changes; in II CTZ, Phu Cat District in Binh Dinh Province was added; III CTZ was

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED |

Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

PAGE 548 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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expanded to include Ben Luc, Thu Thua, and Thanh Duc districts (Long An), Duc Hoa and Cu Chi (Hau Nghia), Phu Hoa, Chan Thanh, and Lai Thieu (Binh Duong), all of Bien Hoa Province, and all of Phuoc Tuy Province except Xuyen Moc; in IV CTZ, the new NPA included An Giang and Vinh Long Provinces and the contiguous portions of Phong Dinh and Vinh Binh Provinces. 100

(S) In a briefing for the Mission Council early in August, J3 MACV outlined the basic philosophy of the 1967 Combined Campaign Plan. Generally, ARVN would be given the primary mission of providing security for RD, while US and FWMF would continue efforts to destroy VC/NVA main forces and base areas. In the three northern CTZ's, ARVN would devote at least half of its effort to support of RD, but in IV CTZ ARVN might have to devote up to 75 percent of its effort to offensive operations. US/FW forces were to support RD by the provision of security in their TAOR's and base areas; they would also contribute implicit aid to RD and to the resurgence of the RVN economy as a by-product of normal operations. To insure increased ARVN support for RD, mobile training teams (MTT's) were formed for each ARVN division in order to explain to all battalions their roles and responsibilities in RD, and to inculcate in the ARVN troops the necessity for proper conduct toward their own countrymen. 101

(C) The Ministry of RD had made considerable progress in developing the guidelines for the several provinces, but involvement in the national elections of 11 September delayed publication until 8 October; five days later the English translation was published and disseminated, after which teams from both US and GVN agencies visited each Corps headquarters to present detailed briefings on the documents and the requirements generated thereby. In early November the Ministry sent teams to the provinces to provide assistance in developing their plans; review and approval of the plans were accomplished by Gen Thang, Commissioner General for RD, who was accompanied by a combined US/GVN team, between 14 November and 23 December, with the exception of two provinces (Kien Giang and F. Long Dinh) which were completed for 9 January 1967 because of the recent appointment of the province chiefs. The appropriate Corps and Division commanders were required to indorse the plan, to signify their understanding and concurrence, and their ability to support the plans militarily. 102

(C) Military planning for the Combined Campaign Plan for 1967 continued as the RD plan evolved; as the focal point within MACV for RD support, MACJ33--now redesignated the RD Support Directorate--furnished the RD concept (Annex B) to the plan, which was signed by COMUSMACV and Chief JGS on 7 November. Although the purely military aspects of the Combined Campaign Plan, discussed elsewhere in this History, were fully understood by US military commanders, COMUSMACV was concerned that the RD portions of the plan should be equally understood by all US personnel, particularly by ARVN advisors. On 22 December COMUSMACV addressed similar letters to each of the Corps Senior Advisors:

THIS PAGE RECORDED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order See Army By AC per

830624

PAGE 549 OF 772 PAGES

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1. (C) The 1967 Combined Campaign Plan assigns ARVN the primary mission to support Revolutionary Development (RD). Success of the overall RD program in 1967 will depend largely on how well ARVN performs this mission.

2. (C) The major tasks assigned to ARVN in support of RD are to clear selected areas of enemy forces, provide security for the population and cadre elements in these areas, assist police forces to identify and eliminate the VC infrastructure, open and secure lines of communication necessary for economic development and conduct an active defense of political and economic centers. In addition, ARVN search and destroy operations are to be aimed at preventing the incursion of enemy main force units into areas undergoing RD and destroying enemy forces in areas where RD activities are planned for the future.

3. (C) Because support of RD is ARVN's primary mission, ARVN advisors are reminded that their primary mission is to provide advisory assistance in all matters pertaining to military support of RD. . . . all ARVN advisors must know and understand every aspect of RD support and use this knowledge in every possible way to assist their counterparts.

4. (C) Support by GVN and US military forces of Revolutionary Development places emphasis on three matters:

a. Small unit operations. This puts a premium on small unit leadership.

b. Night operations. We must take the night away from the guerrillas.

c. Troop civic action projects participated in by the Vietnamese people. If US troops are available to pitch in and "get their hands dirty" an excellent example will be set for the Vietnamese troops who have been inclined in the past to look down on participation with the people in manual labor. The value of troop civic action is perhaps more psychological than material. 105

(C) On 29 December COMUSMACV signed a combined MACV/JCS directive requiring the preparation of sector security plans, designed to provide coordinated military support for provincial RD activities. The directive was forwarded to Chief JCS for signature at year's end, with the expectation that it would be published during January 1967. 104

THIS PAGE REPRODUCED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 52 OF 872 PAGES

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### The RD Program at Year's End

(C) As 1966 came to a close, it had become apparent that the year had been a watershed in the field of RD. The continuing buildup of US and FWMA forces, together with such outstandingly successful military operations as ATTLEBORO, provided a new climate in which to prosecute the RD program. Recognition of this fact was implicit in the reorganization and renaming of the GVN Ministry of RD, the increasing acceptance of the RD role by the JGS, and the establishment of US agencies, both civil and military to render the most effective support for the RD program.

(TS) COMUSMACV's view of the RD program near the end of 1966, and his estimate of the problems for 1967, were summed up in extracts from his closing remarks to his senior subordinate commanders in the latter half of November:

During the coming year, the GVN hopes to surge ahead in the Revolutionary Development program. They are counting on our support. It is going to be necessary to re-educate the generals and retrain and reorient the troops, in order to develop greater finesse in this field than has been typical in the past. The GVN has asked for our help in this regard.

\* \* \* We must all remember that Revolutionary Development is a Vietnamese program. Our part is to support the program. When we refer to our participation, it is Revolutionary Development support and not our program; it is a Vietnamese program. \*

\* \*

Before our arrival, the Vietnamese were fighting for their lives. They had to depend on the RF and PF to protect the people and the resources while ARVN had to fight the VC guerrillas and main forces. Now we are here in strength and have been effective against the enemy main forces. With our engaging the main forces, ARVN can now turn their attention to fighting the guerrillas. They can now provide protection to the area, people, and resources and participate in Revolutionary Development programs. In order for them to be successful, a re-education process is necessary, from the generals on down. The attitude has been, "Don't let the regular troops act like the RF/PF." The corps commanders are changing their attitudes and are desirous that those under them change their attitudes also. ARVN must be made to realize that they must conduct night ambushes and night patrols to get the VC off the peoples backs and provide

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 55 / OF 872 PAGES

8-30624

~~TOP SECRET~~

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... security. In a secure environment, the Revolutionary Development cadre can come in and accomplish their duties. General Thieu, Premier Ky, on your line must realize this. We must help and not give merely lip service. We must produce tangible results.

One example of the re-education needed: In IV Corps, an ARVN battalion spent several weeks in and around their compound. A road which ran right by the compound was in need of repair and could not be used for transportation of people and produce. The local people asked the battalion commander if his troops could repair the road. The battalion commander said it was beneath the dignity of ARVN regular troops to do such a job.

This example is illustrative of why we must work with the Vietnamese to change their attitude. ARVN must work with the people and we must help to reorient and support the Revolutionary Development program. The ARVN attitude is a carryover from the colonial days when the army was aloof from the people and did little if anything to assist them.

The attitude of the soldiers toward the people generally is poor. When out on operations or training, soldiers steal chickens, pigs, or rice from the people in order to feed themselves and without any compensation to the people. We must do all we can to change this practice. It is self-defeating if we fail to gain the confidence of the people in ARVN, which is needed to assist and protect them. Encourage your superiors to make sure that the units have rations and money to pay for food, because if the troops do not have food or a way to get it legally, they will steal it. Every effort must be made to provide rations in the field. If you have any problems in this regard, write to me. It may be that action from the higher level can assist in provision of rations to the units.

To assist in this program, each ARVN division is to send a training cadre to Saigon to receive training to serve as mobile training teams within their respective divisions. These teams return to their divisions and go to each battalion in the division to conduct two weeks of instruction designed to reorient the units towards Revolutionary Development. Included in this instruction are small unit tactics and night operations. You should be aware of the existence of these teams, pay some attention to them, and assist in any way you can. These teams are very important and

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See Army By TAG per

PAGE 552 OF 872 PAGES

30624

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must be successful if ARVN is to be any good in conduct of Revolutionary Development programs.

In conduct of operations in support of Revolutionary Development, we will frequently have units buddy up with ARVN units. Once we get the patterns started, it will help in future operations. A word on command relations in these combined operations is appropriate. We have had great success with our cooperative efforts in the past. We should establish a proper relationship from a technical command standpoint. Proper types of missions are general support and direct support. When conducting operations where we have the preponderance of forces committed, which we usually will have, and ARVN, RF/PF, or CIDG units are working with us, their association will be in direct support or general support of our operation. This is a good military terminology and quite proper for use here. General Vien agrees in this terminology.

A unit can be placed in direct support of another unit or it can be originally placed in general support and be further diverted to a direct support role. \* \* \* In operations in support of Revolutionary Development, it will be quite proper to place US battalions in direct support of ARVN battalions. These can be infantry, artillery, armor, or any kind of US battalions. It is a sound, clear-cut mission and assignment. Adopt this terminology and mission assignment when working with ARVN.

Many of the ARVN commanders feel that Revolutionary Development operations are not spectacular and they won't get credit for doing an important job. They want to get a big body count or capture personnel or supplies, etc., in order that they and their units receive recognition. In your discussions with your counterparts, stress the point that, in Revolutionary Development, the destruction of guerrillas and the VC infrastructure is more important in disrupting the enemy's overall efforts than is destruction of main force units. It hurts the enemy twice as much to lose a guerrilla as opposed to losing main force personnel. The guerrilla dominates the people of the country, denies the flow of rice throughout the country, and provides intelligence to and acts as guides for main force units. When guerrillas are killed, it removes the intimidating force of the people and destroys the eyes and ears of the main force.

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By IAG per

PAGE 53 OF 122 PAGES

8-30624

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

If the main force does not have the support of the guerrilla, they are not nearly as effective and are more vulnerable to our operations. Guerrillas also provide subsistence to the main forces and corral the cookies to move the subsistence to where it is required. The Vietnamese commander who does well in Revolutionary Development programs should get appropriate credit for doing an important job well. These operations are not spectacular, generally, but must receive recognition. 105

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

Background

(S) The introduction of US psychological Warfare (PSYWAR) personnel into the RVN had been directed by CINCPAC on 27 April 1960. Instructors from USARPAC resources were to be utilized to stimulate the training program within the RVNAF. The first PSYWAR Mobile Training Team (MTT) arrived in early February 1962. Because of fragmented psychological operations in the GVN and the absence of an integrated GVN program, US military activities in this field were limited to providing advice, assistance, or training to RVNAF personnel in specialized aspects of psychological operations. 106

(C) PSYWAR operations were hampered in their early stages of development not only by Vietnamese skepticism, but also by the iron-clad control over the government exercised by the Diem regime. However, following the 1 November 1963 coup d'etat, there was a complete change in the attitude of the RVNAF regarding the importance of psychological operations (PSYOP). Throughout 1964 the MTT's assisted the RVNAF and distinct progress was discernible in all technical fields in which advisory assistance was given. With the arrival of US combat forces in the RVN in 1965, it became necessary to relate the commitment of these forces to the need for countering the mounting efforts of the VC. Propaganda directed at NVN audiences was initiated in April 1965; it explained the necessity for US bombings of communications routes and warned the people to stay away from military targets. 107

(FOUO) During 1966 the MACV Political Warfare Advisory Directorate--later redesignated the Psychological Operations Directorate (MACPD)--continued to perform its basic mission of recommending and developing PSYOP/civic action programs for MACV, and of advising the RVNAF's General Political Warfare Department (GPWD). MACPD supported the RVNAF PSYOP/CA activities, and exercised staff supervision under MACJ3, of the PSYWAR program of US tactical units and US PSYOPS units in the RVN. 108

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### Organization and Planning

(C) The introduction of US PSYOP units in the RVN was designed to provide a major stimulus to the overall US/GVN PSYOP programs and to insure that US tactical units were provided adequate and timely PSYOP support. In early 1966 the ultimate US military PSYOP buildup objective in the RVN was one PSYOP battalion and an Air Commando Squadron (PSYOP). The Vietnam Detachment of the US Army Broadcasting and Visual Activity Pacific (USABVAPAC) was in the Saigon area, attached to USARV and under the operational control of COMUSMACV. Personnel of this unit became part of the cadre of the HQ and HQ Co of the 6th PSYOP Bn, which arrived in the RVN on 5 February and which was assigned to USARV, although under operational control of COMUSMACV. On 10 February three tactical PSYOP companies (244th, 245th and 246th) were organized and activated, incorporating elements of seven previously-deployed PSYOP detachments.

(U) On 24 March the C-1 of I FFORCEV and II FFORCEV were requested to recommend solutions to alleviate the apparent weakness in the PSYOP field in the form of shortages of PSYOP staff personnel at brigade, division, and FForce levels. These commanders confirmed the need for more PSYOP personnel at the various levels and agreed that the best solution would be to augment their TOE with the desired staff sections. CG USARV was informed on 6 June of the specific recommendations made by these commanders, and requested that the recommended augmentations be expedited so that the commanders concerned might have appropriate personnel resources to carry out their PSYOP responsibilities.<sup>109</sup>

(J) Following a discussion between COMUSMACV and the Director of the Joint US Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO) of the US Mission on 27 April, a review of the whole sequence of PSYOP coordination was undertaken by the MACV staff. As brought out during the review, Director JUSPAO was the Mission Coordinator for PSYOP and was responsible for initiating Mission-level programs, for generating actions from the Mission that involved operations policy decisions from Washington agencies, and for monitoring matters of substance concerning policy or resources at the Mission Council level. The Mission Psychological Operations Committee, on which the J3 served as the MACV representative, although in relative disuse, was available for discussing substantive PSYOP matters. In Saigon, coordination was effected between MACV and JUSPAO by the MACPD Director, who attended JUSPAO Executive Board and Staff Meetings; at the Regional and Provincial levels, the representatives of the several US agencies worked together closely, both individually and as members of various PSYOP committees that met on a regular but informal basis to implement the many facets of the National PSYOP Plan. The MACV staff recommended that a new joint MACV-JUSPAO agreement be drawn up, to include some of the many developments since the 18 May 1965 agreement.<sup>110</sup>

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PAGE 555 OF 822 PAGES

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(U) On 11 June COMUSMACV directed that J5 MACV conduct a comprehensive analysis to determine whether the current MACV PSYWAR organization was adequate to pursue effectively and satisfy MACV's PSYWAR requirements. J5 was to recommend actions which would optimize the MACV PSYWAR posture and which would improve the effectiveness of joint MACV/JUSPAO PSYOP. The need for such a survey had been brought about by the introduction of massive NVA forces into RVN, and by the many changes created by the US military buildup and the expanded advisory effort. During the buildup, COMUSMACV had emphasized to officers arriving in-country the need for giving full attention to PSYWAR, and consequently US and Allied field commanders had requested more PSYWAR support. COMUSMACV observed that as military operations expanded, PSYWAR activities lagged behind. <sup>111</sup>

(U) Since the MACV PSYWAR efforts were directly related to those of other US and GVN agencies, the survey included the activities of other agencies as well as those of the MACV staff and operational units involved in PSYWAR. The analysis included consideration of the adequacy of professional expertise at MACV and subordinate staff levels; the extent to which existing and programmed PSYWAR resources met requirements; the manning adequacy and competence of PSYWAR units; the effectiveness of PSYWAR planning and measures to exploit intelligence, particularly at local levels; the possible need for modifying MACV/JUSPAO functions and responsibilities; and the degree to which black propaganda could be used to greater advantage. <sup>112</sup>

(TS) On 23 July COMUSMACV was briefed by the J5 on the PSYWAR study. He did not approve the findings completely, but did come to a decision on the approach--namely, that immense emphasis would be placed on the provision of personnel and equipment at the tactical level to support a stepped-up PSYWAR program. At the Saigon level, emphasis would be on research designed to determine enemy weaknesses, and on techniques that had proven successful against the enemy in the field. A recommendation that a J7 staff section be established to deal with psywar matters was disapproved. However, COMUSMACV stated that he was the MACV PSYWAR Officer, and that all commanders would assume this same responsibility by increasing greatly their efforts in PSYWAR. <sup>113</sup>

(S) On 3 August the Political Warfare Advisory Directorate was redesignated the Psychological Operations Directorate (PSYOP Dir or MACPD). It remained under the staff supervision of the MACJ3, with direct access to the MACV CoS and COMUSMACV when appropriate. Functions and personnel and equipment authorizations for MACPD, and the JTD augmentation for HQ MACV, were revised to conform to the additional responsibilities assigned by COMUSMACV. An expansion of the PSYOP Directorate was considered necessary to improve its capabilities to analyze propaganda requirements, exploit civilian professional and Vietnamese advice, observe and evaluate operations, and provide timely guidance and positive motivation. By late August the PSYOP Directorate was able to report that a

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PAGE 556 OF 872 PAGES

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closer integration of intelligence and PSYWAR activities had been accomplished. J2 MACV had intensified its coordination with the PSYOP staff and JUSPAO, and had begun to conduct propaganda analysis and evaluation of enemy psychological strengths and weaknesses, assessments of PSYWAR effects, and dissemination of information concerning PSYWAR opportunities gathered by intelligence agencies. <sup>114</sup>

(U) A MACV/JUSPAO Memorandum of Agreement on Direction and Supervision of US Psychological Operations in Vietnam, dated 10 August 1966, clarified COMUSMACV's authority to conduct PSYWAR against the enemy and his responsibilities for coordination of PSYOP in RVN. <sup>115</sup>

(U) At the request of Director JUSPAO, a MACV team conducted a fact-finding survey of the JUSPAO organization from 21 October to 4 November. The survey was based on information provided by JUSPAO members, and did not necessarily represent JUSPAO's official views. The team concluded that:

JUSPAO is a "high cost" organization compared with USMACV and that JUSPAO should fulfill certain fundamental organizational needs before undertaking any expansion of activities. These needs include: an effective system and organization for logistic support; additional warehouse and working space; an effective system of liaison with field representatives; an integrated system of internal records, reports, and standing operating procedures; a revised joint table of distribution for US military personnel; and an effective system for internal financial management and cost reduction. <sup>116</sup>

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(C) The Advisory Committee for PSYOP, consisting of senior representatives ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ was established on 7 November. Its purpose was to advise the Mission Council on matters pertaining to PSYOP in the RVN and to provide general and ad hoc policy advice to JUSPAO in the coordination and direction of PSYOP. In addition to supporting JUSPAO, it was to insure that PSYOPS in the RVN were consistent with the policies and objectives of the GVN and the US. The Committee was to review periodically the effectiveness of PSYOP, stimulate new programs to meet changing needs, and present periodic reports to the Mission Council on the status of major GVN/US psychological programs. Through the end of 1966 this committee had not convened. <sup>117</sup>

(S) By mid-November MACPD had submitted necessary recommendations to increase MACV PSYWAR resources in order to respond effectively to PSYOP requirements. In the view of the Director, this involved the expansion of the 6th PSYOP Bn to a PSYOP Group; staffing increases in

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HQ MACV and major subordinate command PSYOP staffs; an increase in the PSYOP aircraft inventory; the use of VNAF PSYWAR aircraft and aircraft organic to US tactical units to augment the 5th Air Commando Sq support capability; the provision of a quick-reaction PSYOP capability for divisions and separate brigades/regiments; and the equipping of maneuver battalions with hand-carried loudspeakers. Definite plans had been formulated for increasing the MACPD staff from its authorized strength of 23 officers and nine enlisted men to a staff consisting of 51 officers, 25 enlisted men and two professional US civilian PSYWAR officers. <sup>118</sup>

(U) In December 1966, the 6th PSYOP Bn's second heavy mobile printing press became fully operational, with an immediate increase in the battalion's production output and a corresponding decrease in the backlog. Augmenting the battalion's in-country strength was the arrival of the 19th PSYOP CO, which was moved into the IV CTZ and located at Can Tho, with reproduction operations at Binh Thuy Airbase. This arrival increased the in-country PSYOP strength to four companies, and represented the first US PSYOP capability in the Mekong Delta area. <sup>119</sup>

#### The Chieu Hoi Program

(C) The Chieu Hoi ("open arms") Program, originally established by decree of President Diem on 17 April 1963 to encourage VC cadre to return to the side of the GVN, was thought to be potentially the most productive of the PSYWAR efforts. The program floundered throughout succeeding governmental crises, however, because of a lack of demonstrated interest in the part of GVN officials. From its inception until the end of 1966, the total number of returnees stands at 48,031. The year 1966 (20,242) represented an increase over 1965 (11,124) of 82 percent. The reasons for this recent marked increase in Chieu Hoi returnees has been attributed to the greater stability of the GVN, improvements within the Chieu Hoi administrative structure, the increased PSYOP effort; and the military pressure which continued to deprive the VC/NVA of their food, ammunition, and safe haven areas. <sup>120</sup>

(C) During 1966 the greatest PSYOP effort ever conducted in the Vietnam War was the TET (Lunar New Year) Holiday PSYOP Campaign, 9-20 January. This effort consisted of a nation-wide, all-media campaign by all GVN, RVNAF, and US civilian and military PSYOP agencies to convince all friendly and hostile groups in the RVN that the VC were losing the war. The goal was to influence as many VC and their supporters as possible to rally to GVN control within the framework of the Chieu Hoi Program (CHP) during and after the TET Holiday which began on 20 January. The Assistant Director for Field Services, JUSPAO chaired the US Mission task force which managed the US activities associated with the TET Campaign. MACV contributions included staff planning for the campaign;

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PAGE 558 OF 872 PAGES

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arranging for the printing of 92 million leaflets on US military presses; coordinating military aircraft shipment of the 69.5 million leaflets, which were printed in Okinawa and Japan, and USIS PSYWAR material from the Philippines; conducting an extensive multi-media command information program to support field commanders in orienting their respective personnel on the Chieu Hoi Program and the TET Campaign, assisting the RVNAF GPWD in developing a similar set of instructions and program for the RVNAF; committing the 5th Air Commando Sq to disseminate leaflets and conduct aerial loudspeaker broadcasts; and utilizing the "Project Jenny" airborne transmitter aircraft for radio broadcast in support of the TET Campaign. <sup>121</sup>

(C) US authorities were pleased with the immediate results of the TET Campaign. At the US Mission Council meeting of 31 January, it was noted that the daily returnee rate since the end of TET (24 January) was 84, as contrasted with the pre-TET January daily rate of 45. Ambassador Lodge noted that while Premier Ky had seemed rather cool toward the CHP in August 1965, he now appeared to be a firm supporter, which was a definite step in the right direction. However, subsequent analysis and scrutiny revealed that the returnee rate during the two weeks following TET was not as great as initially thought, for among those counted as Chieu Hoi returnees for the weeks ending on 29 January and 5 February had been 2,762 civilian refugees. In mid-February, the decision was made not to count civilian refugees as CH returnees. The majority of returnees referred to themselves as village guerrillas, and others classified themselves as VC draftees. Only one in five admitted to being a VC volunteer. While basic reasons for rallying were given as bombings, food shortages, inadequate care, separation from family, and lack of freedom, a large majority of returnees cited Chieu Hoi appeals as an important factor in their decision to rally. <sup>122</sup>

(C) In the wake of the Honolulu Conference (8-11 February) and a preliminary appraisal of the TET Campaign results and methods, PSYWAR authorities decided to program more extensive use of the "campaign" method for in-country PSYOP as an overall supplement to the separate PSYOP conducted in support of specific combat actions. During February, major military operations continued to receive priority PSYOP support. The four major combat operations during February--WASHER/WHITE WING, DOUBLE EAGLE, VAN BUREN, and two regimental-size sweeps in Darlac Province--accounted for a great number of Chieu Hoi returnees, and a GVN/US effort was begun to maintain the returnee rate at the high post-TET level. <sup>123</sup>

(C) In mid-March a trend toward higher-caliber personnel among the returnees was noticed, including a NVN first lieutenant and a VC regional force platoon leader, but VC terrorism against Chieu Hoi centers also increased. Center construction was stepped up with self-help returnee labor, supervised by contractors. The quality of the Chieu Hoi

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PAGE 559 OF 822 PAGES

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cadre was also improving through the national training program. The continued trend of defections involving important NVA and VC military and political cadre in early April provided an indication that the enemy's morale was apparently declining. In view of its evident success, and with USAID assistance, the GVN began giving more support to the CHP through its Ministry of Information and Chieu Hoi (MICH).<sup>124</sup>

(C) During April a Joint Chieu Hoi PSYOP Committee, consisting of JUSPAO, USAID, MACV, MICH, and GPWD representatives, completed preparations for implementing a GVN/US Joint Chieu Hoi PSYOP Campaign. Delivery of nine standard leaflets in 40 million copies was completed from US Army printing facilities in Okinawa and Japan, and 50 million more were slated for delivery in May. The MACV Political Warfare Directorate prepared a command letter on 29 April which provided instructions for the execution of MACV contributions to the campaign. The drive was to continue indefinitely throughout the RVN by all propaganda agencies in support of the GVN Chieu Hoi Program. MACV participation was to be accomplished within the framework of the JUSPAO National PSYOP Plan and the GVN/US Joint Chieu Hoi Program.<sup>125</sup>

(C) However, the returnee rate throughout the country fell off after the record March figure of 2,336. The daily average of 74 returnees realized during February and March fell to 54 in April. This decline was attributed primarily to the drop-off in military contacts during the period. Progress in the construction of CH centers and resettlement hamlets was accelerated, due largely to greater GVN emphasis on the program, greater availability of materials, and the rush to complete work before the rainy season. On 26 April the third training class for CH cadre was started at the National CH center; the class duration was for three weeks and consisted of one-third of the CH cadre from each province. Although funds for vocational training of returnees was not available at province level, several provinces had initiated sewing and brick-laying classes. Some of the basic problems involved in the CHP were the delay in construction of some centers, inadequacy of province-level training of the returnees, shortages of cadre, and a continuing lack of total support for the program. Many of the province chiefs, as well as officials at the GVN MICH level, applied their own interpretations to the program, which were sometimes contrary to its purposes.<sup>126</sup>

(S) Concerned with an apparent deterioration of the program, Washington authorities requested more information about the program itself, the attitude of GVN officials toward the program, definitions of various categories used in classifying the returnees, and the adjustment problems experienced by returnees after their discharge from the CH centers. It also suggested that the US Mission Weekly report be the sole recurring report to Washington on the CH Program.<sup>127</sup>

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PAGE 560 OF 872 PAGES

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(G) US Mission authorities did not believe that the program had deteriorated. In spite of certain shortcomings, it was noted that GVN officials at highest levels were "showing more support for the program than before January 1966." The "Chieu Hoi Program, excellent in theory, was severely compromised in the eyes of governments which succeeded Diem by the fact that it was closely identified with him." US authorities in RVN believed that they were in a better position, in late April, to give high-level emphasis to the program than ever before. In clarifying some of the management problems in the CHP, it was noted that the placement of CH operations under the Vietnamese Information Service (VIS) authorities had been directed by GVN decrees dated June, July, and September 1965, but that these decrees had not been enforced until MICK directed on 31 January 1966 that they be enforced. One effect of the decrees was that the Province CH Chief became subordinate to the Province VIS chief, and the salary of the District CH chief was reduced by 500 piasters.<sup>128</sup>

(FOUO) In July a MACV J2 Intelligence Officer was assigned on full-time liaison duty with USAID Saigon to coordinate intelligence exploitation of returnees. Three military officers were also given coordination responsibilities at the Corps level, and a fourth officer was slated for the same assignment. The USAID CH advisory staff reached full strength on 11 July when Mr. Ogden Williams arrived to assume the position of Inter-Agency CH Coordinator. Other members of the USAID CH staff included one American, two Filipino, and four Vietnamese employees at Saigon and two American civilians and two Australian Army officers on the staffs of the Regional Directors. USAID also planned to recruit 45 Filipinos for advisory work: two for assignment to the National CH Center, one each to the regional centers, and 39 to the provincial centers.<sup>129</sup>

(FOUO) In late July the US Embassy reported that since October 1965, 31 provincial CH centers had been repaired or expanded, eight were under construction, and plans had been approved for the remaining six. Although construction plans for 1966 called for four new Regional (Corps) centers at Da Nang, Pleiku, Bien Hoa, and Can Tho, actual construction had begun only in Pleiku. The Regional centers were expected to accommodate returnees who could not be processed satisfactorily at the Provincial centers and to control special facilities (such as in intelligence-exploitation capability and a satisfactory reception center for high-caliber returnees).

(FOUO) Hopeful prospect for the program was found in the improved attitudes of GVN personnel toward the CH concept. Unlike his predecessor, Dinh Trinh Chinh, who had failed to endorse the CHP fully, Maj Gen Nguyen Bao Tri (appointed MICK on 13 July) promised strong support for the program. US officials in I CTZ were also hopeful that with the favorable attitude of the new I Corps commander, Brig Gen Hoang Xuan Lam, an effective CHP could at last be launched in the I CTZ after many

PAGE 561 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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years. The II Corps commander Maj Gen Vinh Loc, also urged a greater CH effort in his area of responsibility. 130

(FOUO) By late July under the direction of the Joint CH PSYOP Committee, 60 million leaflets were being produced and distributed monthly and 20 new leaflets and a library of 35 loudspeaker tapes had been developed, with about 3,000 copies of the latter distributed to 24 loudspeaker planes of the 5th Air Commando Sq and other PSYOP operators. CH programs were broadcast daily by Radio Saigon and weekly by the Voice of Freedom. CH themes were also used in JUSPAO Cultural/Drama team performances, and films to publicize the CHP among the RVN citizenry as well as the GVN/FW military forces were in production.

(U) At a 27 July press conference the new MICH, Gen Tri, commented that the GVN CH policy would be guided by two principles: Unity of Command and Selection and Classification of Targets. He noted that the efforts of his Ministry were aimed at the goals of developing national solidarity, encouraging government responsiveness to public opinion and the latter's respect for the law, cultivating discussions and negotiations between various political and other rival groups, and emphasizing the need for a growing recognition of the basic right of freedom of thought by the citizenry, in a manner congruent with the gradual development of a society of responsible individuals and groups.

(S) Washington authorities were impressed with the progress made in the CHP and directed that the program objectives be pursued as a matter of top priority, with the 1967 program to be planned on a greatly expanded scale. They expressed concern as to the lack of data concerning the actual integration of the CH returnees into society, and felt that publicity of instances of genuine conversion of returnees to productive, loyal members of the RVN society would increase the effectiveness of the program. 131

(S) US officials in Saigon informed Washington that although it was clearly recognized that the CHP should be pursued on a priority basis, the "program in many provinces has always been woefully weak due to a variety of factors such as: poor quality of GVN administrative cadre, lack of overall GVN priority for program and GVN political instability and past failure to enunciate and implement clear and sincere revolutionary goals to steal VC thunder." They noted, however, that the direction of the CHP had been restored to its former status as an independent sub-ministry separate from the VIS, and that the new GVN team headed by CHP Chief Col Pham Anh appeared to be aggressive, but would need time to translate intentions into realities. 132

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

PAGE 562 OF 872 PAGES

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(S) On 22 August US authorities in Saigon informed Presidential Assistant Komer that "while many GVN inhibitions remain, progress now underway is impressive, and new organizational concepts the Mission is implementing, based on better trained personnel, more adequate funding, more imaginative inducement and exploitation techniques, and improved follow-through should produce sharply stepped-up program in FY 67." It was contemplated that plaster funding and dollar aid for FY 67 would be increased substantially over FY 66, and that the CY 67 CH returnee goal would be 45,000, or double the anticipated total for CY 66. It was noted that additional funds might be required as the program developed in FY 67 if the GVN accepted proposals to mount an increased bounty program (defection inducement for ranking VC personnel) and improve training and resettlement benefits. Filipinos being recruited would advise, monitor, and assist all CH activities at province and district levels. Because CH returnees were sometimes unacceptable for resettlement in existing hamlets whose inhabitants feared VC reprisal, CH hamlets appeared to be indispensable in the resettlement problem. Improved effectiveness in CH activity was visualized in terms of integrated and imaginative program devices, to include a bounty program and stepped-up local tactical PSYOP to improve inducements to defect; streamlined surrender procedures; more sophisticated and earlier interrogation requirements at initial points of CH processing; stepped-up tactical exploitation of returnees along the lines of the Malayan experience in PSYOP, counterintelligence, and combat patrols; inducement of high-level defections; improved vocational training; new resettlement and career opportunities; and a follow-up on returnees after they departed the CH centers. 133

(S) On a test basis a poster with the photographs and names of 50 known VC, along with appeals to the peasantry to contact them and persuade them to defect, was distributed in August in Gia Dinh Province, and plans were made to distribute similar posters in other provinces. The Mission Council also studied the possibility and significance of attempting to induce the defection of an entire VC unit. In mid-August a ranking returnee commented that the CH themes were aimed at low-ranking VC because they emphasized the miseries and hardships which the VC must endure; he suggested that VC cadres be targeted and that emphasis be placed on the varying rights and privileges among the different ranking cadres and the inconsistencies and dissensions between cadres of northern and southern origins. 134

(S) During July and August, there were added indications that the VC was becoming increasingly concerned over the success of the CHP. Among these indications were VC orders to assassinate CH returnees, actual assassinations of returnees, captured VC documents which described plans for increased counter-CHP propaganda, reported VC plans to attack CH centers, ground fire at aircraft on PSYWAR missions in areas which previously had been quiet, and VC espionage operations targeted against the CHP. 135

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 563 OF 872 PAGES

830624

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(S) As the GVN elections approached, US authorities in Saigon expressed agreement with Washington suggestions that the CH effort be accelerated during the pre-election period. The theme for this effort would be to contrast the free system in RVN with the totalitarian methods in NVN. As it turned out, this special appeal was negated by the recognition that the attractiveness of such a program must include the eligibility of the returnee to vote, and that an exception to GVN electoral law would be necessary, as the law prohibited voting by persons not registered on the electoral lists prior to 6 August.<sup>136</sup>

(C) Intelligence sources in early September reported that the VC were organizing cadres to train draft dodgers. The trainees would then be issued CH certificates to "return" to the GVN and volunteer for service within RVNAF, to become VC espionage agents. Several reports also indicated that the VC were instructed to collect CH passes found, and to "return" voluntarily to the GVN in situations in which escape was impossible.<sup>137</sup>

(U) The MICH now took steps to reduce the categories of returnees from five to the following three: military, political (including former "liaison agents"), and other elements (i.e., draft dodgers, deserters, VC sympathizers, and VC followers). The old term for a rallier, "Quy Chanh," was changed to "Hoi Chanh," to express more clearly the concept of a "person who has rallied to a Just Cause." CH authorities considered the increased use of Hoi Chanh as members of the CH cadre at all levels, and the provision of a comprehensive medical service program for Hoi Chanh.<sup>138</sup>

(U) Noting that the majority of Hoi Chanh surrendered themselves at the District level, and that they were supposed to be forwarded promptly to the Province CH Center for processing, Deputy Ambassador Porter proposed to COMUSMACV that the US military sub-sector advisors be urged to assist in the CHP in several ways. Commenting on these proposals, COMUSMACV reasserted MACV's full support of the objectives of the CHP within the limits of resources available, noting that MACV's primary concern was with the psychological aspects of the program and with the intelligence exploitation of the Hoi Chanh. MACV had collaborated with JUSPAC in producing and disseminating propaganda designed to induce defection, and had strengthened its exploitation effort by the assignment of J2 CH liaison officers at each Corps and by an increase of four personnel in each sector. COMUSMACV felt that the MACV sub-sector advisory teams were hard-pressed to meet all their responsibilities, which included support for the CHP, but he assured the Deputy Ambassador that they would provide all possible assistance within their capabilities.<sup>139</sup>

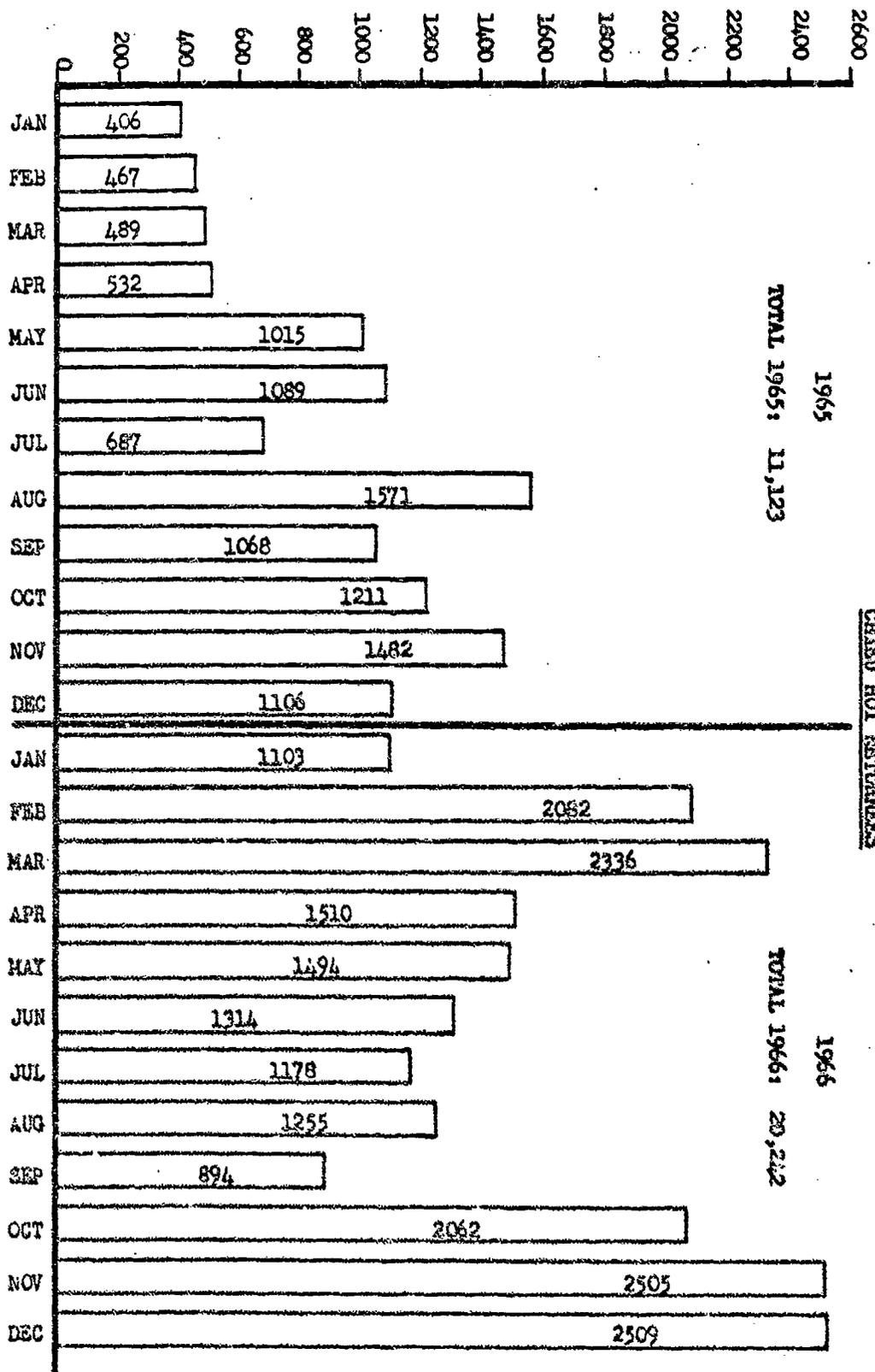
(U) In late October new MACV instructions for rallying procedures for VC/NVA returnees were disseminated, and all US and PW troops were

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PAGE 574 OF 822 PAGES

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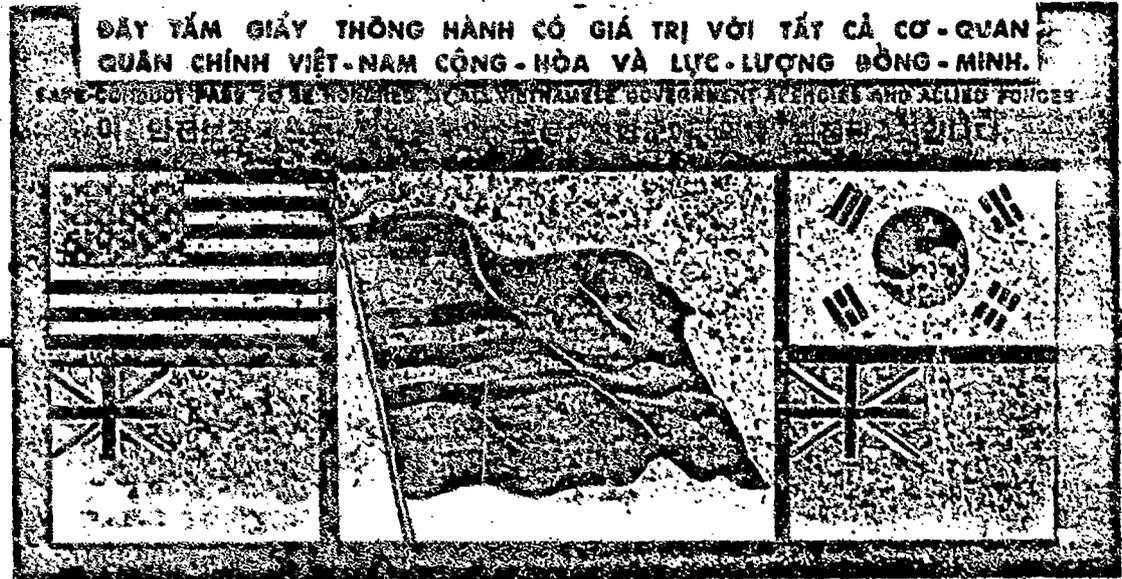
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PAGE 566 OF 872 PAGES

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advised that the success of the CHP depended upon proper treatment of the ralliers, as promised by the GVN. A propaganda leaflet instructed the potential defector to hide his weapon, report only in the daytime, and hold his hands up to show his good will; he was reminded that he could rally even without a leaflet by simply approaching Allied troops holding both hands upright. 140

(U) As 1966 ended, MACPD was working closely with JUSPAO and MICH to develop a PSYOP campaign for the forthcoming TET celebrations (8-12 February) in 1967. Based on the results of the 1966 TET campaign and the increasing numbers of Hoi Chanh rallying as a consequence of the increased tempo of military operations into former VC strongholds, there was every hope that the Chieu Hoi program in 1967 would equal or even surpass that of 1966.

#### Leaflet and Broadcasting Operations

(TS) In addition to the specialized effort devoted to the Chieu Hoi program and to support of military and medical Civic Action programs, the MACV psychological warfare effort in 1966 was channeled primarily into a continuing series of leaflet and loudspeaker broadcasting campaigns, aerial and ground, designed to hinder the enemy war effort, lower his morale, and induce defections in his ranks. For convenience, leaflet and broadcasting operations during the year are divided into four categories; continuing general PSYOP campaigns, Fact Sheet operations, the Trail Campaign, and operations in Cambodia.

#### Psyops Campaigns and Themes

(U) During January, continued use was made of leaflet themes that had proved themselves most effective in 1965. Three leaflets in particular, directed to NVA troops infiltrating into RVN, made basic but effective psychological points:

As you leave home to kill the peaceable people in South Vietnam, you leave behind burdens which the women, the old ones, and the children will have to bear. They do not complain, but they know that they must prepare themselves to mourn your death and shameful burial in an unmarked grave.

During your three-month march to South Vietnam, either you or one of your two nearest comrades will be stricken with malaria. If you take your malaria pills regularly, you may live to die in South Vietnam.

You will never see one of these and probably won't hear it. It is a B-52 bomber which carries 29,700 kilos of bombs and can drop them with pin-point accuracy. You

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 567 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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can avoid being a casualty by turning yourself in with a safe-conduct pass.

(C) In February a leaflet showing the picture and names of 27 captured NVA soldiers was disseminated, with the legend: "These men were released by the GVN and crossed the Ben Hai Bridge on 21 January. NVA soldiers who surrender or are captured by ARVN or Allied forces are treated well. Only they will live to return home." A PSYOP campaign to exploit the B-52 strikes in and near War Zone C (Tay Ninh Province), which commenced on 15 February, emphasized the fact that War Zone C was no longer a safe area and urged that the dangers of repeated bombings be avoided by using the safe conduct passes. By the end of March, 5.8 million leaflets with this theme and 1.1 million safe-conduct passes had been dropped on 14 targets, and loudspeaker broadcasts of 30-minutes duration had also commenced. <sup>141</sup>

(C) MACPD participated in a quick-reaction leaflet operation on 20 February in support of the US 1st Inf Div's Operation MASTIFF in III CTZ. B-52 strike-warning leaflets, general warning leaflets, and safe-conduct passes were dropped on suspected VC locations northeast of MASTIFF objectives for the purpose of fixing the VC in place in anticipation of attacks, or to cause their movement southwestward toward B-52 strike zones. <sup>142</sup>

(C) At the request of the US Naval Advisory Group and after coordination with the RVNAF PSYWAR Department, an all-media PSYOP campaign, announcing and explaining the stringent security measures in force along waterways and shipping channels within the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ), was initiated with loudspeaker broadcasts and leaflet drops on 6 March. Soon after the victories of the 1st ARVN Div in Operations LAM SON 234, 235, and 236 and the III MAP/ARVN victories in Operations LIEN KET 26/UTAH in early March, the I Corps PSYWAR personnel launched an all-media PSYOP campaign in conjunction with the GVN-sponsored victory celebrations to publicize these important and decisive victories. <sup>143</sup>

(C) In early April II Corps PSYOP units, conducting a campaign directed against NVA infiltrators in SVN, dropped over 2.7 million leaflets, including strip maps bearing surrender instructions, Chieu Hoi leaflets, and safe-conduct passes, on known or suspected enemy positions in Pleiku Province during Operation LINCOLN. Around-the-clock aerial loudspeaker broadcasts were employed using taped Chieu Hoi appeals, surrender instructions, and night harassment tapes to heighten enemy anxieties and fears. As directed by COMUSMACV, a special leaflet was developed, printed, and loaded into leaflet bombs in late April and dropped on 10 May in and around the Mu Gia Pass area, to discourage construction workers repairing damages in that area.

(C) In mid-May a new leaflet was developed for use in III CTZ stressing the differences between what NVA soldiers were told by their cadre

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Order Sec Army By JAG per

830624

PAGE 548 OF 2322 PAGES

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about RVN and the real conditions in the jungle and in RVN. "Those who believe these lies and invade South Vietnam face certain death, and can avoid it only by looking for and using a safe-conduct pass."<sup>145</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV directed CG III MAF and the DSA of I Corps on 25 May to prepare plans for a combined US/RVNAF PSYOP campaign in I CTZ, to reverse the trend of the people in that area toward non-identification with the GVN, and to gain and consolidate the support and loyalty of the people and members of the RVNAF for the GVN. COMUSMACV directed execution of this program in coordination with the RVNAF.<sup>146</sup>

(C) The 5th Air Commando Sq (C-47's) dropped leaflets in the War Zone Do Xa in I CTZ within four hours of B-52 strikes in that area in late May. The area covered included the radius of the bomb-blast noise envelope to exploit the fear and disorganization resulting from the raid.<sup>147</sup>

(S) Representatives of JUSPAO, US Embassy, and MACPD decided in July that production of a newspaper for distribution in VC-controlled areas was feasible. In order to build reader acceptance, to create a demand for this newspaper as a valuable source of news and to achieve unquestioned credibility, the following editorial policies were established: The paper was to include no comments and contain no polemical or tendentious writing, but was to be limited to factual news reporting and features. The emphasis of the paper was political reporting; it included items in support of US and GVN objectives, on building a viable government, revolutionary development, the Chieu Hoi program, understanding of the American presence, and news of victories over the VC and NVN forces. The writing was aimed at a barely literate audience, but the content was selected to appeal to officials and potential leaders of hamlets and villages. During the period August-October four newspaper issues were published and two million copies of each were distributed, except for the election campaign issue, which amounted to five million copies. Distribution percentage for the four CTZ's was 20, 25, and 35 respectively, determined in terms of estimated literacy rate and population density in VC-controlled or contested areas. Approximately half the total was airdropped, the remainder being distributed by PSYOP teams in support of tactical operations.<sup>148</sup>

(C) In response to COMUSMACV's inquiry concerning measures which were being used to counter NVN claims to military victories, MACPD reported that, in general, a leaflet program was not considered the most efficient method, because of the time and effort required to counter specific enemy propaganda data and the great effort required to distribute the leaflets. Although the Voice of America did not engage in counter-propaganda as such, it did present two hours of factual news reporting or news commentary daily, which effectively challenged propaganda broadcasting. The other methods used were interview programs with

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PAGE 569 OF 872 PAGES

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Chieu Hoi rallies, and the dispatch of personal letters from POW's and rallies to their families in NVN which explained the good treatment received from GVN/FWMAF and the actual outcome of battles in which they had participated. 149

(S) On 30 July COMUSMACV conferred with the Ambassador on the extensive press coverage and favorable impact on world opinion received after the 21 January and 20 July release of NVA PW's. US Mission officials had examined the idea of repeated releases, and their conclusion was that Article 109 of the Geneva Convention specifically required detaining powers to effect unilateral repatriation of PW's who were seriously wounded or sick, after caring for them until they were fit to travel. If skillfully handled, a continuing and regular program of repatriation of sick or wounded NVA PW's could stimulate favorable world opinion for the GVN and embarrass the Hanoi government. The latter's refusal to accept soldiers who were conclusively NVN citizens, or who, if prisoners, elected to remain in the RVN after being offered repatriation, would result in much adverse publicity for the NVN. COMUSMACV believed that such a program, planned for maximum publicity, if it avoided the implication that repatriation was merely a propaganda stunt, would offer convincing and repeated evidence of Hanoi's aggression against the RVN. 150

(S) Over two million copies of a new leaflet were printed in mid-August and dropped on two cities in the Red River Delta. The leaflet was titled "What is the Future?" and posed the alternate courses of either more bombs and more dead sons and brothers, or an honorable negotiation. It also emphasized the RVN/US willingness to negotiate, in contrast to Hanoi's refusal. 151

(C) MACPD informed COMUSMACV on 7 September that the PSYWAR effort against the VC infrastructure in the Saigon area had no US military participation but that a variety of US and GVN agencies had ongoing programs. However, there was no apparent centralized direction or control. PSYWAR in this area was largely a GVN activity and JUSPAO supported the MICH and the National Police PSYWAR Service in support of PSYWAR efforts against the VC. RVNAF participation was limited to coordination by the Capital Military Region (CMR) G-5 with the Mayor of Saigon, the Saigon Police, and the Saigon VIS. The CMR did participate in PSYWAR activities in the "outer-defense-belt" of Saigon and had prepared a PSYWAR plan in support of the defense of Tan Son Nhut Air Base. 152

(C) On 15 September COMUSMACV informed senior commanders that the restrictions on the use of US PSYOP resources to support the Vietnamese elections did not apply to exploitation of the election results. In preparation for the national elections, the GVN had printed four million leaflets entitled "Should I Vote on September 117." These leaflets were disseminated on the eve of the election by the VNAF. COMUSMACV enjoined his commanders to use all available PSYOP resources to exploit the opportunities created by the results of the elections. The only restriction

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PAGE 570 OF 822 PAGES

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was against references to victories by specific candidates. JUSPAO produced a leaflet which stated that the people had taken their first step toward true democracy, in spite of VC threats and the protests of a minority of the free citizens. It called on all Vietnamese, including those who had believed that true freedom could be gained through the VC movement, to recognize the mandate of the people and to join in the development of a true revolution in Vietnam.<sup>153</sup>

(C) During the floods in the Mekong Delta in September and October, US/GVN PSYOP agencies actively exploited the positive aspects of the GVN flood-relief program. Themes in these PSYOP included the citation of specific villages aided and the type of assistance rendered. The GVN MICH distributed a poster showing a flooded dwelling with the residents being evacuated, bearing the caption: "The responsibility for flood relief belongs to everyone in the Nation." JUSPAO issued ten separate press releases giving details of assistance offered to flood victims by USAID, GVN, and voluntary agencies, and of long-range plans for rehabilitation and crop replanting.<sup>154</sup>

(C) Soon after the Manila Conference (24-26 October), JUSPAO designed leaflets reporting the results of the conference. Some 40 million of these were disseminated in RVN starting on 29 October, and 12 million were dropped over NVN commencing on 3 November.<sup>155</sup>

(U) During December two national quick-reaction leaflets were printed and distributed. The first exploited statements by VC Lt Col Chuyen, who had rallied to the GVN; ten million of these leaflets were distributed country-wide, using as the theme Chuyen's personal letter explaining his reasons for rallying after ten years as a member of the Communist Party. The second leaflet exploited the assassination of Constituent Assembly leader Tran Van Van by VC terrorists. Three million of these leaflets were produced and given to MICH for distribution.<sup>156</sup>

#### Fact Sheet Operations

(C) Fact Sheet operations were conducted in NVN and consisted of the dissemination of propaganda material as a means of causing dissension among the citizenry, with the ultimate aim of forcing the ruling Lao Dong Communist Party in NVN to cease its aggressions against the RVN.

(TS) Fact Sheet operations were not conducted in early 1966 because the bombing pause over NVN, which had started on Christmas Eve 1965, was still in effect. On 7 January SECSTATE requested the US Mission's comments on the desirability and practicability of resuming Fact Sheet operations during the bombing pause. The Mission Council recommended that, except for the special TET Greetings drop planned for the eve of the TET holiday season (21-23 January), the operations not be resumed during the bombing pause, but that a mass leaflet drop be

PAGE 57 / CF 822 PAGES THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
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830624

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conducted upon its termination. SECSTATE agreed with the first proposal, but did not approve the plan for a mass leaflet drop at the termination of the pause. Hopeful for a favorable response from Hanoi to US peace initiatives, SECSTATE recommended that printing of leaflets for use after termination of the bombing pause be suspended.<sup>157</sup>

(TS) Following the resumption of bombings of NVN on 31 January, COMUSMACV requested authorization for Fact Sheet operations on 4 February, in order to place 15 million leaflets into the Hanoi-Haiphong Delta area and six million leaflets into the area from Thanh Hoa south to the DMZ. To facilitate an effective leaflet coverage of these areas, CINCPAC authorized flights as necessary into the ROLLING THUNDER area, as it had been defined prior to the standdown. In mid-February CINCPAC provided further authorization and guidance, indicating that normal Fact Sheet operations could be resumed in the area of armed reconnaissance/ROLLING THUNDER operations, and that operations outside these boundaries could be conducted occasionally over NVN at night and from high-altitude aircraft; the latter however, would be on a case-by-case approval from Washington.<sup>158</sup>

(TS) Following CINCPAC's authorization of armed reconnaissance area ROLLING THUNDER 51--which allowed transit of the Hanoi and Haiphong airspaces to carry out authorized air strikes--MACV PSYWAR authorities felt that the liberalization of these restrictions would apply to Fact Sheet operations as well. No comments were made on or after a Fact Sheet operation over this area in November, when leaflets describing the Manila Conference were dropped.<sup>159</sup>

(S) SECSTATE on 24 November requested information on the effectiveness of both the Fact Sheet program and the psychological campaign directed against the civilian population and of infiltrators from NVN. A joint MACV/JUSPAO study released on 20 December included the following points:

It is evident that the Hanoi Regime fears the effectiveness of psychological warfare directed against it and its efforts to conquer South Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh stated, on 22 October 1966, ". . . we must further heighten our determination to smash all spying and psychological warfare activities of the enemy, check and smash in time all maneuvers of the reactionaries and maintain public order and security in North Vietnam."

The NVA daily organ Quan Doi Nhan Dan, dated 27 November 1966, was even more explicit in expressing alarm over the effectiveness of PSYWAR directed against the North: ". . . the U.S. imperialists

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 572 OF 572 PAGES

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have stepped up their psychological and espionage warfare to an extremely vicious degree . . . they have launched many deceitful 'peace negotiations,' propaganda campaigns and resorted to other dirty psychological warfare tricks. On the one hand they seek every means to stir the reactionary elements to oppose our regime in an attempt to create troubles in our rear base; and, on the other hand, they use material means to buy up certain elements along with spreading groundless rumors and putting forward hypocritical sugar-coated arguments. All of the enemy's tricks have the dark aim of paralyzing our army and the people's vigilance and shaking our determination to fight."160

The study noted that considerable effort was being devoted to the gathering up of leaflets by the local authorities. In addition, "spontaneous" meetings were called to counter the leaflets. Other sources indicated that in some sections the people were warned that the leaflets were poisoned, and would cause slow death to anyone who picked them up. However, interviews with ralliers and PW's indicated that such warning had only limited success.

(S) The reluctance on the part of the North Vietnamese to discuss the contents of leaflets with their fellow countrymen made assessment of popular reaction difficult. Interrogations produced too small a sample on which to base any firm conclusions, and most of those interrogated had departed NVN in late 1965 or early 1966. Nevertheless, some conclusions were drawn from comments on leaflets dropped during this period. Of all leaflets dropped either in NVN or along infiltration routes, an NVA soldier's poem to his mother (see illustration) seemed to have the most impact, and was still being used as of the end of 1966. Captured NVA soldiers said this leaflet had had a definite affect on their morale. Warning leaflets had the effect of encouraging people to leave an area, and they resented it when NVN authorities would not permit evacuation. The people also appreciated being informed that civilians were not the targets.

(S) To improve their effectiveness, all leaflets designed for NVN and the NVA infiltrators were pre-tested on the Northern ralliers and prisoners. In this way, their potential effectiveness was determined before they were printed. Most psychological campaigns have a cumulative effect, which is difficult to measure at any one point in time. However, there were indications from the increasing number of defections that the NVN Fact Sheet campaigns was effective.161

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PAGE 511 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) A new technique was used for the first time in December 1966, that of printing and packing four different leaflets together. This, coupled with a smaller leaflet size, allowed a large increase in the number of leaflets that could be carried by a single aircraft for wind drift dissemination. Use of this technique resulted in the largest one-day drop to date-24,000,000 leaflets on NVN on 23 December. The total number of leaflets dropped over NVN during December amounted to 47,120,000 of all types. 162

The Trail Campaign

(TS) Soon after Washington authorities approved the plan, an intensive "Trail Campaign" was initiated on 24 January 1966 against the NVA infiltrators in Laos. The Trail Campaign was primarily a MACV effort within the context of a plan approved by the Director of JUSPAO and with JUSPAO participation in thematic content and leaflet design. The targets planned for this campaign consisted largely of way stations, staging and supply areas, routes, and trails leading to these areas, in NVN, the Laotian Panhandle, the Laos-RVN border areas, and the Cambodian-RVN border areas. The themes employed were designed to create in the infiltrators a feeling of anxiety and insecurity leading ultimately to a heightened susceptibility to surrender appeals. CINCPAC had specified in late December 1965 that leaflet and airborne loudspeaker operations in Laos would be conducted in accordance with BARREL ROLL/STEEL TIGER basic operations orders. (See Chapter V). In early January the [redacted] approved the proposal to conduct leaflet operations in the eastern portion of the Laotian Panhandle, but restricted it to "East of a straight line from YD 7125 to WE 6514 and then due North to intercept the DRV border." Most of the leaflet deliveries in Laos were made by C-47 aircraft. 163

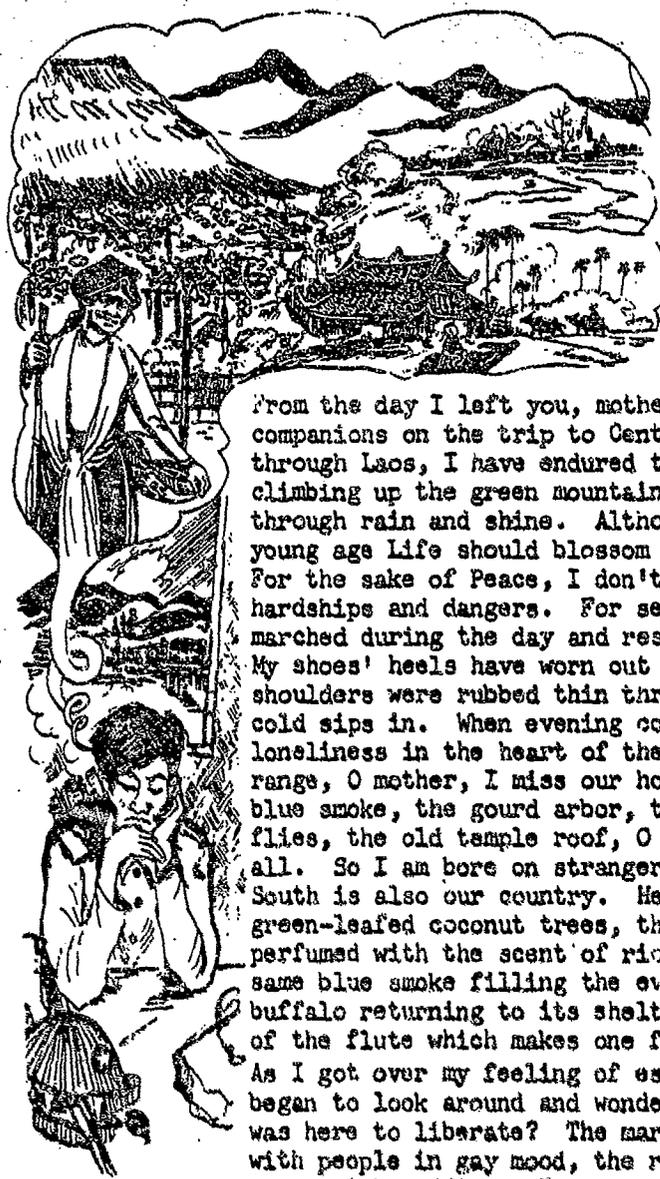
(TS) On 18 February 1966, CINCPAC authorized commencement of Trail Campaign operations over southern NVN. Trail Campaign leaflets were dropped over NVN beginning on 28 February, initially exploiting Hanoi's failure to respond to peace overtures during the bombing pause. The leaflets appealed to the people to persuade friends and relatives in the NVA to use the GVN safe-conduct passes when they arrived in RVN, so as to escape certain death and, ultimately to return home and live in peace. 164

(TS) Although initially the campaign was planned to last only three months, it was decided to continue operations indefinitely. In mid-May 1966, [redacted] COMUSMACV's proposed expansion of the area in Laos for [redacted] operations against NVA infiltrators, the area approved earlier having been found to be inadequate for effective coverage. CINCPAC recommended approval to JCS and defined the area proposed for expansion as including "all Laotian territory east of the following boundary: from WE 4577 at the NVN border South to intercept armed recon line at WD 5132, then along armed recon line to XC 8404, thence to YB 1581 thence to intercept the Cambodian border at YB 4538. 165

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A NORTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIER'S  
POEM TO HIS MOTHER

From the day I left you, mother, to follow my companions on the trip to Central Vietnam through Laos, I have endured the hardships of climbing up the green mountains and marching through rain and shine. Although with my young age life should blossom like a flower. For the sake of Peace, I don't mind enduring hardships and dangers. For several months, I marched during the day and rested at night. My shoes' heels have worn out and my jacket's shoulders were rubbed thin through which the cold sips in. When evening comes, besieged by loneliness in the heart of the Truong Son range, O mother, I miss our home, I miss the blue smoke, the gourd arbor, the little butterflies, the old temple roof, O how I miss them all. So I am bore on strangers' soil but the South is also our country. Here, I saw the same green-leafed coconut trees, the same roads perfumed with the scent of rice paddies, the same blue smoke filling the evening sky, the buffalo returning to its shelter, the sound of the flute which makes one feel homesick. As I got over my feeling of estrangement I began to look around and wondered what there was here to liberate? The market was crowded with people in gay mood, the rice field was green with paddies. From a curve-roofed pagoda came the sounds of a worship bell. The classrooms were full of cheerful children singing a song in chorus. And in a plot of garden the small butterflies were busy on the yellow cabbage flowers. Peace and happiness reigned throughout the country. But why "they ordered me to burn the villages, destroy the bridges, explode the mines and sow death around? Often my hand trembled when I had to lay a mine only to later witness people blown up and blood sprayed around. Whose blood it was? It was the blood of people like you, mother, and myself. That night, my eyes were filled with tears and my sleep was interrupted by nightmares.



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(S) There were no significant changes to the area authorized for the Trail Campaign operations during the remaining portion of 1966. The campaign succeeded in reaching infiltrators according to several interrogation reports, and to combat this effort, cadres were reportedly sent ahead of infiltrating units to tear up leaflets found on the trails. This tactic was not entirely successful, for many leaflets were picked up and read despite admonishments and warnings from the cadres. The best evaluation of the campaign was the number of NVA soldiers persuaded to rally or accept capture rather than death.

#### Cambodia

(TS) Increasing evidence in late 1965 and early 1966 indicated that there were NVA forces equivalent to two divisions in the Chu Pong area of Pleiku/Darlac Provinces, on the Cambodian border, and that areas just inside Cambodia were being utilized as staging and refitting sanctuaries. In late April 1966, COMUSMACV considered it essential to take steps to reduce the effectiveness of these units prior to their commitment to major operations in the RVN. Permission was requested from higher headquarters to initiate a PSYWAR leaflet campaign against these forces, with authority to overfly the Cambodian territory at night to a depth of 20 kilometers along Pleiku and Darlac Provinces. This request was based on the belief that there would be relatively little international impact from the proposed intensive PSYWAR leaflet campaign, and on the analysis that a wind-drift method of delivery from the RVN side of the border would be of only marginal value during May and practically infeasible in June. In a message to JCS, CINCPAC concurred in the proposed action and advised that such operations involved minimum risks, were least provocative because of their non-destructive nature, and were aimed at NVA personnel and not Cambodian nationals. Washington authorities approved the proposed leaflet campaign, but disapproved the request for overflight of Cambodian territory. Effective upon CINCPAC's approval, distribution operations could be conducted when there were prevailing westerly winds against NVA units in Cambodian territory immediately adjacent to Pleiku and Darlac Provinces. 166

(TS) On 1 June CINCPAC authorized conduct of the operations. Leaflets for this campaign were provided by the 6th Psyops Bn from out-of-country printing facilities; 1 to 1.5 million leaflets were delivered toward targets derived from current intelligence by C-47 aircraft assigned to the 5th Air Command Sq PSYOP. In an analysis of the campaign, COMUSMACV determined that the effectiveness would be enhanced if leaflets were dropped on that part of Cambodia adjacent to Kontum Province. His request for this expansion was approved by Washington authorities on 6 June. 167

(TS) In mid-June, in view of mounting concern over the use of Cambodia as a sanctuary by the VC/NVA forces, COMUSMACV believed it

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 576 OF 872 PAGES

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appropriate for Washington agencies to consider a psychological campaign against Cambodia itself. Realizing that sensitive issues such as the proposed expansion of the International Control Commission, the need to keep Cambodia non-belligerent, and the undesirability of expanding hostilities into Cambodia might preclude early implementation of such a campaign, COMUSMACV nevertheless felt that an intensive and well-coordinated psychological campaign might be useful in persuading Cambodia to adopt a more neutral position in the months ahead. The US Embassy and JUSPAC concurred in COMUSMACV's recommendation that the feasibility of such a campaign, directed against Cambodian leadership and opinion-makers with tasks and themes developed by Washington, be explored with a view of timely implementation in the future.<sup>168</sup>

(TS) On 21 September CINCPAC directed that a new plan for these leaflet operations be prepared in conjunction with JUSPAC. By early October, a plan proposing overflights anywhere along the Cambodian/RVN border had been prepared, with the qualification that overflights should not penetrate more than 20 kilometers without prior approval by JCS. The plan envisaged use of themes that would lower the morale of the enemy forces, create friction between cadre and soldiers, and encourage malingering, desertion, or defection. Delivery of these leaflets was to be executed at night by cargo-type aircraft over areas known to contain enemy personnel.<sup>169</sup>

(TS) Prevailing winds permitted delivery of only 16 million leaflets from 9-12 July, 1.2 million of 21 September and 1.4 million on 25 September. A complete analysis of the effectiveness of the program had not been developed by the end of 1966.

#### Civic Action Programs

(U) MACV Civic Action (CA) staff officers visited almost all the major US/FW units in RVN during January 1966, to orient themselves on new CA developments, to learn of problems encountered in the field, and to evaluate current and planned CA programs. To facilitate the preparation of news data illustrating the dual role of the fighting man in the RVN, MACV prepared a command letter on the subject on 10 January. This letter was distributed to the US press, to Vietnamese newspapers and magazines, and to third-country media representatives in Vietnam; dissemination to foreign countries was handled through USIA offices for more extensive coverage.

(S) In January the Philippine Government indicated its willingness to send to RVN a Civic Action Group (CAG) consisting of 123 officers and 1,707 enlisted men. Subsequently, a five-man US RT<sup>7</sup> was sent to the Philippines to provide the CAG an orientation on VC weapons, tactics, and techniques, as well as on those used by friendly forces in securing base areas, and on non-combat hazards associated with operations in RVN.<sup>170</sup>

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 577 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) GVN Defense Minister Co signed Directive 963 on 2 February; this document formalized the basic principles and regulations governing RVNAF CA activities. US authorities welcomed the finalization of this long-awaited directive, which was expected to encourage RVNAF to participate more vigorously in the military CA activities. The reluctance of many RVNAF personnel to engage in CA in the past was partly attributable to the fact that in many areas, the civilian population had higher living standards than the RVNAF members and their dependents. The directive designated the province chief as the GVN official who would prepare plans and coordinate and supervise the RVNAF participation in this program within each province. The objective of the entire CA program was to gain the support of the rural population, and RF/PF were to implement these CA activities whenever circumstances and capabilities permitted. The province chief was also able to assign CA activities to ARVN regular units stationed in his provincial area, upon approval of the CTZ and DTA commanders. The publication of this MACV/RVNAF-drafted document hopefully signaled the beginning of an enlightened attitude on the part of RVNAF and the acceptance of and cooperation with RVNAF by the people. US/FW CA staff officers were alerted to the potentials of this directive and advised to prepare to plan and execute CA projects jointly with RVNAF units whenever feasible.<sup>171</sup>

(U) On 23 February the GVN Ministry of Defense restricted expenditures of CA funds to indemnification of civilians for damages and losses due to RVNAF/US/FW combat activity; all other CA activities by RVNAF were expected to be funded by the Ministry of RD. On the same date USAID established a Regional Directors and Provincial Representatives Imprest Fund, which was not to be used in competition with the MACV subsector Revolving Rural Construction Fund, but was to be used in areas where no sub-sector teams were deployed and in areas where high impact could be obtained. Concurrence of the Provincial Coordinating Committee was required for use of this fund.<sup>172</sup>

(D) MACV CA staff officers visited the 5th Special Forces Group in the central highlands area in February to give emphasis to the CA projects among the Montagnards. The objectives of the staff visits during March were to monitor CA activities at each echelon, to insure that complete CA instructions were available to units and advisory teams, to notify commanders of observed CA shortcomings by subordinate units in the field, and to encourage CA participation by the ARVN units. An information letter on the concept of "County Fair" operations was published on 29 April. This was a coordinated GVN/USMC search-type action incorporating CA and PSYOP measures for rooting out VC infrastructure in suspected villages. MACV Directive 515-2 was published on 30 April, incorporating all previous CA guidance and establishing Military Civic Action Program (MILCAP) policies for all subordinate commands and advisory detachments. It outlined the responsibilities for the development, coordination, and implementation of CA programs, and

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PAGE 578 OF 876 PAGES

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recommended basic guidance to the FVMAF commanders. 173

(U) A special civic action account (the MACV Civic Action Fund) was established in April 1966 in the MACV Chaplains Fund for administration of funds donated to HQ MACV for use in military civic action programs. US units and advisors request disbursements from this special account for civic action projects conducted in their areas of responsibility. Projects undertaken contribute to the objectives of civic action and are the quick-reaction type designed to have a high impact upon the local civilian populace. 174

(C) On 23 May CG III MAF was directed by COMUSMACV to develop a specific CA program to alleviate the suffering of the civilian populations of Da Nang and Hue caused by the political crisis. This program, to be conducted jointly with the RVNAF, was designed to demonstrate to the people, as well as to anti-government elements, that the GVN was interested in their welfare and needs. Implemented on 26 May, it consisted of the issuance of food and relief supplies and the provision of temporary shelters through the I Corps Joint Coordinating Council's Commodity Distribution Committee. The RVNAF and the GVN civilian agencies, assisted by the III MAF Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) teams, provided medical treatment and gave priority to the evacuation of emergency cases. 175

(C) On 5 June SECDEF requested the US Mission in RVN to emphasize to the RVNAF the importance of military-civilian relations through proper attitudes and actions. President Johnson, in his 1 February address to Congress, had stressed the need for a five-year emphasis on CA programs, and SECDEF felt that the President's plan for worldwide emphasis on CA provided an auspicious occasion to stimulate renewed RVNAF efforts in this field. In response to SECDEF's request for information, the status of the MACV CA program, as of 1 June, was described as follows: 37 military personnel were assigned to the RD field on the MACV staff; about 2,200 others in the RD field throughout the RVN devoted 10 to 90 percent of their efforts to CA as additional duty; 11 staff personnel coordinated CA activities at MACV; and over 500 personnel were assigned to CA positions throughout the command. All planning for tactical operations included provisions for emergency medical care and distribution of food and clothing. 176

(U) US forces distributed the bulk of the International Voluntary Agency supplies brought into the RVN by the Catholic Relief Services and CARE. From January to May 1966, US forces distributed 12,860 tons of food, clothing, and medical items supplied by the Catholic Relief Services and about \$759,800 worth of CARE commodities. Planned US unit activities from January to May resulted in the construction or major repair of 78 schools, 43 bridges, 246 miles of road (none surfaced for all weather), and 29 dispensaries. However, this represented only a fraction of the total military effort. For example, overall schoolroom construction during

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PAGE 579 OF 874 PAGES  
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this period approached 1,000 units, with military advisory teams at province and district level routinely assisting in procuring or transporting required building supplies and furnishing technical advice as an integral function of their daily duties.

(U) All military CA projects were closely coordinated with the local GVN officials. Provincial coordinating committees, which included MACV, USAID, and GVN representatives, developed a file of potential projects within their areas which would have a high impact on the population. As US/FW/RVN forces were available, these projects were recommended in priority for completion as resources and time permitted. Australian and New Zealand forces regularly coordinated with the US 173d Abn Bde in projects of all types in the vicinity of Bien Hoa. Korean units pursued CA programs vigorously, with emphasis on construction of bridges and schools.

(U) USAID supplied almost all requirements for construction materials to US/FW forces, in the form of cement, reinforcing bars, and tin roofing. In many cases, USAID Province Representatives served as points of liaison between GVN officials and military unit staffs. Although not directly related to military civic action, USAID efforts had significant impact on improved civilian-military GVN attitudes and actions. During the summer of 1966, about 12,000 students, led by their teachers, participated in small social welfare and economic development projects in 33 provinces and in Saigon and Da Nang. This program was sponsored by USAID and the Ministry of Education, and US military personnel were requested to assist largely in the transporting of building materials from warehouse to project sites. USAID facilitated arrangements for US military personnel to assist in the GVN's physical education programs. 177

(U) MACV published a directive on 6 June establishing policies and procedures for the conduct of CA programs to provide maximum support for the GVN in its programs of RD and nation-building. CA functions were to support both the military and RD programs, to minimize adverse economic, political, and psychological impact on the civilian population, and to increase acceptance by the population of GVN control. All CA activities were to emphasize GVN participation and sponsorship; US/FW forces' support might be recognized, but was not to be accentuated. On 15 June MACV Directive 37-13, which concerned financial administration of US/FW forces' CA funds, announced the establishment of a revolving cash fund for US/FW forces, with which to finance, in coordination with local MACV advisors, high-impact CA projects that required rapid accomplishment and for which other funds were not available. An initial grant of 200,000 plasters per division and 100,000 per separate brigade or equivalent unit was provided to each commander upon application; a unit's monthly expenditure was not expected to exceed this basic amount. For CY 66, a force-wide 30 million plaster limitation was imposed. The

PAGE 580 OF 872 PAGES  
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fund was to be replenished periodically by the unit's Imprest Fund Cashier, who received cash from the MACV Aid-In-Kind Custodian upon submission of paid vouchers. The fund was to supplement existing programs and was not to be used when normal GVN financing was available; it was limited to use in the fields of education, public works, agriculture, health, and sanitation.

(U) In June the PSYOP Directorate was designated as the MACV liaison office for coordination of US scouting activities with the Vietnam Boy Scout Association. MACV assistance to the Vietnam Boy Scout Association centers on the voluntary participation of scout-trained personnel as advisors to unit and district leaders. During the period June-December 1966 more than 50 US scouts indicated an interest in assisting the Vietnamese scout movement, and about 20 were actively engaged in the program. The interest shown by advisors to Vietnamese military schools and training centers, coupled with the support of civic action funds, have made scouting available in several areas to refugee children and military dependents who would otherwise be unable to participate. Logistic support was given to two large camps, one at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in October and the other in Pleiku in December. Other MACV efforts in the youth field included English instruction and assistance in the fields of sports and physical education. Personnel of US units and advisory teams throughout Vietnam taught English classes for Vietnamese officers, civil servants, school children, and refugees on a voluntary basis. USAID provided English primers for use in connection with these classes. US units and advisory teams assisted sports and physical education programs by construction and repair of athletic facilities, providing personnel to act as coaches and physical education advisors, and fielding teams to compete with Vietnamese military and civilian teams. -77A

(U) On 23 July the first of a new series of monthly military CA reports was published, to indicate the broad scope and variety of CA projects completed each month by RVN/US/NV forces throughout the RVN. The major categories used in this statistical report were: 1) construction/repair projects, 2) medical treatments, 3) health and sanitation activities, 4) distribution of commodities, 5) redistribution of captured items, 6) education efforts, and 7) unit voluntary contributions. -78

(U) In response to a suggestion by the US Embassy, the PSYOP Directorate originated and carried out a program for providing coaching assistance to Vietnamese athletes preparing for participation in the 5th Asian Games. Volunteers with previous coaching experience were obtained from all commands to spend four months assisting the Vietnamese. This program produced dramatic improvement in the ability of Vietnamese coaches to train athletes and enabled South Vietnam to send a team to the Asian Games competition which brought honor and favorable notice to their country. The coaches also served as physical education instructors in Saigon High Schools, and were commended by school directors and GVN Ministry of Sports officials. -79

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(U) At the end of July, MACPD informed J4 MACV that the military CA program had reached such proportions, both in quantity of shipments and in command emphasis, that distribution through an opportune transport system was no longer adequate. J4 was requested to determine and establish a system which would be most effective in distributing the increasing tonnage of CA commodities. 179

(U) At a mid-August conference attended by the USAID Child Welfare Officer, the Director of Foster Parents Plan (Vietnam), the UN Welfare Advisor to the Ministry of Social Affairs, and representatives of MACPD, the question of military construction of new orphanages was discussed. Because massive construction of orphanages in Korea had encouraged poor families to abandon their children, the conference members agreed that the MACV CA program should be directed toward improving existing orphanages rather than building new ones. 180

(U) In September, Ambassador W. Averell Harriman queried Presidential Assistant Komer in Washington about the ultimate disposition of swill from the military messes in RVN, suggesting that this commodity be used in support of pig farms near US camps. In answer to the query COMUSMACV noted that the 1st Cav Div was contributing some 5,000 gallons per month and that other US units had similar programs. Distribution of swill to hamlets near US installations, COMUSMACV had found, a worthwhile project with high impact. 181

(U) CINCPAC informed COMUSMACV in mid-October that a proposal had been made by a Newspaper Enterprise Association representative that the national urge to send Christmas gifts to military personnel in Vietnam might be channeled to support the CA program in Vietnam. In his letter to the Assistant SECDEF (Public Affairs) on 1 November, CINCPAC noted that because of the plaster-conversion limitation imposed on COMUSMACV for programmed military spending, the ASD (PA)'s suggestion that contributions be channeled into existing funds and agencies appeared to be the most practical course to adopt. He advised that if this course were pursued, USAID should be encouraged to channel contributions into payment for services and for the purchase and shipment of materials to RVN, thereby reducing the influx of US dollars into the country. 182

(C) Specific examples of the MACV CA program for the last two months of 1966 indicated the degree of progress made in this field since the beginning of the year. At the end of November, a summary report noted:

The civic action program in I Corps was received well by the people. ARVN and US force civic action teams in Quang Tri Province assisted in the movement of 800 refugees to secured areas for medical attention, refugee relief and USAID commodity distribution. The

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PAGE 582 OF 728 PAGES

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amount of construction completed by US forces decreased during November. A continuing shortage of building materials and items such as MEDCAP supplies inhibited the US program in I Corps. In II Corps, RVNAF participation in the civic action program was negligible while US and FVMAF continued to support the program. There was a slight decline in US civic action efforts in some areas of II and III Corps because of heavy operational requirements; however, an increase in the number of joint construction projects was seen as US units coordinated their civic action projects with provincial RD plans. RVNAF participation in the program in II and III Corps continued to be negligible; although, in III Corps ARVN and RF/FF interest in civic action projects has increased. Of any program, medical treatment continued to have the greatest impact on the rural population. Distribution of food, clothing, soap and building materials, for those persons without the basic necessities, was next in line. In Hau Nghia, civic action efforts by a US team so impressed the people at Duc Hanh "B" hamlet that 40 families returned and began reconstructing houses destroyed previously by the VC. In the IV Corps, the program consisted primarily of medical treatment, preventive medicine, sanitation and distribution of food and clothing. Limited civic action occurred in Go Cong, Kien Phong, Phong Dinh and Kien Hoa Provinces. Civic action increased in the other 11 provinces. The VNN participated in the program for the first time. 183

Similarly, the report issued as of the end of December indicated the weaknesses as well as the strengths of the CA program:

The civic action program in I Corps continued to be received well by the people. Commodities and gifts were distributed by combined US/RVNAF groups to children for Christmas. Timely assistance from US/RVNAF personnel aided the victims of the 24 December Flying Tiger aircraft crash in Binh Thuan Hamlet where 121 persons were killed and many residences were damaged or destroyed. In II Corps, medical treatment and commodity distribution continued to be two primary RVNAF civic action projects. In Pleiku and Ninh Thuan Provinces, RVNAF displayed little interest in civic action while civic action was a major contribution to the RD program effort in Khanh Hoa and Binh Dinh Provinces. There was a slight decline

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PAGE 583 OF 721 PAGES

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in civic action efforts in some areas of III Corps because of increased operational requirements. Another contributing factor to this decline was the tremendous amount of time and effort expended by the provinces in development of the 1967 RD plan. RVNAF participation increased over last month. RF/PF continued to improve their active participation in civic action projects. In IV Corps, emphasis was placed on medical treatment, commodity distribution and educational classes. Noteworthy examples of Vietnamese participation were immediate relief for fire victims in Vinh Binh Province and voluntary contributions from parents to build a high school in Vinh Long Province. A high impact US action was the plastic surgery performed on eight resident of Chau Doc Province. In An Giang, RF/PF made voluntary money contributions to two civic action projects. Additionally, 31,200\$VN were voluntarily contributed to schools and orphanages. Emphasis was placed on repair and construction of public facilities, playgrounds; classrooms and bridges.<sup>184</sup>

#### Medical Civic Action Programs

(C) During 1966 the Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) continued to play an important role in the overall military civic action effort throughout the RVN. The MACV Surgeon was responsible for the medical technical direction of MEDCAP, while senior advisors, component commanders, and commanders of RVNAF tactical units had responsibility for conducting medical civic action projects within their zones. MEDCAP I projects were conducted by using military personnel and resources to treat indigenous personnel, through RVNAF counterparts, in rural and often remote areas, providing tangible evidence that GVN was interested in the welfare of the people. In some cases the only evidence of the government heretofore visible to these people had been the village chief, policeman, or tax collector, so the MEDCAP teams, which always included RVN military personnel, created a favorable impression of the RVNAF and the GVN. Since the basic intent of MEDCAP I was to establish and maintain a continuing spirit of mutual respect and coordination between the RVNAF and the civilian populace, it was essential that US personnel working the program remain in the background. Every effort was made to indoctrinate RVNAF counterparts in order that some day they could assume responsibility for the entire program without US personnel support. MEDCAP II consisted of projects conducted by major US and FVMAF troop units, of battalion size and larger, not working directly through Vietnamese officials. Each project was initiated by submission of a formal plan which had written concurrence of the RVN Provincial government, the USAID Provincial Representative, and the

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PAGE 584 OF 622 PAGES

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MACV Sector Advisor. Formal written approval of the plan was obtained from MACV prior to implementation. 185

(C) The supplies necessary to carry out the mission of the MEDCAP continued to be funded by USAID and distributed through RVNAF medical depots. Every effort was made to persuade Vietnamese medical units to requisition supplies for all personnel in their immediate geographical area who were performing medical civic action projects, including the US teams; this was considered necessary as the first step toward turning over the entire program to RVNAF units. However, late in the year a study of medical supply support to MEDCAP indicated that it could be improved, duplication eliminated, and supply management of requirements simplified, if supply support came from the same logistics system providing medical units with their regular operational medical supplies. Under this proposal the RVNAF logistics system would support all RVNAF medical units, including unit MEDCAP supply requirements. Similarly, USARV, NAVFORV, and 7th AF would support all medical supply requirements of their respective US and FVNAF medical customers. MACV component commands concurred with the study's recommendations, and it was planned to coordinate and phase the transfer of MEDCAP supply support of US and FVNAF MEDCAP teams from RVNAF to MACV component commands during early CY 67. 186

(C) During the period 1 April to 30 June MEDCAP treatments increased from an average of 450,600 per month to approximately 800,000, and by the end of September the monthly figure had reached 1,000,000. By the end of 1966 a total of 9,765,591 Vietnamese had been medically treated through MEDCAP, at a cost of approximately 15 cents per treatment, as compared with less than 6,000,000 during 1965 at 22 cents per treatment. 187

#### Military Provincial Hospital Augmentation Program

(C) During 1966 the Military Provincial Hospital Augmentation Program (MILPHAP) continued to stress the use of military medical personnel to treat RVN civilians in civilian medical installations and in field. This program augmented the MEDCAP. The RVN is a country of approximately 14,000,000 people with few physicians, most of whom are either in the RVNAF, are not practicing, or are too old to practice, leaving only a minimum number to care for civilians. This paucity of professional medical education made it necessary, in many instances, to place RVNAF physicians in civilian hospitals and permit the same physician the right to a civilian practice. 188

(C) On 1 January 1966 there were six MILPHAP teams in-country; by the end of the year this number had increased to 21 MILPHAP, plus the two special surgical teams. The MILPHAP team commanders did not assume responsibility for the operation of province hospitals or health services, but supported and assisted their counterpart medical chiefs in carrying out their ultimate responsibilities for all health matters. The MILPHAP

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PAGE 585 OF 872 PAGES

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teams attempted to integrate themselves into the entire health service operations, as opposed to assumption of responsibility for any one section thereof. The province medical chief remained in charge and retained final veto power over US team proposals.<sup>189</sup>

(C) In November 1966 the project title was changed from Military Provincial Hospital Augmentation Program to Military Provincial Health Program, with the codename remaining the same (MILPHAP). This change enabled the teams to become more fragmented and to offer needed medical assistance outside the regular civilian medical installations.<sup>190</sup>

(C) During the year significant steps were taken by USAID to improve medical supply support to US MILPHAP teams. The USAID logistical advisory branch to the GVN Ministry of Health (MOH) depot system was expanded; the pipeline was shortened by requisitioning medical supplies from the US Army Depot Ryukyus Islands, effective 1 October 66; and a program was initiated to streamline GVN/MOH depot procedures. The rate of fill at the MOH depot at Phut Tho (Saigon), had improved from 30 percent initial fill in September to over 50 percent in December. It was anticipated that fill rates of 80 percent and over would be possible by April 57. This will ease considerably the burden of MILPHAP teams, which under the MILPHAP concept must receive their supply support through the GVN MOH, on the theory that the practical value of their advisory mission would be downgraded were they to have sources of supply available to them that are not available to their RVN counterparts.<sup>191</sup>

(U) Not part of the MILPHAP program, but of inestimable value to the people of RVN, were the medical contributions by several Free World nations. On 23 July the first Philippine civilian medical team arrived in RVN, followed six days later by a similar team from the United Kingdom. A Spanish medical team reached Saigon on 8 September, and a Brazilian contribution of medical supplies arrived in RVN on 12 September. Possibly the most dramatic Free World medical assistance was evidenced by the arrival in Saigon harbor on 14 September of the German Federal Republic's gleaming white hospital ship Halgoiland.

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PAGE 586 OF 821 PAGES

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PAGE 587 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 58 OF 72 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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PAGE 596 OF 872 PAGES  
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CHAPTER VIII

CONTINUING CHALLENGES

CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE IN RVN

From Political Crisis to a Constituent Assembly

(C) At the beginning of 1966 the Government of Vietnam (GVN), in power since June 1965, appeared by recent Vietnamese standards to be relatively stable. Relations between MACV and the government of Premier Nguyen Cao Ky were generally excellent, and close cooperation between COMUSMACV and Chief JGS, the apolitical Lt Gen Cao Van Vien, was leading to an increasingly effective prosecution of the war. Yet behind the facade of governmental solidarity lay a number of fundamental sources of trouble, any one of which might at any time erupt and threaten the fragile fabric of the Ky government. Chief among the issues of great sensitivity, many of them interrelated, were a basic feeling of dissatisfaction toward the military junta, especially on the part of out-of-power politicians; a fragile relationship among the senior officers making up the ruling National Leadership Committee (NLC); an increasing tension between "northerners" and "southerners" within the Ky government; political more than doctrinal differences between Catholics and Buddhists, dating from the Diem regime; and, overshadowing all factors, the worsening economic situation in RVN.<sup>1</sup>

(C) The GVN domestic political program for 1966, as outlined to a member of the US Mission on 7 January by the Special Assistant to Premier Ky, provided for adoption of democratic processes at something less than high speed. It was clear that the ten-man NLC (also called the Directorate) was firmly opposed to holding free elections for a National Assembly during such a critical phase of the war, and proposed instead to initiate only the first steps in building democratic institutions in RVN. The first move, according to the NLC, was to appoint a "Democracy-Building Council" which would draft a constitution and statutes concerning political parties, elections, and possibly regulation of the press. The constitution, to be drawn up after consultation with provincial councils, political elements, and leaders of the politico-religious sects, would then be submitted to the electorate for approval.<sup>2</sup>

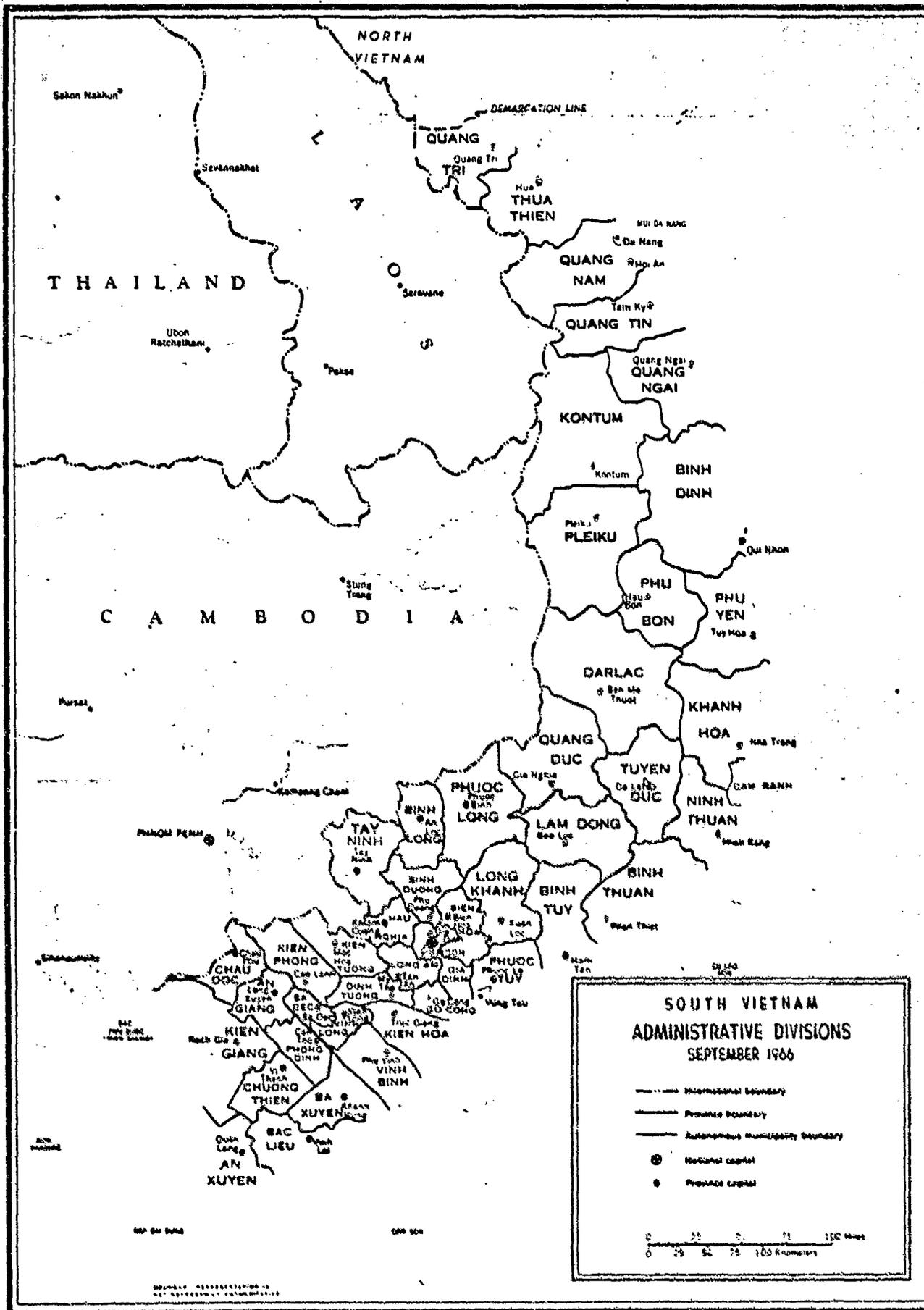
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(U) The second annual session of the National Armed Forces Congress, composed of over 2,000 officers, was convened in Saigon on 14-15 January. In a major policy address, Premier Ky outlined the primary GVN goals for 1966: to win the war, to pacify and reconstruct the rural areas, to stabilize the economic situation, and to build democracy. Ky pointed out that the Armed Forces had assumed power, not with the intention of clinging to it, but to create the necessary conditions for setting up a true democracy. The Democracy-Building Council, he announced, would be appointed soon after the Lunar New Year (TET) to draft a constitution for submission to a popular referendum in October 1966; democratic elections were promised for 1967.<sup>3</sup>

(S) While the military congress was in session, the year's first rumors of a coup broke out, inspired probably by the presence of so many officers in Saigon as well as by the approach of TET (21 January), the traditional period in RVN for settling accounts in preparation for the new year. These rumors, which lasted several weeks, ran the gamut from a peaceful realignment of the NLF, with Ky being replaced by one of his colleagues, to a full-scale military-supported coup backed by disgruntled elements both within and without the RVNAF. A GVN spokesman denied to the press that security services had arrested some junior officers planning a coup, but Premier Ky later acknowledged to Ambassador Lodge that a small dissident group had been uncovered and neutralized. It appeared that the affair had posed no significant threat to the Ky regime, but it gave a foretaste of events to come.<sup>4</sup>

(S) Meanwhile, in the I CTZ far to the north, there appeared the first minor rumblings of what was to become the principal political crisis of 1966. The first event, not, like the cloud no larger than a man's hand, was apparently insignificant. The I Corps Commander Lt Gen Nguyen Chanh Thi had differed frequently with Col Thien, the Mayor of Da Nang, over the administration of that important city, and on 16 January Col Thien was relieved and replaced by a civilian physician, Dr. Man. The US Consul in Hue warned that the change in mayors might have political repercussions; Dr. Man, he noted, was inexperienced in public administration and in politics-military affairs, and any change in the delicate balance of power in the Buddhist stronghold was dangerous. "Student, Buddhist, and intellectual statements of dissatisfaction with current government continue," the consul reported on 24 January, "even though for time being their unhappiness not being expressed in any forceful manner." He added that the Buddhists "remain very sensitive to any acts by American military which they regard as anti-religious or threat to national sovereignty."<sup>5</sup> On 2 February some 150 villagers marched on a district headquarters between Hue and Phu Bai to protest the alleged killing of a civilian by US Marines the previous day; the gathering dispersed quietly, but again the US Consul in Hue warned that it augured probable increasing difficulties in the area over the American military presence.<sup>6</sup>



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(S) On 7 February Chief of State Thieu and Premier Ky met with President Johnson in Honolulu in a two-day conference on the political, social, and economic aspects of the war. The subsequent Declaration of Honolulu outlined the joint US/GVN goals of a determined military effort together with attacks on hunger, ignorance, and disease in RVN. The fact that the conference had taken place on US territory was seized upon by dissident elements in RVN as signifying undue subservience by the Ky government to its US allies.

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(C) On 21 February Premier Ky announced a cabinet reshuffle which, in the view of the US Mission, would result in a stronger government by adding young, energetic southerners while retaining in other positions the displaced members around whom dissidents might rally.

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(S) On 3 March Premier Ky flew to Hue, reportedly to investigate allegations that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was engaging in political activity against the government. The [REDACTED] meeting was apparently acrimonious, with charges and countercharges from both sides, and it became increasingly clear that one of the two would have to back down. Ky returned to Saigon to solicit support from the other members of the NLC, calling for a formal vote of confidence on the basis of dismissal [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] On 10 March the NLC backed the Premier, agreeing to the relief of [REDACTED] and suggesting that he should go abroad for an indeterminate period. Thi apparently accepted the decision, and the following day a GVN communique announced [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had been granted sick leave and that he would be succeeded [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (A detailed treatment of the events leading to [REDACTED])

[REDACTED] is presented in a monograph classified TS published by the Military History Branch, HQ USMACV, on 9 December 1966, entitled "The March-June 1966 Political Crisis in South Vietnam and Its Effects on Military Operations."

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(TS) COMUSMACV's first official indication [redacted] came on 9 March, when Gen Co, Deputy Premier and Minister of Defense, advised him of the meeting to be held the following day. [redacted]

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[redacted] On 11 March, [redacted] COMUSMACV discussed with US Mission officials and with CG III MAF the possible impact of the relief in I CTZ. He noted that a reaction appeared to be taking place [redacted] with the objective of restoring him to duty or embarrassing the GVN; COMUSMACV felt that the latter objective was the motive of potentially dissident elements in I CTZ.

The Vietnamese in Central Vietnam have never been genuinely sympathetic or loyal to the Saigon government and we are seeing a manifestation of this attitude. In my opinion there is a great prospect that political trouble of a serious nature is again to develop in the Da Nang/Hue area. All of us deplore . . . the resurgence of political unrest and problems which have set us back so often in past years. Such seems to be inevitable in this long and tortuous task of rebuilding a nation concurrent with fighting a war. These two tasks tend to mutually interfere and this phenomenon is at the root of our problems in achieving rapid success.<sup>11</sup>

(S) [redacted] COMUSMACV instructed all US subordinate commanders to avoid generating rumors on this subject, and to counsel their RVNAF counterparts to understand and accept the administrative action and to concentrate on the all-important mission of getting on with the war.<sup>12</sup>

(S) The predicted reaction in I CTZ [redacted] began immediately; some 2,000 persons, including ARVN personnel, took part in a peaceful demonstration in Da Nang on 11 March, the theme being "Down with the Generals' Command in Saigon." In the next few days other demonstrations took place and schools were closed in Da Nang and Hue, and it became apparent that the protests were being organized with the tacit approval of local officials, chief among them Mayor Man of Da Nang, [redacted] [redacted] Meanwhile leaders of the Buddhist Institute in Saigon declared the country to be in a "state of crisis" and called for the return to public life of several generals who had taken a prominent part in the overthrow of the Diem regime in 1963.<sup>14</sup> In Da Nang, a general strike called on 13 March was about 90 percent effective; it was instigated by the "Military and Civilian Struggle Committee for I Corps," composed of elements loyal to Thi and including ARVN personnel.<sup>15</sup>

(S) On 15 March the GVN made a decision, afterwards much criticized,

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PAGE 602 OF 872 PAGES

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[redacted] to return to Da Nang temporarily. [redacted]

[redacted] would fly to Da Nang on 16 March to pack his belongings, say goodbye to friends, and demonstrate publicly that he had accepted his dismissal as being in the country's best interest; on his return to Saigon, [redacted] depart for the US and a medical check, a trip arranged by DOD and proffered by COMUSMACV. In Da Nang, and the next day in Hue, [redacted] greeted by large and enthusiastic crowds. His addresses were moderate but ambiguous, stressing that he himself was a poor man without education, that he was always on the side of the people, and that he would be willing to service his country anywhere.

[redacted]

(TS) In a meeting with Chief of State Thieu on 19 March, COMUSMACV gleaned the official GVN reaction to the unrest in I CTZ, a reaction perhaps not unmingled with wishful thinking. According to Gen Thieu, the majority of RVNAF personnel supported the dismissal.

[redacted]

Thieu felt that [redacted] would return to Saigon, and would be agreeable to going abroad. Thieu further claimed that the Buddhists had been consulted [redacted] and had acquiesced, but despite their agreement they were now quick to capitalize on the situation; the Buddhist argument was that the relief of Thi demonstrated a lack of unity among the generals, that the generals were not united because they had political ambitions, and that therefore the generals should be returned to the Army and that the civilians should take over the running of the government.<sup>-7</sup>

(S) The Directorate (NLC) already had decided not to compromise with the Buddhists in any way, reaffirming its announced plan for a constitutional referendum in the fall of 1966 and general elections in 1967; on 19 March Premier Ky, in an address at Dalat, made it clear that "any form of disturbance . . . will have no influence on the government. The Armed Forces and the Administration will not yield to unjustified claims which are contrary to the interest of the nation and the people."<sup>18</sup> The Buddhist reaction to this stand was an immediate demand that the GVN be replaced at once by an elected civilian government; for the first time the struggle forces began attacking Ky by name. On 23 March there were general strikes in Da Nang and Hue, and the struggle propaganda became increasingly anti-American in tone: although the American people and troops were thanked for their assistance to the Vietnamese people, they were simultaneously accused of infringing on Vietnamese sovereignty and blocking democratic movement in order to strengthen their control over the GVN.<sup>19</sup>

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(TS) COMUSMACV took a very poor view of the propaganda of the struggle groups. On 24 March he had a meeting on the subject with [REDACTED]

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I told him I was very concerned about the military situation in I Corps and that I did not believe the people in I Corps realized the seriousness of the situation. I stated as I saw the situation there were four columns marching into Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces from North Vietnam and Laos and fifth column activities in Da Nang and Hue. \* \* \* Further, I told him I was concerned about the reaction of the American public when they learned that 210 Americans had been killed and 808 wounded between the period 1-22 March and, despite this sacrifice, civil disorder had been allowed to take place in Da Nang and Hue which not only failed to recognize the contribution of the Americans but was derogatory to them.<sup>20</sup>

(TS) Beginning on 25 March, an overt incident in Hue provided fuel for the struggle propagandists. During the course of the demonstrations a student leader posted a banner with provocative, anti-American sentiments; a US Marine promptly tore the banner down. The student leader objected, and demanded a public apology. After many telephone calls involving US Mission and military personnel, the matter was smoothed over when a US advisor to the 1st ARVN Div wrote a letter to the student expressing regret over the incident. COMUSMACV accepted the fait accompli, but was not happy about it: "This was a very distasteful action from my point of view because of the hotheaded attitude of the student leader who was either intentionally or unwittingly aiding and abetting the VC. The young man . . . is apparently 25 years of age and should be serving in the Army."<sup>21</sup> With the concurrence of Ambassador Lodge, COMUSMACV on 28 March wrote to Lt. Gen Vien, Chief JCS, expressing his concern over the whole struggle situation:

. . . an unjustified abuse of United States policy reflected in a series of radio broadcasts, together with display of English language signs obviously intended to provoke US military personnel--the same personnel whose sacrifice of life and limb has played an important role in enabling the citizenry of Hue and the region as a whole to pursue the good life in safety.

Abuse of United States military presence in the northern reaches of the Republic . . . not only degrades troop morale, but places me in an exceedingly difficult and embarrassing position in attempting to explain the situation.

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It is for the reasons just cited that I address you in the frank, straightforward manner that marks our association to seek your assurance that United States forces, who in themselves are an inspired "struggle group" dedicated to serving your countrymen, are treated with customary dignity and spared unnecessary interference in accomplishing the tasks entrusted to them.<sup>22</sup>

(S) [redacted] remained in the I Corps area, ignoring all GVN requests that he return to Saigon and either accept a GVN position or go abroad for his health. His presence continued to fragment loyalties; much of the 1st ARVN Div supported, at least tacitly, the struggle movement, although on 30 March the GVN ordered seven of the most politically-inclined officers of the division transferred to Saigon. On the same day an incident in Da Nang, in which a USMC vehicle scraped the bumper of a VN truck, was greatly magnified by the struggle-group agitators, who demanded that "top US officials" come to Da Nang to settle the matter within 48 hours, or "we will not be responsible for the lives and property of US residents in Da Nang."<sup>23</sup>

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(S) By the beginning of April the struggle forces had taken control of many of the centers of political power in Da Nang and Hue, and hard-core elements were established not only in I Corps towns and villages, but also in many areas of the II CTZ. The effect on the military situation was becoming serious. While US and ROK forces continued to carry the fight to the enemy:

RVNAF activity, reflecting the political turmoil, dropped off sharply, particularly in I Corps where the First Division Commander has, in effect, led the division in a passive mutiny against the Government. The Viet Cong, apparently not wishing to divert the Vietnamese from their internal bickering, mounted only four small-scale attacks [in the week 3-9 April], the lowest total since the week of October 6-14, 1965. The number of heavy contacts also decreased, with the total RVNAF casualties dropping to 278 from 518 last week, the lowest weekly total since the . . . week of February 12-19, 1964 in the wake of the Khanh coup . . . .<sup>24</sup>

(S) On 3 April Chief of State Thieu announced that a national political congress shortly would convene to draft a constitution. On the heels of this concession, however, Premier Ky declared at a press conference, "I consider Da Nang to be in the hands of the communists, and the government will organize an operation to retake Da Nang." He accused Mayor Man of using GVN funds in support of dissident elements,

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PAGE 605 OF 872 PAGES

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and bluntly warned that if the mayor were caught "he will be shot to death outright without trial." Ky also ordered suspension of all Vietnamese commercial flights from Saigon, "because the planes have to stand by in case the government needs them to move troops."<sup>25</sup> COMUSMACV immediately notified CG III MAF to take all necessary measures to avoid a confrontation between US troops and RVN civilian or military elements. Predicting violence in Da Nang after GVN forces were flown in, COMUSMACV ordered that all US troops be confined to billets and vehicles kept off the roads; he further suggested that all Da Nang port operations be suspended until the situation was resolved.<sup>26</sup>

(TS) During the night of 4-5 April, Premier Ky, [redacted] and Chief JGS Gen Vien accompanied two VNMC battalions, with police and PSYWAR augmentation, from Saigon to Da Nang air base; a third battalion followed later. US advisors to these units had been directed not to accompany them, but to fly to Da Nang the next day to remain close at hand. COMUSMACV instructed CG III MAF to insure that no US advisors accompanied RVNAF troops in or near Da Nang, but that advisors should be ready to join their units if they were deployed against the VC. Premier Ky spent most of 5 April at the airfield in consultation with his staff and local officials; the VNMC battalions made no move toward the city, but VNAF aircraft dropped pro-GVN leaflets over Da Nang. Late in the afternoon Ky announced on the local radio that he had found Da Nang not completely occupied by communists, but did find some communist infiltration. The Premier then flew back to Saigon.

(S) Meanwhile the CG 1st ARVN Div had announced over Radio Hue that its division supported the struggle movement, claiming that the GVN had "betrayed the people's interest," he protested the GVN troop movement to Da Nang and rejected Premier Ky's earlier contention that Da Nang was communist-controlled. Units of the 1st ARVN Div were posted south of Hue on Route 1, evidently to guard against pro-GVN troops, and other troops, aided by student demonstrators, removed barricades outside the MACV compound at Hue. At this stage, all US advisors to the 1st Div were withdrawn to base-camp locations and all US helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft were withdrawn from 1st Div support. On the following day, 6 April, the evacuation of US civilians was ordered.<sup>28</sup>

(S) In Saigon, where following a meeting at the Buddhist Institute there had been clashes between demonstrators and riot police aided by ARVN airborne units, COMUSMACV reported to CINCPAC on the effects of the political unrest on military operations:

There has been a retardation of coordinated US/GVN operations, primarily in the 1st Division Tactical Area and Quang Nam Special Zone. Logistical activities in these areas have been severely hampered. Contractors

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280 PAGE 666 OF 832 PAGES

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have lost 18,000 man days of Vietnamese labor, and 1500 US man days have been expended to accomplish required tasks. Unloading of ships in Da Nang has been curtailed on several occasions with a tonnage loss of 3700 short tons and has been suspended since 31 March in Hue with a loss of 1600 short tons. Commercial POL deliveries were not accomplished on 23, 24, 30 and 31 March, and military convoys and airlift were substituted. Continued interruptions could result in a reduction in III MAF stock levels, increased employment of tactical units for convoy and other logistical operations and increased requirement for logistical airlift

. . . .  
The deterioration of the political situation has had an adverse effect on the GVN military effort. In the 1st Division Tactical Area, command and control by both division and sector military leaders is reported as marginal . . . . Influence of Buddhist leaders is reported in competition with that of the military, and 2000 military personnel participated in demonstrations in Hue, contrary to orders. The situation in the 2nd Division Tactical Area is considerably better, and only a little unrest has been noted.<sup>29</sup>

(TS) COMUSMACV had made available to Chief JGS a C-130 aircraft with which to return VMMC units to Saigon, but on 8 April the aircraft arrived in Saigon carrying only Defense Minister Co, who had been held hostage for a brief period by members of the I Corps staff in Da Nang. Earlier in the day Gen Vien had requested COMUSMACV to provide aircraft to fly additional RVNAF troops to Da Nang, but COMUSMACV refused. Although Gen Thieu backed the request, stating that he planned to move two Ranger battalions that night, COMUSMACV indicated only that he would ask the Ambassador to query Washington; the Rangers were flown to Da Nang in VNAF aircraft.<sup>30</sup>

(S) In Hue, 1st ARVN Div leaders and the dissidents associated with them decided on 8 April to reduce their anti-American tone. The 1st Div had been shocked by the withdrawal of their US advisors, and the CG had urged their return as soon as possible, promising to assign ARVN troops to protect US installations and to replace at once the barriers at the Hue MACV compound. 1st Div troops declared in a resolution that while they had no confidence in the Ky government, they would "always stand side by side with allied soldiers, particularly US soldiers, in the mission of fighting communist aggression until victory."<sup>31</sup>

(C) On 10 April, by NLC appointment, the Hue-born Lt Gen Ton That Dinh, a former commander of III Corps, assumed command of I Corps,

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PAGE 607 OF 872 PAGES  
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replacing Gen Chuan, who had returned to Saigon and asked to be relieved. On the same day, at a press conference in Saigon, the Buddhist Institute denounced the GVN and warned that demonstrations would continue if its demands were not met. At the conference, [redacted] formally launched the Buddhist political party, Vietnamese Buddhist Forces. The US Mission viewed the Buddhist declarations as a virtual pledge of all-out attack on the Ky government.<sup>32</sup>

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(C) On 11 April Chief JGS requested US aircraft to remove the two remaining VNMV battalions—one had departed the previous day—out of Da Nang, and on 12 April the units and their US advisory teams, with vehicles and cargo, were returned to Saigon by USAF and VNAF airlift. Tensions were eased and, for the moment, at least, demonstrations ceased in Hue and Da Nang.<sup>33</sup>

(C) Also on 12 April, the National Political Congress opened in Saigon. The Buddhists initially boycotted the congress, but later sent an observer; [redacted] told the press that he was not anti-American and had no desire to expel US forces from RVN, but had simply opposed US policy as blocking the establishment of a national assembly. Despite an intensive VC attack on Tan Son Nhut Air Base on 13 April, the congress wound up its work on the 14th with a ten-point proposal which included elections for a constituent assembly within four months and retention of the military government to organize the elections. As the congress was ending, NLC Chairman Thieu promulgated a decree for the election, to be held within three to five months. The Buddhist Institute accepted the program and the decree, agreeing that the Ky government should stay on until the elections were held.<sup>34</sup>

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(C) Despite the apparent amity in Saigon, the situation in I CTZ remained unsettled. On 15 April, appearing in Da Nang, [redacted] openly associated himself with the struggle movement, calling for an immediate change in the GVN and urging continued demonstrations in the area. Mayor Man, still clinging to office, supported [redacted] while the struggle-controlled radios in Hue and Da Nang denounced the GVN election decree as a trick. Radio Hue on 15 April made the frenzied declaration that more than 60 Buddhist bonzes were ready to immolate themselves in protest.<sup>35</sup>

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(S) On 18 April COMUSMACV reported to CINCPAC and JCS his belief, based on a survey by advisory teams, that ARVN commanders throughout the II, III, and IV CTZ's were loyal to the GVN, and that the same was true of the 2d Div in I CTZ. The 1st Div was divided, but its CG, Gen Nhuan, sided with the struggle movement, and the 1st Div, under the influence of Gen Tri and its Buddhist chaplains, would demonstrate against GVN if the crisis flared up again. RF/PF forces were either behind GVN or politically indifferent, except for a few units in northern I CTZ.<sup>36</sup>

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PAGE 608 OF 872 PAGES  
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(C) CG III MAF reported on 19 April that Gen Dinh was making progress in returning I CTZ to normal. Dinh had ordered Gen Nhuan and Da Nang struggle elements to call off a planned demonstration, and had had a meeting [redacted] in Hue; the Buddhist leader assured Dinh that Buddhists would no longer demonstrate against the GVN. Nevertheless, MACV intelligence estimates in late April considered the situation potentially explosive, with [redacted] leadership of the struggle movement tending to negate Gen Dinh's efforts. In an effort to reduce [redacted] the GVN on 29 April appointed MSS Chief Col Loan to succeed Col Lieu, [redacted] as Director General of the National Police.<sup>37</sup>

(U) At a press conference on 7 May, Premier Ky stated that the constituent assembly to be elected sometime in 1966 would simply draft a constitution and could not be transformed directly into a national assembly; for this reason, Ky said, the present GVN would remain in power until a legislative assembly had been elected "some time in 1967." This statement provoked strong reactions from the struggle forces and Buddhist leaders, who professed their belief that the GVN would resign upon the election of a constituent assembly. [redacted] began issuing a series of increasingly inflammatory statements, most of them aimed at creating distrust among the members of the NLC. [redacted] approached by US Mission officials, added his voice to charges that Premier Ky was discredited and should resign at once. At the same time, it appeared that Col Loan, who enjoyed Ky's full confidence, actually was trying to keep the I CTZ situation stirred up, so as to provide the GVN with sufficient provocation to intervene and settle the situation permanently.<sup>38</sup>

(S) Early on 15 May, ostensibly to support ARVN units which had "risen up" against the struggle movement, the GVN took swift action to settle the whole affair. RVNAF paratroops and marines were airlifted from Saigon and Quang Ngai to Da Nang; under the personal command of Gen Vien, Chief JCS, the troops quickly secured the airfield and proceeded to take control of I Corps headquarters, the Da Nang garrison, the city hall, the National Police garrison, and the radio station. Gen Dinh, CG I Corps, requested and received US transportation to HQ III MAF, where he sought asylum.<sup>39</sup>

(TS) The entire operation, a desperate gamble by the GVN to retain control of I CTZ, was undertaken without any reference to the US Mission or MACV, at a time when both the Ambassador and COMUSMACV were in Honolulu. COMUSMACV expressed US concerns:

... apparently the Prime Minister decided to send troops to Da Nang in order to take over the Mayor's office, the radio station, and the I Corps Headquarters to establish government control. I am convinced that this move was incidental to both

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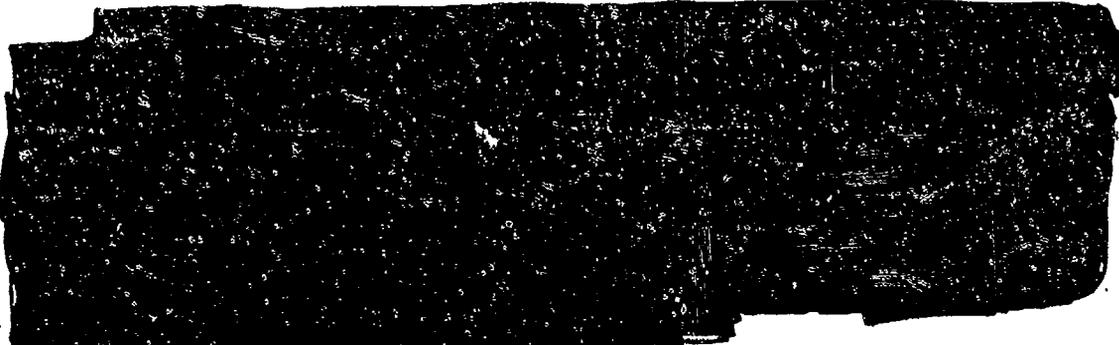
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Ambassador Lodge and myself being out of the country at the time. This unexpected move was made without the knowledge of the Americans and has created cause for great concern. \* \* \* From what I know of the situation, it is a complex one. I fear that there will be unfortunate bloodshed and political repercussions before the matter is quieted, from which nobody but the Communists will benefit. To try to bring about some order out of this chaos will be a delicate and difficult task indeed.<sup>40</sup>

(S) The reaction in Hue to the GVN move against Da Nang was immediate. [redacted] addressed, through the US Consulate, a telegram addressed to President Johnson, Ambassador Lodge, the World Buddhist Association, and Buddhist leaders in Saigon, urging immediate intervention on the grounds that the GVN forces in Da Nang were oppressing the people and preparing to attack the Buddhist pagodas. Radio Hue broadcast declarations by Gens Dinh and Nhuan opposing the GVN operation, calling it an invasion aimed at provoking civil war. [redacted] appeared to be in command; he told a US Consulate official that any GVN troops sent to Hue would be neutralized, by persuasion if possible, but by force if necessary. [redacted] personally assured the safety of Americans in Hue. In Saigon, meanwhile, the Buddhist Institute denounced the GVN action in Da Nang, calling it "a grave betrayal, opportunistic, irresponsible and thoughtless."<sup>41</sup>



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(S) As this second Da Nang crisis began, the US Mission received cautionary guidance from SECSTATE: "We should not throw our weight in any way behind a GVN effort that seems badly planned and ill-advised, likely to drive militant Buddhists and many others into clear opposition, which the GVN may not be strong or determined enough to handle without compromise or the worst outcome of extended bloodshed."<sup>42</sup> In reply, the Mission noted that no such action had been taken, but cautioned against the opposite course:

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PAGE 610 OF 723 PAGES

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If we move quickly and give the impression we are pulling the rug out from under Ky, the government will undoubtedly fall and ARVN, which despite revolving door changes in government since November 1, 1963, has remained the one reasonably stable unit in the government, may be irreparably damaged. The government which will emerge may very well not be the "other side," but will probably be the worst sort of jury-rigged affair imaginable . . . incapable of waging war and even of making any sort of acceptable peace.<sup>44</sup>

(TS) With the outcome of the crisis still in doubt, CG III MAF met on 18 May with CG 2d ARVN Div, Gen Hoang Xuan Lam, in an effort to determine the position of Lam's command. Lam stated that the 2d Div was loyal to the GVN, but that problems would arise if the GVN took any direct action against Buddhists in pagodas.

Meanwhile Gen Dinh, the outgoing Corps Commander, decamped prior to handing over command from Hue he joined in attacking the Thieu-Ky government.<sup>45</sup>

(S) In his address, Ky defended the secrecy of the Da Nang operation on the grounds that it was a political and not a military affair. Once installed, complained privately to CofS III MAF that Col Loan was moving troops in Da Nang without authority, and that Loan was urging an attack on the two main pagodas which were struggle group strongholds. Cao absolutely refused to order an attack on the pagodas, and shortly thereafter requested asylum at HQ III MAF, claiming his life was in danger. By 19 May it was becoming clear that Col Loan, with or without Premier Ky's knowledge, was determined to attack the pagodas and end the insurgency; the former I Corps CofS and G3 both sought sanctuary at HQ III MAF, stating that Catholic officers could not stay at I Corps HQ.

(S) Col Loan returned to Saigon late on 19 May, and early the next morning heavy fighting broke out in Da Nang as GVN forces attacked a number of struggle positions and VNAF aircraft continually buzzed the city. Shortly after noon, the struggle forces sent a letter to CG III MAF, through an American correspondent, claiming that more than 1,000 persons had been killed or wounded and threatening to destroy the Da Nang air-base unless the US intervened and forced the GVN troops to withdraw from the city. Two hours later a struggle-force officer called and

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PAGE 611 OF 872 PAGES

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warned that if the GVN troops continued the assaults, the Da Nang East ammunition dump would be blown up; III MAF had received reports that the struggle forces had wired the dump for demolition. In order to protect US personnel and property, and to be in a position to occupy the dump, a USMC company was moved from the Marble Mountain area to the new III MAF Command Post at Da Nang East; at the same time traffic control posts were established on Route 1 north and south of Da Nang airbase to block all troop movements toward Da Nang that might endanger US installations.<sup>47</sup>

(C) The military action in Da Nang reached a peak on 21 May, with heavy street fighting beginning shortly after dawn. The ARVN 7th Abn Bn was flown in from Saigon by VNAF aircraft. After struggle forces in Da Nang East fired on VNMC troops, VNAF aircraft began using guns and rockets to suppress the fire. Rockets left craters in the III MAF compound and blew a hole in the messhall roof; three USMC personnel were wounded and evacuated. With US personnel clearly endangered, CG III MAF informed the VNAF commander that further strafing or bombing of Da Nang or Da Nang East could not be allowed, and that III MAF aircraft, already airborne, would shoot down VNAF aircraft if the attacks continued. The VNAF attacks stopped, but at about the same time the Da Nang airbase was struck by 60-mm mortar rounds from struggle positions in Da Nang; two USAF personnel were wounded and a vehicle was damaged, but no aircraft were hit. Shortly thereafter the new III MAF CP received eight mortar rounds from the struggle forces at the ammunition dump; eight USMC personnel were wounded, one seriously.<sup>48</sup>

(TS) COMUSMACV received the latest information as he was departing Saigon for Chu Lai to meet CG III MAF. He had already recommended to the Mission Council that the US "change our policy and start throwing our weight behind the government, but at all times staying in the background. In particular, I suggested that we make plans to support ARVN psywar/Civic Action programs in the Da Nang area."<sup>49</sup> Now, at Tan Son Nhut, he spoke to Comdr 7th AF, who advised him of the mortar fire on the Da Nang airbase and recommended that US aircraft be evacuated; COMUSMACV approved provided other arrangements could be made to provide required air support. At Chu Lai COMUSMACV "instructed Gen Walt to start using our influence behind the scene in order to try to break off any ARVN and other supporting elements from the struggle group. Also, I instructed him to move in and take over the ARVN ammunition dump which was held by ARVN officers aligned with the struggle forces. He was told to do this by negotiation rather than military action if possible."<sup>50</sup>

(TS) Meanwhile, after heavy fighting, GVN forces occupied the Tan Linh pagoda and an ARVN hospital in Da Nang; inside the pagoda a large cache of arms was found, including six BAR's, 150 carbines, nine machine guns, and 150 grenades. The main dissident stronghold, the Tinh Hoi pagoda, continued to hold out; elsewhere in the city were only isolated

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PAGE 612 OF 722 PAGES

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pockets of resistance, including the ammunition dump. Late in the morning Chief JGS Vien arrived from Saigon.

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Gen Vien apologized for the VNAF action against the new III MAF CP, and requested CG III MAF's assistance in gaining control of the ammunition dump. US officers agreed to approach the dump commander with an order signed [REDACTED] and guaranteed by Gen Vien, that the commander would be guaranteed amnesty if he turned the dump over to GVN forces. A key struggle officer revealed to a USMC officer that the dump was not rigged for demolition, but claimed that the dissidents would fight to hold the dump and would destroy it if the VNMC attacked. 51

(TS) A message from CJCS to COMUSMACV expressed Washington's deep concern over the situation, and asked him to comment on a proposal which would terminate all US military and economic aid, suspend the military and civilian advisory effort, and withdraw US units to base areas; after such a possible step, high US officials might personally inform GVN and leading anti-GVN officials that the US could no longer tolerate the situation and that the opposing factions must resolve their differences. In reply, COMUSMACV indicated his belief that the crisis had been exaggerated to the American people by sensational reports from journalists, and that the situation had not deteriorated to the point that such drastic action was needed. He recommended against sending special emissaries from Washington, and felt that he himself could play a useful role by individual contact with senior military officers on both sides of the conflict. He thought it unwise to threaten curtailment of US aid, and the US advisors provided an invaluable channel of communications; to cease offensive operations and withdraw US units to base areas would be dangerous militarily and politically, and would surrender the initiative to the enemy. 52

(TS) COMUSMACV went on to advise CJCS that a plan was being prepared for US forces to take over the engineer and ammunition depots in Da Nang under the guise of a combined activity; he believed Premier Ky and Gen Vien would accept the plan, and once the pattern was established it might perhaps be expanded in I CTZ as a first step toward a more efficient logistical system throughout RVN. Other possible combined logistical arrangements included POL products, Da Nang port operations, and aeromedical evacuation. The MACV PSYOPS Directorate was preparing a plan in support of the ARVN PolWar Directorate to improve the GVN image in Da Nang through leaflets, broadcasts, civic action, and prompt indemnification. Regarding the ARVN posture in I CTZ, COMUSMACV reported that the 2d Div, under the firm leadership of Gen Lam, was loyal to the GVN and responsive to the orders of the Corps Commander; it was fighting the VC better than it had for two years. All three regiments of the 1st Div were intact and Gen Nhuan was now taking more interest in fighting the VC, although he was still swayed by [REDACTED] Gen Dinh. 53  
COMUSMACV had instructed CG III MAF to develop a plan for a combined

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PAGE 613 OF 872 PAGES

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operation against the VC involving elements of I Corps forces, RVNAF general reserve units in Da Nang, and USMC units, but such an operation would not be possible until firm GVN control was established in Da Nang, which might require several more days.<sup>53</sup>

(S) On the evening of 22 May COMUSMACV met with Chief of State Thieu, who expressed satisfaction with the course of events in Da Nang. The GVN would have lost face with the people, Thieu felt, if it had not moved back into Da Nang; furthermore, if the Buddhists had been allowed to continue undermining the discipline and morale of RVNAF, a civil war would have been inevitable because the Catholics would not have allowed the Buddhists to gain such power. Such a civil war would have resulted in complete US loss of confidence in the Vietnamese and the probable withdrawal of US forces. Finally, Thieu said that the NLC saw clearly that [redacted] was trying to control the upcoming elections and thereby control the country. Thieu hoped that as soon as Da Nang was secured, the struggle forces in Hue would be under increased pressure to surrender. COMUSMACV stressed the importance of a strong commander once I Corps was restored to GVN control; Thieu thought that [redacted] eventually would become effective, but COMUSMACV expressed reservations. In the matter of [redacted] still a prime catalyst in the struggle, Thieu said the NLC was willing to appoint [redacted] ambassador, a military representative to the US, or let him become a student in the US. However, it was COMUSMACV's belief, not expressed to Thieu, that the breach between [redacted] was irreparable, and [redacted] would never accept a position that would make [redacted] superior or colleague.<sup>54</sup>

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(S) The denouement of the crisis in Da Nang came on 23 May when, following complex negotiations, the 2d Bn, 4th Marines assumed control of the Da Nang East ammunition dump without incident. Shortly after noon the struggle forces in the Tinh Hoi pagoda surrendered to GVN forces, and soon thereafter the last remaining pockets of resistance collapsed. Some 250 uniformed personnel, 75 civilians, 33 bodies, and 1,300 weapons were removed from the Tinh Hoi pagoda. Mayor Man and other key struggle leaders were arrested. COMUSMACV estimated the cumulative losses on both sides at 150 killed and 700 wounded; US casualties had been 23 wounded, including 18 USMC. Throughout the crisis III MAF medical facilities had provided care to all Vietnamese who presented themselves for treatment. Now III MAF quickly opened the MRR from the airbase to Da Nang West, and shortly unloading was resumed on both sides of Da Nang harbor. A few isolated confrontations on Route 1 were resolved, and by nightfall on 23 May all struggle forces in and around Da Nang had either surrendered, been captured, or gone underground.<sup>55</sup>

(C) In Hue, however, the struggle forces remained intransigent. [redacted] in an address to 5,000 followers, accused (falsely) the GVN of having destroyed two pagodas. Claiming that the Buddhist goals

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64 OF 77 PAGES

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Order See Agency Manual  
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132

were simply to achieve a national assembly and a civilian government, he called for absolute discipline and obedience to orders, adding that great sacrifices and suffering would be necessary because "we are now in a civil war." But it was the continued presence in Hue that had become pivotal. On the evening of 23 May, over Radio Hue, he urged his former troops to turn their weapons against the GVN. On the 24th [redacted] dispatched a declaration to MACV threatening to bring 1st ARVN Div troops into Hue to defend that city.<sup>56</sup>

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(S) Later on the 24th COMUSMACV flew to Chu Lai and met [redacted] for about two hours. They were in general agreement except [redacted] insisted that the Thieu-Ky government be replaced before the elections, while COMUSMACV felt that it was in the best interests of the country that they remain. COMUSMACV proposed [redacted] meet with Premier Ky; [redacted] initially unresponsive, but agreed to consider the idea; he later sent word through CG III MAF that he would meet Ky in Chu Lai on 27 May.<sup>57</sup>

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(C) Meanwhile, in Saigon, the GVN held a "Peoples and Armed Forces Political Congress" on 24 May, attended by some 800 persons who questioned Thieu and Ky on the I Corps situation and GVN plans; the first public discussion concerned the possibility of enlarging the NIC by adding civilians. While the Congress was in session, two small Buddhist demonstrations were staged. The next day the number of demonstrations rose to about 20, involving an estimated 5,000 persons. Police and security forces used tear gas to disperse the mobs, arresting over 400 demonstrators; a number of youths wearing monks' robes were found to be draft dodgers and were ordered inducted into the RVNAF. As the unrest spread, US military convoys through Saigon were halted and travel in the city for US forces was restricted to essential business.<sup>58</sup>

(S) In Hue the situation continued to deteriorate. On 25 May some 6,000 demonstrators listened to speakers denounce the US for supporting the GVN. About 75 students began a hunger strike in front of the US Consulate, warning that if the US did not cease supporting the GVN within 24 hours, they would let the "people" take action. Based on a warning that the USIS library would be destroyed, the building was evacuated. Intelligence reports also indicated that the US Consulate was marked for attack, whereupon classified material was burned and the Consul requested Gen Nhuan, CG 1st Div, take necessary safety measures. The following day there was a massive funeral procession, estimated at 10,000 persons, for an ARVN officer who had been killed on 17 May after he fired at [redacted] helicopter. At about 1630 some 300 students arrived at the USIS Library; as NP and ARVN forces stood watching the students broke into the library, ransacked it thoroughly, and set fire to the building. By the time the crowd dispersed three hours later, only the shell of the building remained.

132

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Armed students manned barricades around the US Consulate, and reports continued to indicate that the Consulate would be attacked.<sup>59</sup>

(S) The meeting [redacted] at USMC headquarters in Chu Lai on 27 May turned out to be very successful; Gen Vien told COMUSMACV that [redacted] had promised to cooperate with Ky. It was anticipated [redacted] would leave shortly for Dalat to await an assignment.

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[redacted] Gen Dinh, another former I Corps commander, pledged his support in returning the troops to their units to fight the VC; he said he had complained [redacted] about the lack of discipline among the Buddhists and students in Hue, but found the Buddhist leader bitter and unapproachable.<sup>60</sup>

(C) In the early hours of 29 May, after writing letters and telegrams of protest against US and GVN actions, a Buddhist nun burned herself to death in front of a pagoda in Hue. A communique [redacted] announced that President Johnson was responsible for the nun's death, "as well as for the sacrifices of all other Vietnamese Buddhists in the past and in the future." Over 100 Buddhist monks and nuns began an anti-US hunger strike in Hue. That night at the Buddhist Institute in Saigon, following police clashes with large numbers of demonstrators, another nun burned herself to death; next morning a Buddhist monk committed self-immolation in Dalat. To an ultimatum by the Thua Thien Provinces Chief to turn in all arms, remove obstacles from the streets, and return the Hue radio station to the authorities, the struggle leaders turned a deaf ear; the general strike remained in effect, and civilian employees were prevented from entering the MACV compound.<sup>61</sup>

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(C) The NLC on 31 May officially replaced [redacted] [redacted] returned to Saigon after COMUSMACV had relayed assurances from Chief JGS [redacted] would not be arrested. On the same day Thieu, Ky, and other GVN leaders met with Tam Chau and other Buddhist Institute bonzes. The Premier offered to double the size of the NLC, adding ten civilians. The Buddhists agreed to this proposition and indicated that they were prepared to call off the struggle, but advised Ky that any agreement they made would have to be acceptable [redacted].

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(C) The solution, however, was not to be so peaceful. In Saigon on 1 June a leading Buddhist youth official, Thien Minh, was wounded seriously by a grenade thrown at his car shortly after he had met with Chief of State Thieu. Buddhist youths reacted immediately, burning a US jeep, attacking two US servicemen and a policeman, and flaunting banners accusing the US and the GVN of having "killed" Minh. In Hue at the same time, struggle elements held a mass meeting and decided on violence;

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REVIEW DATE: 5 SEP 1984 PAGE 616 OF 872 PAGES

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about 800 demonstrators, many armed, marched on the US Consulate. Units of the ARVN 3d Regt fled, leaving no security; unopposed, students threw rocks at the Consulate, broke down the door, smashed President Johnson's picture, and set fire to the building with barrels of fuel. Also sacked and burned were the US Administrative Assistant's residence, next door, and the homes of the Province Chief and other GVN officials. Most of the US advisors at HQ 1st ARVN Div were moved to the MACV compound, which did not appear to be in danger, and CG III MAF recommended against its evacuation.<sup>63</sup>

(S) Gen Lam informed III MAF authorities late on 1 June that although he had intended to move slowly into Hue, the day's events had changed his mind; he now planned immediately to move two reinforced infantry battalions from the 1st ARVN Div into Hue from the north to seize key positions. Lam had been informed that 120 VC were involved in the violence, and that the struggle forces were on the verge of entering the ultimate phase of complete insurrection, which would include an appeal for help to the NLF. Lam planned to entrust the tactical operation to Gen Nhuan of the 1st Div, but surprise was compromised when Nhuan promptly drove into Hue and warned [REDACTED]

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(S) In a meeting with Premier Ky on 2 June, COMUSMACV found him satisfied with the GVN progress against the dissidents. The Buddhists, Ky felt, now realized that their position was very weak, for without any real issue they had gone too far, lost control of their demonstrators, and garnered no real support from the press or international Buddhist groups; they now admitted VC penetration of their ranks, and had officially requested the GVN to provide protection for the pagodas. On the same day, 2 June, agreement between the Buddhists and the NLC was announced in a joint communique; the NLC promised to invite ten civilians to become members prior to 6 June, and would try to establish a civil-military advisory council to the GVN prior to 19 June; the Buddhists agreed that all struggle activities would be suspended at least until 6 June.<sup>65</sup>

(S) The Buddhists, however, could no longer control fully their adherents. In Hue, as ARVN troops watched, students on 2 June sacked a district chief's house 50 yards from the MACV compound, and the struggle forces made no move to abandon their heavily-guarded strongholds. In Saigon that night, youthful demonstrators roamed the streets until police dispersed them with tear gas. On 3 June—Buddha's birthday—Buddhist Institute chairman Tam Chau announced his resignation in the face of a demand [REDACTED] that the Institute cease negotiations with the NLC immediately. In Hue, [REDACTED] told the press that his followers would boycott any GVN-organized election; he reiterated his demand that Thieu and Ky be removed and criticized President Johnson for supporting them. At Da Nang on 3 June a Buddhist nun burned herself to death, and the next day three more self-immolations were reported in Saigon, Nha Trang, and Quang Tri City.<sup>66</sup>

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PAGE 617 OF 872 PAGES, 20 SEP 1964

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the roads in and around Hue still contained altars, vehicles up to 2½-ton could pass with care. About the same time, however, some 350 ARVN riot-control troops arrived at Phu Bai from Saigon; by early afternoon they had reached Hue and were being billeted at the police camp. Shortly thereafter, the Buddhists were reported replacing the altars in the streets, monks directing the movement with loudspeakers. An Army truck passing a table caused a picture to fall off, and a few minutes later a Marine truck brushed an altar and knocked it over; in both cases apologies were given and accepted. [REDACTED] moved into a Hue hospital to continue his fast, and in Saigon, Buddhist Institute leaders declared that since Thieu and Ky were unwilling to resign, they would go to prison, if necessary, to protect their followers from oppression, and they would refuse to participate in the elections.<sup>70</sup>

(S) Just before noon on 10 June the Chief JCS, Gen Vien, arrived at Da Nang and was met by Gen Walt and Gen Lam. The three flew by helicopter to the CP of the 1st ARVN Div, where they were met by Gen Nnuan and briefed by a staff officer. Gen Vien then addressed the officers and men at the CP in a vigorous speech, which was translated for Gen Walt as an exhortation for all officers to get out of politics and to get back to fighting the VC.<sup>71</sup>

(S) On 13 June another 300 riot-control troops were sent to Hue, but Col Loan told US officials that he was counting heavily on PSYOPS activities and general public weariness to achieve restoration of GVN control. However, for that day and the next, altars still remained in the streets, while in Saigon a US jeep and a police vehicle were burned in sporadic Buddhist demonstrations. GVN authorities were losing patience, and when COMUSMACV visited Da Nang, he was assured by Gen Lam that he intended to move into Hue with whatever force was required, arrest the leaders of the struggle movement, clear the streets of the Buddhist altars, and reestablish GVN control once and for all.<sup>72</sup>

(C) On 15 June the GVN promulgated a decree establishing a predominantly civilian 80-man People-Army Council to advise the government on political, economic, and social matters. Having thus carried out its pledge to the dissidents, the GVN moved that same evening to settle the issue in Hue. The 5th ARVN Abn Bn joined riot police in the city, and under the direction of Col Loan, began final operations against the struggle groups. Loudspeakers broadcast a message from Tam Chau, in Saigon, to remove the altars. The ARVN troops, ignoring Buddhist invitations to join the struggle, acted with restraint; a captain advised police to bow three times and then remove each altar. Draft-age youths who resisted orders to disperse were put forcibly into trucks, and tear gas was used to break up a few last-ditch demonstrations. As the operation progressed, all US military personnel in Hue were restricted to quarters and truck convoys were kept out of the city. On 16 June the 1st ARVN

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Abn Bn was sent into Hue to bolster GVN strength, and that night martial law was declared in the city. The main struggle forces were now in the area of the Citadel, and included about 1,000 ARVN soldiers, largely from support units of the 1st Div.<sup>73</sup>

(C)  - In reply, Hue newspapers broadcasted a communique calling for a general strike; for all Buddhist soldiers to lay down their arms, for continuing non-violent demonstrations against "terrorism," and a boycott of Americans. One effect of this appeal was that an operation by the 1st ARVN Div against the VC in the Quang Tri area faltered when only about 30 percent of the three battalions involved deployed to the field; all ARVN units engaged against the struggle forces were, of course, operating without their US advisors.<sup>74</sup>

(C) A second VMC battalion arrived in Hue on 18 June, bringing Col Loan's total combat strength to four battalions--two airborne and two marine--plus his own combat police. These GVN forces swept the Citadel area, meeting no real organized resistance. At the same time Gen Lam appointed Col. Ngo Quang Trung, deputy commander of the ARVN Airborne Div, as acting commander of the 1st ARVN Div, replacing the fence-setting Gen Nham. US advisors regained a number of 1st Div units that day, assured by Col. Trung's strong statement to 1st Div troops that GVN orders would be obeyed strictly. By the night of 18 June the two main struggle-force pagodas and all other strongholds had been neutralized, all forests cleared of mines, and several key struggle-force leaders executed. By the morning of 19 June--the first anniversary of the NLF's assumption of power--Hue had been restored to GVN control.<sup>75</sup>

(C) In Saigon the Buddhist demonstrations entered their final spasms. On 18 June demonstrators killed a policeman, and dragged another inside the Buddhist Institute. An ARVN Ranger battalion promptly sealed off the Institute and cut off the water and electricity. On 21 June, as a result of a meeting between Tam Chau and the Mayor of Saigon, the siege was lifted and monks and civilians searched as they emerged.

  
On 23 June GVN troops and police entered the Institute compound, using no force, and rounded up over 500 persons, including a man who confessed to murdering the policeman.<sup>76</sup>

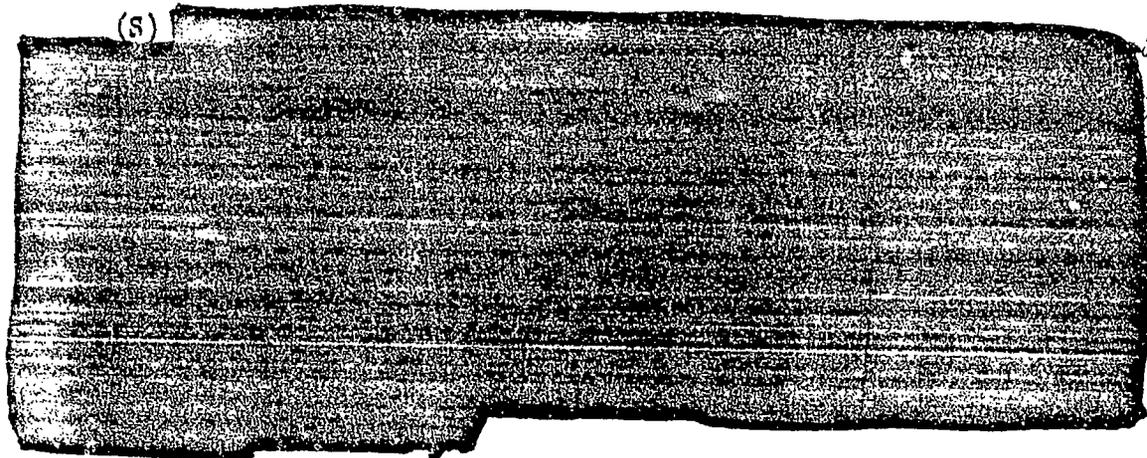
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PAGE 620 OF 873 PAGES

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(S) After quelling the struggle movement, the GVN found itself in a considerably stronger position. The People-Army Council was inaugurated on 5 July, and at once began detailed planning for the scheduled 11 September elections. The Ministry of Information announced plans for a four-phase program, utilizing all communications media, to encourage the people to participate in the electoral process, to insure a large turn-out at the polls, and to warn the populace against efforts by the VC or other dissident groups to undermine the election. The first phase (1 July to 25 August) included dissemination of the election decree, explanation of the purpose and importance of the election, and promulgation of regulations governing candidates and voting procedures; the second phase (26 August to 10 September) urged all citizens to support their candidate and party rallies; the third phase, on election day, was an all-out campaign to get out the vote in peaceful and orderly fashion, and to report the election results as rapidly as possible; the fourth and final phase, following the election, would be to publicize the results, emphasizing their democratic nature and the achievement of progress toward building a free RVN.<sup>78</sup>

(S) On 13 July Premier Ky carried out a modest cabinet reshuffle, adding four civilians and removing two members who represented the only significant militant Buddhist influence. In I Corps, the restoration of the 1st ARVN Div as an effective fighting force was underway. Gen Lam, taking a firm hold as CG I Corps, felt in July that he had the political situation under control; he concentrated on reorganizing and rebuilding the Corps staff, which had only 50 percent of its authorized strength when the struggle ended. ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ the Buddhist as a whole appeared so fragmented politically as to offer no significant opposition to the GVN. Col Loan of the MSS/National Police, presumably as a reward for his support of the GVN and his efforts in ending the struggle crisis, was promoted to Brig Gen.<sup>79</sup>

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(S) In conformity with Vietnamese laws and regulations, the elections for a constituent assembly were to be supervised by locally-appointed committees, with participation by representatives of the candidates. RVNAF was given responsibility for providing security, in order to permit maximum participation in the election. The RVNAF concept of operations to accomplish this mission was to mount no major operations during the period, and to provide security over as wide an area as possible, which resulted in fragmentation of ARVN units. Reserves at all echelons were divided into small units to augment election security, although two RVNAF general reserve battalions were held intact for contingencies; reduced ground operational activity was counterbalanced by increased employment of supporting arms.

(S) The US Government was in no sense to "monitor" the elections, and US/FW forces and resources were not to be used in any way to support the elections directly or to provide security in the immediate vicinity of polling places. In order to preclude any action which could be construed by world opinion as influencing or interfering with the GVN election, and to counterbalance the fragmentation of ARVN forces and reserves, US/FW military forces were directed to maintain strong mobile reserves to react against any VC/NVA threat, to increase harassment and interdiction programs to keep VC/NVA forces off balance, and to control carefully all operations within US/FW TAOR's to preclude operations in the vicinity of populated areas or polling places. Since it was anticipated that all RVNAF aircraft would be utilized in election-support roles, US forces assumed MEDEVAC responsibility for RVNAF forces during the immediate election period (approximately 10-12 Sep): US advisers with RVNAF forces were forbidden to accompany units which performed purely election-security missions. With the reservation that US/FW tactical and logistical requirements were to receive priority, MACV also agreed to airlift approximately 3,000 students from military training centers to designated Corps locations where they were to be used to augment election security, and to provide standby airlift for the two RVNAF general reserve battalions as required.<sup>80</sup>

(S) In the view of the State Department, a good turnout for the election would be a significant indicator of the extent to which the RVN population was becoming sufficiently committed to brave VC threats in order to vote. From requests for US help, however, the lack of vehicles and aircraft for use in election preparations and for getting people to the polls seemed likely to be a serious bottleneck. SECSTATE asked Ambassador Lodge's views on the pros and cons of giving such help. As the situation was seen in Washington, the issue hinged on the political risks, in RVN, and abroad, of appearing to interfere in the elections. The cost to military operations for a brief period was not considered sufficient to subvert the major psychological gain from a big election turnout, but obviously activities should be avoided

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which would appear to be coercing voters in any way. The interference issue might be overcome if US agencies were to provide transport temporarily to ARVN units, which in turn would use their own transport for election purposes.<sup>81</sup>

(S) The US Mission had already considered the question of what transportation services the US could provide GVN in connection with the election. The general guidance which all Mission elements had been following was that the US should not transport voters, election officials, or candidates in US-marked aircraft. The US would not transport ballot boxes or use US PSYWAR assets directly, nor participate identifiably in the campaign or voting process. The US effort was designed to avoid giving substance to Hanoi and VC radio propaganda lines that the elections were an American device to dupe the Vietnamese people. The US was, however, furnishing logistic support in moving election materials into the field, and JUSPAO was providing the MICH with valuable support in the production and dissemination of election materials. The Mission had been directed, insofar as possible, to relieve VNAF of routine missions to enable it to meet like requests from local officials to move candidates and others from place to place during the campaign. The Mission, in effect, was already prepared to do what SECSTATE suggested.<sup>82</sup>

(TS) As the elections approached, COMUSMACV and other members of the Mission Council exercised extreme care to avoid any sudden stress on the GVN political structure. Word reached COMUSMACV that the NLC was considering taking steps against two of its own members [redacted] because they were alleged to be involved in large-scale graft activities. Lt Gen Vien, Chief JCS, sought indirectly to determine, through COMUSMACV, the attitude of the US Mission toward eliminating the two officials from the GVN. COMUSMACV felt that any such action, however justified, would be untimely:

After consultation with the Embassy, word was passed to Vien that we feel it very important that they do nothing to rock the boat at this time and emphasized that the country had enjoyed some stability for the last several months because of the unity of the NLC and certainly the eve of elections was a time to disrupt this unity.<sup>83</sup>

(S) The elections themselves, carried out on 11 September despite the anticipated VC interference, were a source of great encouragement to the Mission and to the US in general. SECSTATE conveyed the preliminary US assessment of the election results in a message on 14 September. He felt that the unusually large election turnout constituted an important step in the return to constitutional representative and more broadly-based government in RVN, and was a dramatic demonstration of the VC's inability

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both to exercise dominant influence over the RVN population and to hamper GVN's ability to carry out an important internal program such as a well organized, nationwide election. The massive turnout could not be interpreted specifically as a positive vote of confidence in GVN or in Premier Ky personally but it did represent, as the minimum, the willingness of the people to participate in the GVN-sponsored program of political development. Although the massive turnout was at least in part attributable to zealous efforts of the local officials to get out the vote, it showed clearly that the voting population was more responsive to GVN organization and administration than to the VC, despite an unprecedented VC pre-election campaign of threats, intimidation, and terror, emphatically giving the lie to the VC/Hanoi claim that they control two-thirds of the RVN population or that they were the sole representative of the Vietnamese people. The relatively small percentage of invalidated ballots (ranging from less than 2 to 11 percent, depending on the constituency) showed that the great bulk of voters were positively inclined toward elections and had no desire to respond to VC pressure or propaganda, or even to the earlier Buddhist Institute call for a boycott.

(S) As was expected, SECDEF continued, the complexion of the constituent assembly did not appear at first view to reflect the emergence of new political parties, blocs, or groupings; rather, it reflected the existing mosaic of the Vietnamese body politic, e.g., in areas where a particular political, religious, or ethnic grouping was strong, that grouping obtained representation in the assembly. There was no evidence that the GVN had made any organized effort to ensure election of a bloc of candidates responsive to it, although there were instances of local officials actively working for favorite candidates. Over 150 military and civil service candidates ran who could have been considered responsive to GVN; of these, only 18 military and 18 civil servants won, less than necessary to give GVN control of the assembly. Another interesting aspect of the newly-elected assembly was that over half of its elected members were under 45 years of age, suggesting that the election had brought forward some new political blood.<sup>84</sup>

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The 11-member Constituent Assembly was inaugurated without incident ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(S) Chief of State Thieu told COMUSMACV that Constituent Assembly members initially had formed regional alignments along northern and southern lines, but soon began dissolving into factions favoring either a US or Korean-type government. They generally agreed, however, that a

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strong executive was needed. "Because of the Vietnamese psychology and temperament," a legislative assembly would also be required, but the battle lines seemed to be drawn between civilians favoring two houses, and the military who leaned toward a unicameral body. The principal civilian fear was that the military would play a strong role in any future government--as in South Korea. Thieu believed that the military must serve as a balance in the matter of regionalism, and claimed that southern politicians had been trying to influence generals of southern E origin. Thieu added that the military was unified, but that corrupt elements--could not be routed out at that time. The assembly must be "made to work," a constitution produced, and a legislative assembly and chief executive elected; then the work of removing corrupt elements from the military could proceed.85

(S) The US Mission felt that the Constituent Assembly was likely to be both the birthplace and the proving ground for a number of political alliances. Most deputies recognized the new and probably ephemeral nature of the parties, and looked beyond the drafting of the constitution as they maneuvered for control of the Assembly. Regionalism was the most important factor in forming political blocs in the Assembly, especially in the view of the 44 southern deputies; could they have united, they had the votes to exercise important influence within the Assembly, but contending leaders and factions diluted their strength. Religion was the second most important factor in groupings, notably in the case of Roman Catholics, who, claiming as many as 35 seats, were the second largest group in the Assembly. Buddhists, with 34 delegates, did not seem to be lining up on the religious line. Other religions were less important as nuclei for political alliances, although an "all-religion front" remained a possible formula for a large national party. Youth vs age was a factor in the Assembly, but was not expected to be a factor generally. There was some evidence of a government bloc, which if cohesive and reasonably successful, could be used by GVN to form the backbone of a national party in alliance with military leadership; the Mission hoped this would be the case. Military leaders had not crystallized their ideas as to their political futures and the formation of parties to back them; an earlier NLC thought of building a party around the Veterans' League apparently had been dropped. The military was known to be intrigued with the Korean example, and had sent two unofficial delegations to study ROK methods; it seemed likely that Korean political ideas would be tried in RVN. The military's intentions were likely to become more precise and serious once they settled on a presidential candidate; and as they moved toward organized support for him, they would be likely to seek a broad political alliance. Given the Vietnamese experience and preilections, party formation, whether government inspired or not, would be largely subseurface. Open party activity on open platforms and broad appeal to the electorate at large would take time, experience, and extensive education; not much could be

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expected for the first presidential election. The Mission felt that the US ought to wait for Assembly shake-down and emergence of political tendencies before deciding what, if any, action it should take to promote the formation of broad national parties.

(S) In the latter half of October, as Chief of State Thien, Premier Ky, Minister of Defense, and other key GVN officials prepared to attend the Manila Conference (See Chapter VII), COMUSMACV was concerned about the possibility of a coup attempt in their absence. He alerted his subordinate commanders to report any unusual or unexplained ARVN troop movements, and any dubious activity of any of the visiting ARVN commanders during the period 24-27 October. As it turned out, no coup attempts materialized, although one GVN cabinet minister resigned in protest over what he considered continued domination of the GVN by "northerners."<sup>27</sup>

(S) Despite the impressive show of GVN solidarity on 1 November--National Day--and the negligible effect of the VC sabotaging of the parade in Saigon, rumors of impending coup attempts continued, most of them involving the CG IV Corps, Lt Gen Dang Van Quang. On 15-19 November Premier Ky acted with considerable political courage when he announced cabinet changes designed to allay some of the regional squabbles; he split the powerful Ministry of Economy into the separate ministries of Commerce and Industry, and replaced the Secretaries of State for Youth and for Education and Social Welfare. Ky's most dangerous step was the relief of Gen Quang as CG IV Corps on 17 November, although the relief was somewhat offset by Quang's appointment to head the newly-created Ministry of Planning and Development. To Quang's credit, he accepted his relief and new appointment apparently without rancor.<sup>28</sup>

(C) Within the new Constituent Assembly there were rumblings against the GVN directive which gave the NLC the power to amend the prospective constitution. One of the most outspoken critics of the NLC was Assembly member Tran Van Van, and when Van was assassinated in the streets of Saigon on 7 December, there were strong hints, even in the controlled press, that the GVN had had a hand in the murder. But the quick apprehension of one of the two assassins, and his ready admission that he was a VC, did much to allay any suspicions in the popular mind.

(S) In the political field, there existed an air of high optimism in the US Mission. The Ky government had survived 12 months and seemed stronger than ever; a modest number of civilians occupied places in the GVN; dissident or corrupt individuals were being eliminated, if not as quickly as many desired; the Constituent Assembly had tackled its duties with enthusiasm and was making progress. All that COMUSMACV or other members of the Mission Council could do in the political matter was to play a watching and waiting game. As the Acting Chief of Mission,

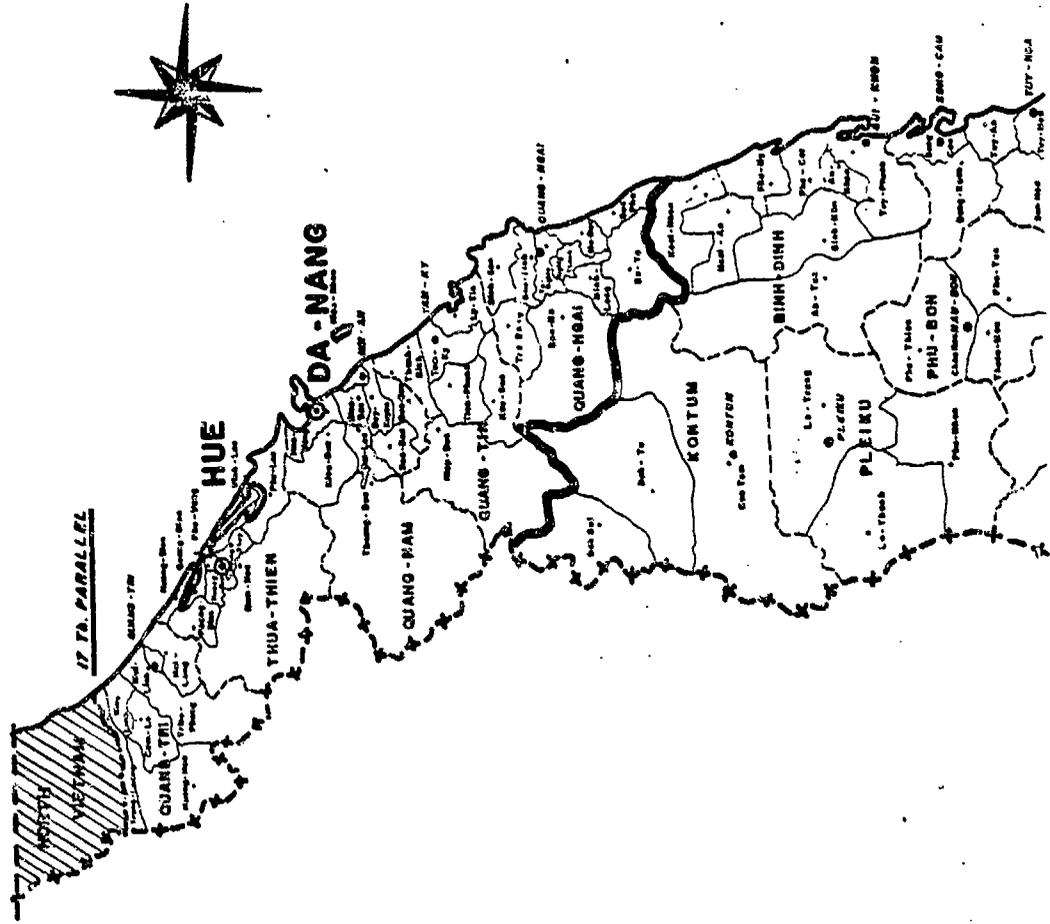
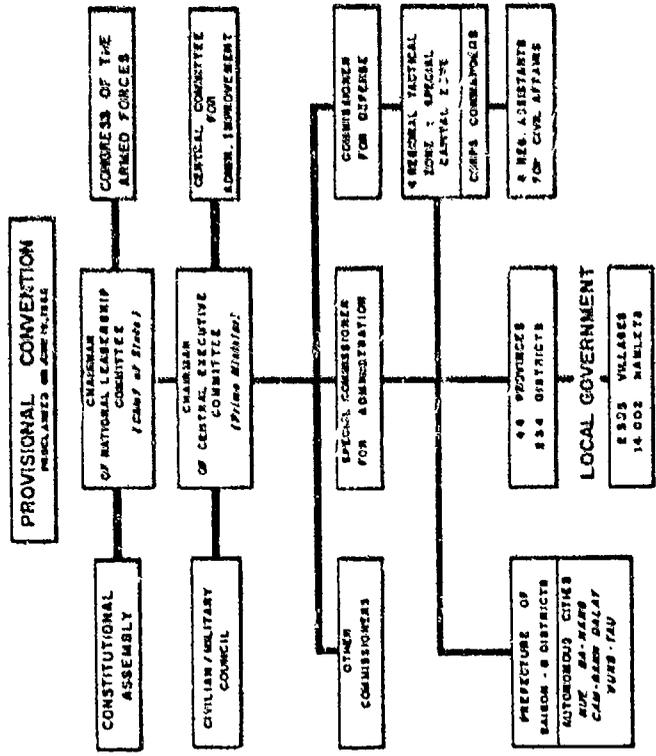
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# THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM FIELD ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT



1. The Convention was promulgated and abrogated June 19, 1962.  
 2. The Prime Minister appoints and removes all public officials. However, decisions affecting military appointments are subject to the vote of members Civil, Military General or Higher level members 120 members of the National Leadership Committee (Art. 40 of the Constitution).  
 3. Provincial Councils consisting of from 8 to 18 members were elected on May 30, 1962.  
 4. Members of the administrative staffs and the Prefecture of Saigon are appointed by the Prime Minister. Council 09-NV of 4/19/62 created Municipal Councils of 8 to 18 elected members in 8 metropolitan cities.  
 5. Council 07-NV of 6/19/62 created the Saigon Prefecture Council of 20 elected members.



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Ambassador Porter noted to SECSTATE, "I am persuaded that our active role probably must be quite limited. Any attempt on our part to assist directly [in the political situation] would be deeply resented. . . . For the time being therefore, we see the US role as limited to trying to influence responsible leaders toward those actions and policies which we believe will result in the formation of broad representative national parties."<sup>89</sup>

#### Economic Problems and Solutions

(U) The Vietnamese economy, sorely strained by the war and incessantly inflationary, was a matter of grave concern throughout 1966 for COMUSMACV, as it was for the entire US Mission in RVN.

(C) At the beginning of the year, COMUSMACV conferred extensively in Saigon with the Administrator, US Agency for International Development (USAID) on ways to curtail the serious GVN inflationary trends, a problem which had been under continuing review by MACV. COMUSMACV assured the Administrator that MACV would do all it could to moderate the inevitable pressures of the increased US military presence on the local economy. Among other measures, COMUSMACV was studying the Saigon housing problem, with the thought of removing those personnel not serving in headquarters in the city proper to field-type billets.<sup>90</sup>

(S) Discussion with the Administrator centered around reducing the troops' incentive to make purchases on the local economy, including ways to divert US military pay into US channels and to reduce the requirement for piaster expenditures. These measures including voluntary troop savings, simplified procedures for transferring troop pay to the US, expansion of US facilities, increasing out-of-country R&R, limiting access to the local market, frequent conversion of one series MFC to another series, troop information, instituting US banking facilities in RVN, and limiting the amount of piasters US personnel purchased. MACV's views on these measures as outlined on 6 January to CINCPAC, are excerpted below.

Voluntary Troop Savings: Any means of increasing troop savings was desirable; such an achievement was dependent on: 1) creating incentive type interest—of about ten percent—on special series savings bonds, savings accounts, soldiers' deposits, etc.; 2) savings effected in Vietnam should be readily available to the individual on return from Vietnam; 3) USA and USAF regulations should be amended to formalize the procedure whereby the individual might elect to accumulate pay in the same manner authorized members of the USN.

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PAGE 628 OF 872 PAGES

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Simplified Transferral of Troop Pay to the US: Creation of a Treasury check similar in design to postal money orders was favored, devised in \$10, \$20, and \$100 denominations, non-negotiable outside the US except at US disbursing offices.

Expansion of US Facilities: An additional 100 officers and EM clubs in CY 66 were anticipated, beyond the 183 in existence at the beginning of the year. USO, Red Cross, imprest fund exchanges and motion picture accounts were also to be expanded. In conjunction with expanding post exchange (PX) activities, US customs duty exemption should be increased from \$10 to a minimum of \$100—or eliminated completely on items purchased in the PX by personnel stationed in RVN.

Increasing Out-of-Country R&R: MACV plans were to expand the program by the end of the year to about 24,000 trips per month to such points as Hong Kong, Bangkok, Tokyo, Taipei and Manila, predicated on availability of aircraft and lifting of restrictions by host governments—where State Department help would be desirable. (See Chapter III for a detailed treatment of this program).

Limiting Access to the Local Market: The prevailing command policy of limiting to ten percent the number of personnel on leave or pass at any time was considered adequate. No other restrictions were immediately recommended.

Frequent Conversion of MPC Series: Conversions per se would not effect the economy; they should be conducted only as required for currency (MPC) control.

Troop Information: A program was underway to bring the adverse impact of plaster expenditures to troops' attention, with the hope of achieving voluntarily reduced purchasing on the local market.

US Banking Facilities: Such facilities should be established in Saigon (Chase Manhattan and the Bank of America had applied to the GVN), but for the time being they should not be extended to outlying areas.

Limiting Plasters Individually Purchased: This was opposed because: individual requirements varied, such a limitation could easily be circumvented through black market dealings, and non-military personnel would not be effected, which would be detrimental to troop morale. COMUSMACV reported that local purchases of construction materials, except for minor repairs, were prohibited. The construction program had been "reviewed, pared down and revised to a point where further consideration

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would not be fruitful," with minimum construction standards already in effect. MACV opposed assignment of an economic advisor to the staff of COMUSMACV as a duplication of effort; the US Embassy and USAID were responsible for economic counsel in RVN, and this counsel was readily available. COMUSMACV recognized the undesirable effects of locating troop concentrations in and near population centers and was conducting studies in this regard. He also noted that there was no known precedent for a commander to refuse to pay earned salary, with AR 37-104 making prompt payment of troops a command responsibility. No change in this regulation was recommended, nor was any limitation on the monthly pay an individual might draw in Vietnam. Summing up, COMUSMACV recognized that a continuing coordinated effort by all US agencies concerned was required to control the impact of the US troop buildup on the GVN economy. He believed that programs of curtailed troop spending and/or increased troop savings be voluntary to be effective. HQ MACV felt that agreement in principle was reached on all the above points in the discussions with the USAID Administrator.<sup>91</sup>

(C) During his early January visit, the Administrator also held two economic policy meetings with GVN officials, which resulted in only partial agreement. The US recommended, and the GVN agreed, the GVN import financing be doubled to a level of \$200 million in 1966, with \$50 million to be expended in the first quarter. The US agreed to expend \$120 million in the first quarter, with an overall target for the year, including Food for Peace imports, of \$400 million. The US stressed the importance of GVN measures to meet the demand for capital transfers abroad so that the black market could be held to its present level or reduced somewhat; if this was not done, the black market rate would rise and US troops would be enticed from the 118:1 piaster per dollar rate to the black market. The US recommended dollar-denominated bonds sold for piasters, liberalization of the 118 rate, an austerity tax yielding a new and free market rate at about 150 piasters per dollar, and GVN covert or overt intervention in the black market. The GVN rejected these proposals on the basis that politically it could not afford to finance capital flight. Instead the GVN recommended that it sell gold in RVN to meet this demand; the US rejected this, and an impasse was reached.

(C) After much discussion, the GVN officials agreed verbally to use all foreign exchange earnings and not to build up reserves during 1966; to aim at a 1966 tax collection target of 22 billion piasters; to place an import deposit into effect as soon as possible; and to review with the US measures to keep the black market rate in check. The US admission felt it was questionable whether agreement would be reached with the GVN on the black market problem, and noted that it would take close supervision and frequent prodding to ensure that the GVN seriously lived up to agreements reached, particularly on the tax target and the expenditure of foreign exchange earnings.<sup>92</sup>

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PAGE 130 OF 272 PAGES

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(S) As predicted, only very slow progress was achieved. The US Mission was advised by a GVN official following the Honolulu Conference that Premier Ky and Chief of State Thieu did understand the seriousness of the economic situation and the necessity for prompt action, and that Ky's political future was tied to economic performance. The problem remained, however, of convincing the other ruling generals of this and gaining their support in areas of powerful personal interest to them. This official warned that the Honolulu economic program could not be carried out unless the generals fully supported and did not interfere with anti-inflationary actions. He felt this would be most difficult, as discipline in the GVN was at a new low, while interference by the RVNAF in civil affairs had reached a new high. The difficulties were compounded immensely by the political crisis which gripped the nation starting in early March. The onset of the crisis corresponded with a marked slow-down in Chinese business activity, particularly in the import sector, as a result of adverse reaction to the 14 March execution of Ta Vinh, an important Chinese merchant in Saigon. Vinh was condemned by a newly established "Special Court" for bribery of a public official and selling imported cloth and steel at higher than legal prices. The ensuing slump in import activity did not ease until well into April, when the business community apparently decided the GVN would tolerate some black market activity, with some merchants believing the political crisis had distracted the GVN from its anti-corruption campaign. The level of imports remained an area of major concern throughout the year.<sup>93</sup>

(S) In his March report to the President, the USAID Director stated:

Political problems have diverted almost all GVN attention away from economics. Few officials can make policy decisions and only minor implementation of Honolulu economic accords can be expected until the crisis is resolved. Current political problems make implementation Honolulu economic agreements very doubtful. Economic pressures which have developed over the past several months will make it most unlikely to meet our targets of limiting inflation to 33 percent.

The Director said that while recognizing those obstacles, the US intended to press for at least minimum GVN compliance with the Honolulu tax targets. The new GVN Minister of Economy announced on 30 March, three tax measures calculated to yield about one billion piasters in additional revenue (three billion less than the extra four billion agreed on at Honolulu above the originally targeted 22

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PAGE 631 OF 872 PAGES

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billions.) The measures included strict collection of motor vehicle taxes, conversion of the tax on restaurants from a percentage of proceeds to a flat assessment, and strict collection of tax on excessive rentals. Another continuing problem was congestion in the port of Saigon, which constantly delayed goods enroute to the VN market. (In April, COMUSMACV turned over a military pier in Saigon to civilian use to help speed the flow of goods.)<sup>94</sup>

(S) The delivery of rice from the Delta to Saigon was another critical problem. Although deliveries had been at a three-year high in December 1964, they were reported by March 1966 to be at a nine-year low. Factors cited included the fact that some of the annual rice crop was being sold for higher prices across the border in Cambodia; Delta rice merchants were holding large amounts of rice in warehouses in an attempt (which succeeded for a time in April) to force higher GVN prices; and stepped-up VC taxation, quotas, and purchases for the support of their forces. COMUSMACV discussed this problem with Chief JCS on 28 February, noting that VC methods of blocking rice shipments to Saigon included interdiction of routes, spreading of rumors of pending price increases, and other economic warfare techniques. Chief JCS later reported back to COMUSMACV that the CG IV Corps was taking a personal interest in rice movement and that a battalion of VMC had been ordered to start operations in the Rung Sat area. CG IV Corps did not believe a great deal of rice was going into Cambodia. Actual rice stocks in Saigon were kept at adequate levels primarily by imports.<sup>95</sup>

(C) COMUSMACV's efforts to aid the economic situation continued throughout the year. The MACV program to reduce the military population in urban areas proceeded steadily. On 13 April all R&R and leaves to Saigon were suspended. Five days later COMUSMACV directed component commanders to take positive actions to preclude the introduction of additional units or activities into the Saigon area. On 2 May COMUSMACV issued a directive prohibiting the acquisition of additional Vietnamese-owned buildings for use as billets, beyond those already under option, without his personal approval. By 1 August leased facilities representing 17,480 square feet and \$44,514 in annual rent had been returned to Vietnamese control, and this process was programmed to increase rapidly for the remainder of the year. USAF and 1st Log Comd headquarters were scheduled to move to Long Binh when facilities under construction were completed, with a portion of MACV initially occupying the vacated facilities. Ultimately MACV would move to new quarters next to Tan Son Nhut airbase.<sup>96</sup>

(S) Strict black market controls were put into effect. A Ration Control Board was established to consider requirements for rationing certain essential items; on 3 February the list of rationed items was greatly expanded, and serial numbers of items sold for more than \$10

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PAGE 632 OF 872 PAGES

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were recorded. The Liquor ration was reduced by 50 percent and a further reduction was planned. In cooperation with the US Embassy and GVN authorities, MACV took drastic and aggressive action to reduce the high percentage of pilferage from US stocks. Stringent controls were established over US personal currency transactions and postal money orders. The two US banking facilities were cleared to open in Saigon. An increase in PX outlets provided better quality goods designed to absorb troop spending. Out-of-country R&R was expanded. A command-sponsored Savings Bond Drive was initiated. Command emphasis relative to illegal practices by the military was continually stressed through Commander's Conferences, Troop I&E Programs, Armed Forces Radio Stations, and other local news media.<sup>97</sup>

(S) The overriding importance of solving the critical GVN economic problem involved sobering policy considerations for the US Government with clear implications for COMUSMACV. At the end of April, consideration was given to devising the most effective negotiating strategy for convincing the reluctant GVN to take necessary anti-inflationary steps. COMUSMACV's comments were solicited on a series of possible moves designed, among other things, to lead the GVN by logical steps to understand the necessity of drastic measures such as devaluation or exchange auction. This possible strategy involved advising the GVN at the top level that the US meant to help the RVN preserve its independence as long as this help was desired, but that US help was of no avail unless the GVN could also take the essential steps required to restore economic and financial stability; that the US recognized that inflation stemmed to some extent from the costs of expanded government programs far exceeding income, but that another factor was the over-expanding war effort, including the presence of the US military and the related construction effort; and that the US Government was becoming increasingly concerned over the impact of continued expansion of US forces in RVN, if it helped generate runaway inflation which undermined the whole GVN structure. Further, it would be pointed out that certain anti-inflationary measures had been agreed upon during the USAID Administrator's January visit to Saigon, and at Honolulu, but that in fact little action had been taken. The GVN would be reminded that some of these measures, such as taxation, were also important steps in the social revolution it was pledged to carry forward. If the GVN reaction were negative, as was anticipated, the US would then press for more drastic steps such as devaluation or exchange auction techniques. If it became clear the GVN would not undertake even an essential minimum program, the US would have to consider the "shock treatment" of reminding the GVN that since the US military presence was one cause of the problem, the US would have to decide whether to curtail military construction sharply and to re-examine the troop deployment schedule.<sup>98</sup>

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PAGE 633 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) While efforts were being made to spur effective GVN economic moves, the White House generated an across-the-board program of unilateral US actions to reduce inflationary pressures in RVN. A White House memorandum to SECDEF on 6 May cited expert opinion that "inflationary pressures could soon reach such runaway proportions as to become a threat comparable to the VC or severe political unrest to our objectives in Vietnam." The memorandum stated:

Inflationary pressures are so eroding the purchasing power of government workers, military and security personnel, and farmers as to undermine the will to work and will to win of the very Vietnamese elements on whom we rely most heavily. Our military effort could be undermined if the ARVN and their families lose all confidence in the masters with which they are paid. Many also argue that economic distress created by shortages and price rises had much to do with creating the climate for the present political unrest."

(S) Noting that the rapid superimposition of the US military buildup on an already weak GVN economy was perhaps the chief contributor to inflation, the memorandum suggested a series of new measures:

1) Development of projections of the likely inflationary impact of new US troop deployments and military construction.

2) Establishment of an overall US military and civil master and resource budget.

3) Establishment of a GVN manpower budget.

4) Development of a system of priorities as a guide to sensible master and resources budgeting.

5) Establishment of an effective procedure in Washington and the field for policing military and civil programs from the standpoint of inflationary impact and political implications, as well as need. The White House further urged consideration by the military establishment of these specific anti-inflationary measures (some already suggested or being undertaken by MACV):

a) More self-sufficient US construction methods.

b) Postponement or stretch-out of less essential US military construction.

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PAGE 634 OF 872 PAGES

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- c) Greater use of third-country labor.
- d) Greater use of RVNAF in construction.
- e) Reduction of less essential US military shipments to relieve port congestion.
- f) Reduction of US demands for housing and other structures in urban areas.
- g) Further efforts to recapture earnings of military and contractor personnel, such as:
  - (1) Increase out-of-country R&R.
  - (2) Expand in-country R&R facilities.
  - (3) Expand PX sales further.
  - (4) Improve soldiers' deposits.
  - (5) Cost-saving incentive awards to US, Vietnamese and third-country personnel.
  - (6) Expand I&E programs to alert US forces to the inflationary impact of their expenditures on the RVN economy.<sup>100</sup>

(S) On the critical problem of Saigon port congestion, the White House proposed a series of interim measures for immediate relief of the bottleneck, and an urgent DOD/COMUSMACV study of the possibility of the US military taking over operation of the Saigon port. COMUSMACV agreed that MACV could do this if the GVN agreed, and if MACV could serve as the GVN's agent to unload ships and deliver goods to a designated spot for turnover to the GVN or USAID acting as agent for the GVN. After detailed study and negotiations, an agreement was signed with the GVN on 4 July transferring responsibility for USAID/CPA cargo in Saigon from the CPA to MACV. For all intents and purposes, MACV then began operating the Saigon port.<sup>101</sup> (See Annex C—The Saigon Port.)

(S) On the financial front, SECDEF proposed to the Ambassador and COMUSMACV on 1 June that all DOD-generated local spending in Vietnam during FY 67 be limited to 34 billion piasters, a figure calculated to level off spending on the basis of the May 1966 rate. The projected FY 67 expenditure had been 47.7 billion piasters. SECDEF listed 17 possible measures to reduce spending and requested Saigon's comments and suggestions for additional cuts which would

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achieve the desired goal without adversely affecting combat capability. On 19 June, after detailed analysis of various proposed measures to reduce spending, COMUSMACV stated to CINCPAC, SECSTATE, SECDEF and JCS that "the imposition of the 34 billion piaster FY 67 expenditure ceiling is considered impracticable and highly restrictive to the point of compromising the attainment of stated operational goals." Instead, COMUSMACV recommended that the 34 billion be an expenditure objective, or general limit, as opposed to a ceiling. "Such action would permit the command to achieve established objectives without prejudicing the military and pacification efforts in RVN," COMUSMACV stated.<sup>102</sup>

(S) The US Embassy/USAID Joint Economic Division felt that a piaster budget with a built-in reporting and control system was urgently required, and recommended that MACV and the Economic Division immediately develop one along with a complementary manpower budget. COMUSMACV, while concurring with the necessity for controlling piaster expenditures and for comprehensive and timely information on all DOD-financed spending, did not consider it operationally feasible to establish an in-country detailed budgeting, accounting, and reporting system. Instead, he recommended that the existing systems of the military departments, modified as necessary, be utilized with CINCPAC as the focal point for accumulation of data. This approach was subsequently adopted.<sup>103</sup>

(C) On 18 June the GVN carried out its most significant anti-inflationary action of the year--devaluation of the piaster. The drastic move, taken in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund and strongly supported by the US, essentially involved the adjustments of the exchange rate from 60 to 118 piasters to the US dollar. There was no change in the special rate for personal transactions of US personnel in-country. The immediate effect of devaluation was to double the prices paid by importers for all imported commodities except rice, and retail prices thereupon rose significantly before leveling off in late September. Simultaneously with devaluation, the GVN announced salary increases averaging 25 percent for the fixed-income employees of the military and civil services who had suffered most from inflation. The GVN followed up devaluation with rather extensive gold sales which, together with increased smuggling, gradually brought black market currency prices down.<sup>104</sup>

(S) On 13 July SECDEF confirmed in a memorandum to CJCS that "the goal of the DOD is to hold the total piaster expenditure that it funds, determines, and advises to the end-FY 66 level while avoiding any reduction of military effectiveness through careful management by joint commanders and their components of such piaster spending by each quarter fiscal year." The stated 1st quarter FY 67 limitation was nine billion piasters, and the tentative annual limitation 36 billion.<sup>105</sup>

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PAGE 636 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) Asked by CINAC to identify problem areas in achieving the desired piaster limitation, COMUSMACV provided a list on 28 July which included:

USARV Local Procurement of Selected Commodities: "Significant reduction in piasters expended for procurement of selected commodities cannot be achieved at this time either because of the perishable nature of the item, or the shortage of shipping space to permit delivery from off-shore."

Port Congestion:

The current problem of port congestion would be aggravated by any curtailment of the CY 1967 two billion plus piaster program for contractor effort in ship unloading and port clearance operations. The urgency on shipment of air munitions, combined with support required for troop buildup scheduled for this fiscal year, will further complicate the port congestion problem. Unless military terminal service personnel, truck and lighterage units can be made available, continued heavy reliance must be placed upon private contractors in order to effect some relief from the current 245,000 M/T cargo unbooked in CONUS ports and withheld from shipment to loading ports.

Local National Employment:

Significant reductions in piasters expended in support of local national employment or in payment for contractual services cannot be achieved without resulting impairment of mission accomplishment unless prompt replacement of the affected capability in deployment of appropriate military units, particularly to USARV, can be provided.

COMUSMACV also noted only slow progress in reducing US leases of Vietnamese facilities and in reducing personal expenditures of US personnel in RVN. In conclusion, COMUSMACV stated:

Any piaster spending limitation must provide for such flexibility necessary to insure continuous effective accomplishment of the Command's military and pacification mission. An expenditure of piasters for an unprogrammed military requirement should be accommodated as a one time requirement and excluded from the established spending limitation.106

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PAGE 637 OF 872 PAGES

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(U) On 25 August, COMSMACV proposed to the Ambassador, as one piaster-spending reduction measure, that an ad hoc Embassy, USAID, and military committee be formed to study the possibility of providing selected US commodities in lieu of family-allowance piaster payments to indigenous employees of the US Government. Such items as unprocessed rice, cooking oil, and condensed milk, obtainable from US sources at a savings over local prices, would be highly acceptable to Vietnamese employees, COMSMACV stated, and families receiving such items under a payment-in-kind system would be less susceptible to inflationary pressures, since they would receive the commodities regardless of costs on the local economy.107

(U) To implement the DOD program for reducing and controlling piaster expenditures, HQ MACV on 13 September issued a comprehensive directive outlining policies, procedures, and responsibilities of the US military establishment in RVN. HQ MACV was to establish maximum permissible quarterly piaster-expenditure authorizations for all official MACV activities. Individual expenditures were not subject to control or limitation by directive, but MACV policy was to continue efforts to reduce such piaster spending by publicizing savings programs and by encouraging individual purchases of commodities from other than RVN markets. Piaster expenditures from the Joint Support portion of the GVN defense budget would be controlled through a system of cash releases to the GVN, so that established quarterly and annual limits were not exceeded. The directive noted that effectiveness of combat operations and emergency action to safeguard life would not be compromised by expenditure ceilings; proper management of nonessential spending should preclude any excesses resulting from emergency expenditures. MACV established a Piaster Expenditure Control Working Group (PECWG) chaired by the MACV Comptroller and composed of a representative of each ACoFS and the Construction Directorate. The PECWG was charged with planning distribution of the piaster limitations and assessing requirements to permit mission accomplishment within the applied limitations.108

(S) On 1 October, following repeated unsuccessful attempts to obtain Mission Council unanimity on piaster budgets for CY 67, the Ambassador recommended that Washington impose a piaster ceiling of 42 billion for the US military in RVN and 16 billion for US civilian elements; the total of 58 billion compared with 42 billion in CY 66. Despite objections from COMSMACV and Director USAID, the Ambassador felt that any higher spending levels would accelerate inflation and thereby jeopardize political and military progress. The Ambassador stated his belief that the US should quickly bring as massive a military force to bear in Vietnam as possible—so long as this could be done without wildcat inflation and other lethal political effects. Compounding the overall economic problem, the Ambassador stated, were basic weaknesses of the GVN whose position—despite the successful

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PAGE 638 OF 872 PAGES

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11 September election—was "tenuous and precarious." He expressed fear of a much larger US-sponsored program in Vietnam because he believed the GVN was administratively too weak to carry it out, while special Vietnamese interests were still very strong. "I believe there is a rate at which these people can go ahead and anything beyond that rate tends to be lip service," the Ambassador said. Concluding his overall assessment, the Ambassador warned that if the CY 66 US military piaster budget level set by SECDEF were not held, the entire anti-inflationary program in RVN would be jeopardized.109

(S) On 5 October, COMUSMACV set forth for CINCPAC and Washington his position concerning the military and economic situation in RVN and the reasons he could not concur in the Ambassador's proposed CY 1967 piaster budget. COMUSMACV noted that the primary mission of US forces in RVN was to defeat the VC/NVA and to assist the GVN in extending its control throughout the country. He further stated:

If MACV must operate within a piaster ceiling of 42 billion for CY 1967 and if our actual deployments approach the approved deployment level as identified in OSD's Southeast Asia Deployment Program #3 dated 1 August 1966, it would mean that US troop deployments to RVN would have to stop about mid-December 1966. Such action would deprive us of at least one division and the required combat support and combat service support necessary to balance our forces as identified and approved in the CY 1966 Force Requirements. A US military piaster expenditure ceiling of 47.4 billion is the minimum requirement needed by MACV in order to conduct sustained operations of the OSD FY 1966 approved force level of 445,000, an average of 440,000 during CY 1967.110

(S) Nevertheless, COMUSMACV had directed a recomputation of the planned US force structure for an average of CY 67 strength of 430,000 US forces, based on an estimate of service capabilities. This represented a 10,000 reduction, which would cut 1.4 billion piasters from the estimated 47.4 billion requirement, bringing US military expenditures to four billion more than the Ambassador's recommendation of 42 billion piasters. A downward revision of RVNAF strength for CY 67 brought COMUSMACV's budget estimate to within one billion piasters of the Ambassador's recommendation.111

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PAGE 639 OF 872 PAGES

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### Vietnamese Reactions to the US Presence

(c) The reactions of RVN's citizenry to the US presence in-country remained throughout 1966 a matter of vital concern to COMUSMACV and other elements of the US Mission. In May, MACV concurred in a proposal that JUSPAO be assigned primary responsibility for maintaining an up-to-date assessment of nation-wide Vietnamese attitudes. The year's most dramatic instances of Vietnamese anti-Americanism came during the March-June Buddhist/struggle crisis, but there was no evidence that the isolated acts of violence against US personnel and installations or the virulent propaganda slogans of the struggle forces represented the feelings of more than a small minority of the Vietnamese. The main thrust of this agitator propaganda was that the US was "interfering" in RVN's internal affairs and was violating the interests of the Vietnamese people by supporting the Thieu-Ky regime. Tri Quang and his militant Buddhist supporters noisily protested against President Johnson for backing the GVN, and many of the series of springtime Buddhist self-immolations were avowedly undertaken to convince the President of the error of his policy. The evidence suggested that the extreme anti-Americanism which developed in the Da Nang and Hue demonstrations was inspired by the elements which had infiltrated the struggle forces. It was significant to note that even at the height of this campaign, troops of the dissident 1st ARVN Div and the I Corps staff passed resolutions declaring their determination to continue the fight against the communists alongside their American allies. (For a detailed discussion of the struggle movement, see MHB Monograph "The March-June Political Crisis in South Vietnam and Its Effects on Military Operations," 9 December 1966.) 112

(d) In mid-April, a growing sense of uncertainty about RVN political orientation marked Vietnamese public opinion. In part this was an outgrowth of the past month of political turmoil within RVN, during which the prospect of a non-aligned RVN was alluded by the Buddhists, and in part it was due to the American reaction to the Vietnamese political crisis, raising the inevitable question of continued American presence in RVN.

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PAGE 640 OF 872 PAGES

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Typical of this was the Vietnamese newspaper editor who copied a headline from a commentary by a US news Magazine: "TIME FOR A US PULLOUT?" To a degree this resulted from increased attention to the idea of a political settlement of the war, negotiated either with Hanoi or directly with the Viet Cong. There was little doubt that this attitude of uncertainty was salient at the time. The touchstone of the attitude appeared to be the matter of a negotiated settlement of the war. This in turn was intricately mixed up with the attitudes toward the US and its future decisions. Many Vietnamese at the time were exhibiting sensitivity to the possibility of some sort of American withdrawal from RVN, despite the lack of any evidence that this was in the offing. As one Saigon intellectual expressed it to a JUSPAO officer: "The Vietnamese people have been betrayed again and again, by the French, the Japanese, twice by the communists, by Diem, and by the intellectuals. So most people feel eventually the US too, will betray us." 113

(S) On 5 August, amid RVN National Police anger at an incident in which two US military security guards mistakenly accused a Vietnamese policeman of stealing US beer, the Ambassador called a special Mission Council meeting on the problem of anti-Americanism. The Ambassador stated that he had confirmed, and was gravely concerned by, the existence of anti-Americanism in the Saigon police force. He stated that this could undercut the US effort in Vietnam "just as surely as can a military defeat, or wildest inflation, or a communist coup d'etat." Describing the cause of the anti-Americanism, the Ambassador said, "the Vietnamese police have told everyone who is interested that it is the rowdy behavior of certain Americans up and down the streets and through the nightclubs and bars--not once, but night after night. They are behaving in a way which is making them absolutely unbearable to the Vietnamese police and are a constant source of anti-American feeling." The Ambassador felt that many US agencies and activities were involved. 114

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PAGE 641 OF 873 PAGES

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(E) In July it was reported that there was resentment in Long An Province, openly expressed, over the growing number of US advisors. The comment was "advice, yes--interference, no." From the source came the report that several ARVN officers had said, "Americans are not sticking to their role of advisors, instead they are assuming command functions. This doesn't sit well with us Vietnamese. It's something Americans must guard against." After all, they add, "this is our country."<sup>115</sup>

(F) In early September a US battalion was moved into Long An Province in a pilot project to determine the feasibility of employing US combat forces in the densely populated Mekong Delta. The reactions of the local populace were closely monitored as the battalion undertook its complex task. Among the major problems apparent from the outset, was that the population density would cause fire support to be carefully controlled and limited. The local inhabitants were afraid that the presence of US troops would lead to civilian casualties and price increases for local commodities; in addition, they were afraid of the US Negro troops, who reminded them of their sad experience with the French West African colonial troops. During October, more than a month after the battalion's arrival, surveys were conducted to determine the attitude of the people toward US troop presence. Interviews were conducted with individuals from different social, religious, and economic backgrounds, including province natives, refugees, farmers, merchants or vendors, and males and females over 16 years of age. The majority of the respondents were aware that US troops were in RVN to help fight against communist aggression, and approved of their presence, in that it made them feel more secure; however, a small number still had reservations based on fear of inflation, that the women might not be safe, and other personal reasons. Their fear of the American Negro was very early dispelled, as most of the respondents had found them very friendly, especially to children. An interesting note was that the majority of the people interviewed could not distinguish combat troops from advisors or engineers, and usually associated all Americans with the Civic Action Programs offering health-aid treatment and food. It was worth noting that none mentioned the possibility of VC retaliation against the populace in areas where US troops might be operating.<sup>116</sup>

(G) There was continuing command emphasis on the necessity for US military personnel to maintain good relations with the Vietnamese people. A card containing nine rules of conduct was issued to each member of the US Armed Forces in RVN. A MACV directive, revised in May, recognized and dealt with a potential cause of ill feelings--non-combat accidents or incidents involving physical or material loss. This directive delineated responsibilities for reporting, investigating, processing, and supervising non-combat claims for damages by residents of Vietnam.<sup>117</sup>

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PAGE 642 OF 872 PAGES

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(2) At various times of tension during the year, curfew hours in Saigon and elsewhere were extended for US military and USG civilian personnel as a means of reducing the likelihood of untoward incidents. On 26 August, a US curfew of 2300-0400 went into effect, replacing the former midnight-0400 curfew which corresponded with the limitation set for Vietnamese citizens by the GVN. During the Constituent Assembly election period in September, Americans were restricted to travel between duty stations and billets. For much of the year, Hue, Da Nang, Dalat, and other population centers were off-limits to US personnel. 118

(3) The September election results brought comments from foreign diplomats that the elections had been neither free nor honest. The thinking population was indignant over the comments and puzzled as to their reasoning. The self-exiled former Premier Tran Van Huu alleged that the elections had been overtly prepared since April, bringing this reply from a local newspaper: "Mr. Huu thinks as a French puppet. He does not understand that the situation has radically changed and that the Vietnamese-American friendship bonds are far from similar to those tying Huu to his master during the French occupation." 119

(4) In October two local newspapers highlighted a DOD spokesman's statement that the US paid \$34 indemnity for each civilian accidentally killed by US military action, commenting that: "It is too cheap even for the worthless life of a Vietnamese." The DOD-announced figure of \$34 was actually a solatium, but was alleged by the press to be the settlement for each civilian killed in military action. One of the newspapers remarked, after the misunderstanding had been corrected, that "the public cannot but rejoice at the timely confirmation by the American authorities that the \$34 is but an initial payment." It added, rather obliquely, that "paying indemnities can affect the lasting friendship between the Vietnamese and American people." 120

(5) In early October, of all the issues clamoring for attention in the press, none rang louder than the question of whether the war would soon end in peace or be enlarged. Local editors seemed perturbed by any peace proposals embodying concessions on the part of the GVN; they appeared, in fact, quite willing to enlarge the war if necessary. Vice President Humphrey was bitterly criticized for suggesting the eventual recognition of the National Liberation Front (NLF). One newspaper wrote "NLF is the real promoter of this war of aggression. Should negotiations start, one must talk with the instigator and not the accomplice. The Vietnamese are as eager for peace as the Americans, but they cannot accept peace at any price."

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Order Sec Army By TAG per  
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PAGE 643 OF 872 PAGES

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In mid-October the Manila Conference, and the direction the war would take as a result of the meeting, were the main editorial topics. A number of papers cited points that should be emphasized at Manila; one stressed that "whether the final result of the conference will be a negotiated peace or a peace through victory, this people, this territory, must not be used as a scapegoat, a test for a peace formula or a type of war initiated by others and forced on us. President Johnson should remember during the meeting that the Vietnamese only request the American friends to help expel the communist as quickly as possible and to return to the US once this noble job is done."<sup>121</sup>

(8) Prior to the conference there had been mention, by the local press, of fear that the US might initiate a strategy or peace move without consulting the GVN. One news media sent the GVN delegation to Manila with the admonition "to have an adamant position about the necessity of communist defeat to avoid future subversion," while another reminded Ambassador Goldberg that "the RVN is the principal actor and the US is only its ally." Typical comments after the conference expressed by most RVN newspapers: "All the documents released at the conclusion of the [Manila Conference] are masterpieces." "US Policy in VN remains unchanged." "As a result no change is expected, except for a greater buildup to meet future battles to come." "The RVN and her six allies share the same view: to build peace but not at the cost of a communist victory. It is now up to NVN to make her choice."<sup>122</sup>

(9) During November the Saigon press joined in criticizing the US MPs who occasionally opened fire on cars and motor bikes stalled in front of US billets; US authorities were asked to dampen the exaggerated vigilance of the "trigger happy" MPs. The situation improved as the incidents occurred less frequently during the remainder of the year. There had also been several public discussions on the prostitution problem in Saigon. There was a general Vietnamese feeling that the magnitude of the problem—if not the problem itself—had been caused by the Americans. Also during November there were comments on the Kuntze case; one daily newspaper stated the Vietnamese could tolerate the undisciplined acts of the GI's out of sympathy for them, but not those of a Captain who violated Vietnamese sovereignty by calling himself "the Mayor of Saigon." The general opinion was that wherever American troops provided security they were welcome; it was the "static" presence that was apt to rub feelings the wrong way. One Saigon newspaper asked why the Vietnamese did not see more of the good side of the Allied presence, stating that it was unfortunate that the peasants believed VC rumors, such as that helicopters were used by the GI's to catch girls.<sup>123</sup>

(10) In December, a village in Bien Hoa Province was hit accidentally by US artillery fire, after having been bombed accidentally in July. The first time a village or hamlet is attacked in error by American fire, a survey concluded, the people usually accept the incident with their

PAGE 644 OF 872 PAGES

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usual fatalistic resignation and are grateful for any help they can get. However, when it happens twice, they not only wonder about the accuracy of the American aim, but more importantly they have the strong impression that the Americans don't really try to avoid civilian targets.<sup>124</sup> (See Annex F--Civilian Casualties.)

(2) During December most of the Saigon press directed its attention to news concerning the assassination of Tran Van Van, Constituent Assembly deputy and leader of a southern political faction, and to the proposed Revolutionary Development Program for 1967. But time, space, and effort were still available to discuss the incident involving the Mayor of Saigon and US MP's. The Mayor, personally unknown to the MP's, had been apprehended by them while "target shooting" across the Saigon River--with a submachine gun. While the incident did not make the press immediately, except for an indirect questioning of the authority of the MP's, within a few days all the papers had made comments, usually unfavorable toward the MP's, the general conclusion being that the US had gone too far. The gossip column of one paper noted that the US realistically gave behavior guidebooks to troops in foreign lands, but that apparently Vietnam was an exception.<sup>125</sup>

(3) In late December, the Saigon press commented pro-and-con about continued bombing of NVN vs an extended cease-fire. Most were for "increased US pressure against Hanoi," noting that "to destroy dangerous virus, strong medicines are necessary." One paper welcomed Senator Mansfield's call for a 45-day truce because it would mean "45 days of no blood, no deaths, no bombings," while other warned the people to "keep vigilant and vigorously denounce those hypocrites who throw Vietnam into the lap of communism suing for a negotiated peace." Comments on Ambassador Goldberg's request for UN mediation varied. Some of the press called it a "Machiavellian trick" which would enable the US first to prove its good will, then to escalate the war when the communist turned down all peace proposals--as they would have to because they had lost face. One Saigon paper saw the request as "a new chess tactic" emanating from a top-level Washington meeting, and possibly "the forerunner of another series of moves in line with the secret diplomacy wherein Russia may play a leading role," while another daily suggested that the Ambassador's request, plus the simultaneous arrival of US reinforcements, might represent the renewal of a "carrot-and-stick" policy, and wondered about the unexpected silence of the USSR over the Vietnam problems. A Saigon Chinese paper assailed U Thant for what it called his "biased attitude" in having expressed regrets over the alleged recent US bombings of Hanoi. "Did you hear of an American billet blasted by a VC explosion in the heart of Saigon? Why didn't you express any regret or sympathetic feelings to the innocent Vietnamese civilian victims of the VC explosion? And why didn't you blame the VC for such an inhuman act?"<sup>126</sup>

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PAGE 645 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) At the end of the year it could be concluded that there were signs that the Vietnamese people, for real or imagined reasons, were venting some of their frustrations against the US and other FWAF. Whether this was a normal reaction to the conditions under which they had lived for so long, or the beginning of a significant manifestation against the US and FW presence, only time would tell.

## CONFLICT OF OPINION AT HOME

### The US Government Position

(U) The US Government unwaveringly bowed to its commitment in RVN during 1966, despite the pressure of domestic and Free World critics and the intransigence of the communists. The policies underpinning the vast military effort directed by COMUSMACV were refined in detail as the year progressed, but remained fundamentally unchanged.

(U) In February SECDEF spelled out US objectives in terms reemphasized on various subsequent occasions by the President:

Our objective is not to destroy the government of North Vietnam or to set up permanent bases in South Vietnam or to make South Vietnam a member of an alliance. Our objective is to protect the government of South Vietnam so that she can work out her own destiny politically. Our strategy is to prove to the enemy that they cannot win, that they will pay a very high price for trying; eventually they will be willing to negotiate a settlement. An anti-communist alliance is not one of our objectives.<sup>127</sup>

(S) US Chiefs of Mission in the Far East met at Baguio in the Philippines from 27 February to 2 March and came to certain general conclusions regarding the US commitment to RVN. There appeared no prospect of change in the outlook of the present Peking leadership, nor for an early detente between the US and Red China. In pursuing a policy of containment of China, however, the US wished to minimize the risk of war and sought the maximum support of others; channels for contacts with the Chinese should be kept open. The MD program in RVN was an essential concomitant of military operation, but it required a long lead time; care should be taken not to push the program beyond its capabilities to be sustained. This fact plus the requirements for military attrition of VC main forces and NVN troops, led the US to recognize that the war would be long and arduous, and to discourage hopes for quick, easy solutions. The US, however, did

PAGE 646 OF 872 PAGES

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not wish to foreclose the possibility that termination of the fighting in RVN might result from gradual, unpublicized NVN withdrawal, rather than as a result of formal negotiations. It was felt that Soviet policy in Asia was torn between the desire for containment of China and ambitions to push forward the cause of Marxist revolutions everywhere. If NVN were to refrain from active pursuit of its ambitions in RVN, and to retire to its territorial confines, it would doubtless require economic and military support from the Soviets, which they would probably be prepared to provide.<sup>128</sup>

(U) On 30 June, the day following the first US raid on the Hanoi-Haiphong POL facilities, President Johnson spoke in Omaha on why the bombing had been necessary:

In many more ways than I can now tell you here in Omaha, we have explored and we are continuing to explore avenues to peace with North Vietnam. But as of this moment their only reply has been to send more troops and to send more guns in to the South. And until the day they decide to end this aggression and to make an honorable peace, I can assure that we, speaking for the United States of America, intend to carry on. No one knows how long it will take. Only Hanoi can be the judge of that . . . . But I can and I do here and now tell you this: the aggression that they are conducting will not succeed. The people of South Vietnam will be given the chance to work out their own destiny, in their own way, and not at the point of a bayonet and not with a gun at their temple.<sup>129</sup>

(U) The dramatic political purge conducted in mainland China during the summer led some observers to speculate that the reason for Peking's failure to intervene more openly in support of NVN following the POL raids was that the CHICOM regime was in fact preoccupied and immobilized by its own internal conflict. The State Department in July cautioned posts that it was not anxious to see this line of reasoning become generally accepted. The Department believed that the reasons for Chinese restraint included such basic factors as the schism with the Soviets, reluctance to confront US forces unless Chinese territory was actually attacked, logistic difficulties in conducting war against the US in Vietnam, and difficulties in handling relations with Hanoi which would arise from more open intervention.<sup>130</sup>

(U) US forces in Vietnam received personal assurance of unceasing support from President Johnson on 26 October. The President flew from Manila to Cam Ranh Bay, becoming the first US President to visit a war zone since Franklin D. Roosevelt stopped in Casablanca, Morocco during

PAGE 647 OF 822 PAGES

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World War II. President Johnson, honoring all US fighting men in Vietnam, awarded COMUSMACV the Distinguished Service Medal. Addressing assembled US troops, the President declared:

I give you my pledge, I shall never let you down, nor your fighting comrades, nor the 15 million people of South Vietnam, nor the hundreds of millions of Asians who are counting on us to show how in Vietnam aggression does not pay.<sup>131</sup>

#### Political Arguments

(U) Congressional interest in the war was high in 1966, with Congressional investigators visiting RVN at various times and conducting hearings in Washington. In February, a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on the war attracted national attention. Former US Ambassador to Moscow and Belgrade, George Kennan, outlined his views for the Committee, whose Chairman, Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, was a leading critic of Administration policy. Among other things, Mr. Kennan said:

Given the situation that exists today in the relations among the leading Communist powers, and (particularly) the Soviet-Chinese conflict, there is every likelihood that a Communist regime in South Vietnam would follow a fairly independent course . . . From the long term standpoint, therefore and on principle, I think our military involvement in Vietnam has to be recognized as unfortunate . . . I have great misgivings about any deliberate expansion of hostilities on our part directed to the achievement of something called "victory"--if by the use of that term we envisage the complete disappearance of the recalcitrance with which we are now faced, the formal submission by the adversary to our will, and complete realization of our present stated political aims. I doubt that these things can be achieved even by the most formidable military success . . . I hope our Government will restrict our military operations in Vietnam to the minimum necessary to assure the security of our forces, and to maintain our military presence there until we can achieve a satisfactory peaceful resolution of the conflict . . .<sup>132</sup>

PAGE 648 OF 872 PAGES

**UNCLASSIFIED**

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(U) General Maxwell D. Taylor also appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Excerpts from his testimony present the other side of the coin:

A simple statement of what we are doing in South Vietnam is to say that we are engaged in a clash of purpose and interest with the militant wing of the Communist movement represented by Hanoi, the Viet Cong, the Peking . . . . The purpose of the Hanoi camp is perfectly clear and has been since 1954. It is to absorb the 15,000,000 people of South Vietnam into a single Communist state under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh and his associates in Hanoi. \* \* \* We intend to show that the "War of Liberation," far from being cheap, safe and disavowable, is costly, dangerous and doomed to failure . . . . The question has been raised as to whether this clash of interests is really important to us. An easy and incomplete answer would be that it must be important to us since it is considered so important by the other side. Their leadership has made it quite clear that they regard South Vietnam as the testing ground for the "War of Liberation" and that after its anticipated success there, it will be used widely about the world . . . .

\* \* \*

Both sides in the struggle have over the years developed the current strategies which are now in confrontation. During 1964 and 1965, the Hanoi leadership attempted to exploit the political turbulence which followed the fall of President Diem in November 1963. Greatly encouraged by the disorder which marked the political scene in Saigon, the Communist leadership made a massive effort to press on to victory . . . . they began the infiltration of personnel of the North Vietnamese Army, first as individual replacements, later as formed tactical units. Utilizing this new strength, they intended to make the monsoon offensive of 1965 a major drive for significant military victories . . . .

\* \* \*

I am obliged to feel that the Hanoi leadership is not yet convinced that it must mend its ways. Perhaps they still hope for some kind of military victory in the South. Certainly, they are not convinced that in some way the United States cannot be detached from the support of

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South Vietnam . . . . They have not forgotten that the Viet Minh won more in Paris than in Dien Bien Phu and believe that the Viet Cong may be as fortunate in Washington. They doubt the will of the American public to continue the conflict indefinitely . . . . The key, I believe, is inexorable pressure at all points, directed at the will, the ability and the means of the Communist aggressors. It is a fair question to ask, whether this is the best strategy to attain our basic objectives. . . . I must add in honesty that I know of no new strategic proposal which would serve as a better alternative to the one which I have described . . . . 133

(U) Some Senators viewed askance the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings. When asked about the discussion of US military strategy in public hearings, Senator Richard Russell of Georgia said:

I think it would be a grave mistake for any active US military officer--or civilian official--to testify in open hearings on so delicate a subject as Vietnam. Every dissent prolongs the war. It makes no difference if some poor, half-baked beatnik--he can do it--or a Senator of the United States who is highly critical of the war demands that we get out, or has a different theory than the Administration as the objective and purposes of the war. This undoubtedly confirms Ho Chi Minh in his basic concept that the United States just wouldn't have the patience to wage a very lengthy war there. There is, of course, every legal right to dissent. But the fact is that the boys over there in Vietnam are paying a rather high price for our vaunted right of public dissent. There's no question about that--many boys will lose their lives as a result of it. For much of the dissent confirms the North Vietnamese in their theory that, if they can just hold for a while longer, we will get tired and go away. 134

(U) SECDEF McNamara refuted the often-expressed claim that the war in RVN was a civil war. Appearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the SECDEF produced 15 photographs made, some in 1963, over NVN and Laos. The pictures showed convoy staging areas in NVN, southward-moving convoys in Laos, and construction of roads in Laos leading to the RVN border. The SECDEF said that Hanoi started the war

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in RVN in the late 1950's "when it became clear South Vietnam could live as a separate nation and was even surpassing North Vietnam in economic improvements and advances in health and education. Terrorism began in earnest in mid-1957 and in 1960, while communist terrorists assassinated or kidnapped more than 2,000 officials and civilians, a new phase of aggression was started when Hanoi ordered thousands of trained military and other leadership into South Vietnam." The SECDEF quoted from a document found on a dead communist soldier which proved that the NLF was formed by the NVN Communist Party. The SECDEF said, "the war in Vietnam was not and is not a civil war. It is a case of aggression 'modern style' which calls on us to honor our treaty commitment. It is a direct and flagrant aggression by North Vietnam."<sup>135</sup>

(U) Senator Fulbright spelled out his position in an article in a national magazine:

We have neither the obligation nor the right to intervene in a civil war. If, prior to American intervention, the war in South Vietnam was essentially a civil war, as I believe to be the case, then the legal basis of American involvement is dubious . . . . The first step which I recommend is that we state explicitly and forthrightly that we recognize the Viet Cong as a belligerent, with whom we are prepared to negotiate peace, and further, that we will use our considerable powers of persuasion in Saigon to induce the South Vietnamese government, which has said that it will not negotiate with the Viet Cong, to change its mind . . . . It is a tragic fact, but nonetheless a fact, that in Vietnam the effective nationalist movement is controlled by communists . . . .

My second recommendation is that we state forthrightly and explicitly, in advance of negotiations, that we are prepared to conclude a peace agreement providing for an internationally supervised election to determine the future of South Vietnam and, further that we are prepared to accept the outcome of such an election, whatever that outcome may be.<sup>136</sup>

(U) The pre-election Republican assault on the Administration's handling of Vietnam began in effect with a salvo from House Republican Leader Gerald R. Ford, who declared:

We have gone along with our elected Commander-in-Chief on everything he has asked to support our fighting men in South Vietnam. But when I read what is happening over there and how we are running short of bombs despite all the billions we have voted for defense,

PAGE 651 OF 872 PAGES

**UNCLASSIFIED**

## UNCLASSIFIED

I wonder how long we can underwrite shocking mismanagement in the name of national unity.

Ford cited reports of shortages and shipping bottlenecks which he said were "almost a national scandal," maintaining that the "overall combat readiness has definitely been diminished by a draw-down of men and materiel from Europe to meet Vietnam needs."<sup>137</sup>

(U) Democratic Senator John Stennis of Mississippi, asked to comment on Ford's charge deplored making the war a political issue but maintained that he also had "found some mismanagement all the way through." Stennis also spoke out for increasing military pressure on NVN and for allowing military men to control military planning:

We are trying to win this war without substantially damaging the economy and productive power of North Vietnam. I'm fully convinced that plan will not work. I don't mean to destroy them, but we must substantially cut off their capacity to make war . . . .

I frankly think the opinions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other top military men are discounted too much. I think the field of military planning ought to be exclusively to them. I feel these men are restricted too much.<sup>138</sup>

(U) Senator Fulbright strode back in the spotlight in early May with the accusation that "both literally and figuratively, Saigon had become an American brothel." Delivering an address at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, the Senator cited US press reports that many Vietnamese found it economically necessary to put their wives or daughters to work as bar girls or as mistresses for American servicemen, adding that RVN's society was being undermined by the presence of US troops and US goods. SECSTATE Dean Rusk, asked to comment, replied: "I was disturbed by the characterization of a city of two and a half million people, a proud and sensitive people, as an American brothel. It just isn't true . . . ."<sup>139</sup>

(U) Although he continued to criticize Administration policy on Vietnam, Senator Fulbright moved in mid-August to disabuse the communists of any idea that President Johnson enjoyed little Congressional support and therefore would eventually have to change his policy. In an interview the Senator denied that the President was "isolated," and noted that Congress had approved by a substantial margin every measure requested by the Administration on Vietnam. The Senator said the President had had overwhelming Congressional support for his actions.<sup>140</sup>

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(U) As the Congressional election neared, Republicans became more vocal on the Administration Vietnam policy, concentrating on charges of "deception." Wisconsin Congressman Melvin Laird, Chairman of the House Republican Conference Committee, stated on a television program on 22 September:

Republicans feel that the deception and misconceptions over our involvement in Vietnam should be cleared up so that all people in the United States understand the true facts about our involvement . . . . One of the major deceptions is the fact that this Administration is not being honest with the American people as far as the cost of the war in Vietnam is concerned. This war is said to be costing a billion five, and we were funding it in the 1967 fiscal year budget at a billion five a month. The costs really are running in excess of 2.5 billion dollars a month. The second deception that I feel has taken place is the fact that the decisions have been made to escalate this war on the ground militarily . . . .<sup>141</sup>

(U) The effect of the war on the elections, if any, was difficult to gauge. At least one "dove" was elected, as were supporters of the Administration's policies as well as those who called for more stringent measures in the war. House Leader Ford said the increase in Republican House seats was a signal to Hanoi that the US would try to prosecute the war more strongly. Richard Nixon called for "decisive" action in Vietnam, fewer offers of "new concessions" to the communists, and a halt to repeated offers of peace "which only lengthens the war by leading the enemy to believe we will pay a growing price for peace."<sup>142</sup>

(U) Balloting in November did not stop Congressional statements. In New Orleans, the Chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee called for an all-out attack in Vietnam "short of dropping the atomic bomb." The featured speaker at a Veteran's Day celebration, Rep. F. Edward Hebert of Louisiana, placing himself on the side of the "hawks," said, "we can't win with limitations or fight a defensive war. Our youth can't be dissipated uselessly. We should move and destroy everything that is in the hands of the enemy. I decry bombing innocent civilians, but there is no impediment to destroying the docks and harbor of Haiphong."<sup>143</sup>

#### US Public Opinion

(U) As measured by polls and surveys, American public opinion was seen variously as erratic, divided, and disturbed over the war in Vietnam. Some commentators were fond of remarking, as had been done in practically

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every war since the Mexican War, that this was the most "unpopular" war in the nation's history. From the welter of public opinion polls and sociological surveys, two themes seemed predominant: a sense of frustration, and a desire for an "honorable settlement."

(U) Opinion on President Johnson's personal handling of the war fluctuated sharply during the year. Polls showed the President's actions were approved by well over half of the public in January, during and just after the 37-day halt in bombing of NVN. By June his support had declined to about 40 percent, but the bombing of the Hanoi-Haiphong POL facilities at the end of June dramatically increased the President's rating in all polls. The Harris survey found that 62 percent of the public approved the POL raids, 11 percent opposed, and 27 percent had no opinion; 86 percent of those polled felt the POL bombing was more likely to hasten the end of the war than to increase the will of the North Vietnamese to resist. In the ensuing months until the Manila Conference, public approval of President Johnson's Vietnam actions again fell off to a minority.<sup>144</sup>

(U) The Buddhist crisis during the spring had a notably negative effect on US public opinion. Drew Pearson reported on 21 May, after a month-long tour of the US, that "the public is getting more and more disillusioned and fed up with the war. They feel that we are not wanted in Vietnam, that we're in the middle of a religious controversy which cannot be solved . . ." Journalist Stewart Alsop quoted a Senator who supported the President in public, as saying at a dinner party, "the best thing that could happen to us in Vietnam is for them to kick us out." Alsop feared this remark accurately mirrored the "exhausted exasperation" of most of the country. A widely discussed Gallup Poll released 22 May showed that 54 percent of the respondents felt the US should withdraw its troops if the South Vietnamese began fighting on a "big scale" among themselves, while 48 percent felt the South Vietnamese would not be able to establish a stable government.<sup>145</sup>

(U) Pollster Louis Harris felt in mid-August that American public opinion about the war had reached a "critical watershed." His surveys had shown that while 69 percent of American adults were committed to the US presence in RVN, 54 percent said they felt more and more that the US ought to win the war or get out. More than 70 percent of the people expected the war to last a long time, a feeling which remained widespread throughout 1966. Harris reported that more than half of the people thought the US should blockade NVN ports, but an even larger proportion still opposed the use of nuclear weapons in the conflict. Summing up, Harris stated: "if it were possible, most Americans would like to keep the Communist from taking over South Vietnam, 'win the war,' end the fighting, and avoid a third world war in the process. They are ready to blame President Johnson for falling short of all these objectives, but they are not ready to desert his position on the use

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of American troops in Vietnam." At the end of March, commentator Howard K. Smith had found similar sentiments throughout the country: "the overwhelming mood of most Americans today is 'our duty in Vietnam is unpleasant, but we've got to do it.' \* \* \* There is a loud, but not very big, minority on campuses for quitting in Vietnam. In business circles, especially in the Southwest, there is an angry but not very big minority for an all-out war to get it over fast. In between, the great majority of the people seem to wish it were different, but they can see no alternative to what the President is doing."<sup>146</sup>

(U) Another interesting poll, released in December, was the one made in the Washington area of a segment of one of the most vocal anti-war groups in America--the college student. The poll showed that 54 percent believed the US could do more to achieve peace in Vietnam. It also showed that four out of five did not know who the Viet Cong were.<sup>147</sup>

#### WORLD-WIDE REACTION TO THE WAR

(C) The US position in the Vietnam war during 1966 was poorly understood and, partly as a result, opposed by a significant number of people throughout the non-communist world. Summarizing US diplomatic reports of reactions to the war in mid-September, JUSPAO stated: "It appears to the majority of literate citizens of the world that America, in this case, is the neighborhood bully who has pounced on the smallest boy in the class--and a brown-skinned boy at that." This JUSPAO survey found two common threads of worldwide opinion: a fear of escalation of the war because of the bombings in NVN, and a feeling that the war was an American unilateral effort unsupported by the South Vietnamese. In Asia, the survey established that while all countries feared that Communist China might be provoked into attacking one or more of them, there was general unanimity of opinion that the US, once having begun, should continue to fight to the end. Only about a dozen Free World governments openly opposed US policy in Vietnam, but many which privately expressed support or understanding maintained silence in public, which often was construed as criticism. Intellectuals in the Free World more often were vocally opposed, on the basis of such arguments as:

- 1) American unilateral action was another version of French colonialism;
- 2) Vietnam was not worth such a costly effort;
- 3) Strategic bombing was of no real value and strengthened enemy opposition; and

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PAGE 655 OF 872 PAGES

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4) Bombing near Hanoi-Haiphong would escalate into World War III. 148

(C) The world's major forum for official statements of government policy on Vietnam was the United Nations General Assembly. When the Assembly's fall session general debate concluded on 18 October, 103 delegations had made statements reflecting attitudes toward US policy in Vietnam. An analysis by the US Mission to the UN showed that 29 of the statements were basically favorable to the US (Belgium, Britain, China, Italy, Paraguay, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Ceylon, Laos, New Zealand, Tunisia, Denmark, Turkey, Kenya, Costa Rica, Uruguay, Argentina, Netherlands, Ecuador, Japan, Australia, Canada, Thailand, Brazil, Philippines, Greece, Israel and Norway). Statements unfavorable to the US totaled 19: USSR, Eyelorussia, Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania, Mongolia, France, Guinea, United Arab Republic, Mali, Congo (Brazzaville), Syria, Cambodia, Cuba and Algeria. Essentially neutral statements totalled 36, while there were 10 neutral statements showing a slight edge for the US and 9 neutral statements with a slight edge against the US. The US Mission noted that nations which were closest to the Vietnam conflict had lined up quite solidly in support of the general US position. On the other hand, while the US received a fair measure of approval from Western Europe, widespread misgivings or reservations about the US position were evident among African nations and, to a lesser extent, countries in the Middle East and Latin America. The Mission attributed the fact that more than half the statements were neutral to a combination of misgivings or reservations about US policy (particularly the bombing of NVN), plus a widespread desire that the military conflict be ended as soon as possible--without particularly strong views as to how this was accomplished. 149

(U) Throughout the year, would-be peacemakers sought unsuccessfully to bring the war to the conference table. The US coupled its 37-day NVN bombing pause, beginning on Christmas Eve 1965, with a wide-ranging diplomatic effort to persuade Hanoi to negotiate. Subsequent peace efforts, all equally without result, were undertaken by Pope Paul VI, Thai Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman, the Shah of Iran, British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Foreign Secretary George Brown, Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik, Canadian Special Envoy Chester Ronning, various African statesmen, and UN Secretary General U Thant. Many reports associated Thant's announced intention not to seek another term as Secretary General with his distress at the lack of success in ending the Vietnam war. Thant's position, as officially stated on 10 March and repeated at various times thereafter, was that any move to bring the parties closer to negotiations must include the cessation of bombing of NVN, the substantial reduction by all parties of all military activities in RVN, and the participation of the NLF in any discussions for a peaceful settlement. 150

PAGE 156 OF 872 PAGES

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### India

(S) The Indian government, increasingly concerned during 1966 about the possibility of Peking's entry into the war, steadfastly insisted that to avert this and as a first step toward peace, the US bombing of NVN must be ended. This position also stemmed from the conviction that there was no hope of gaining even covert Soviet support and cooperation for peace until the bombing stopped. Prime Minister Gandhi proposed on 7 July that Britain and the USSR immediately convene the Geneva conference, of which they were co-chairmen. She also appealed for an immediate end of NVN bombing, to be closely followed by a cessation of hostilities and of "hostile movements and actions on all sides throughout Vietnam." Shortly thereafter, Mrs. Gandhi visited Moscow where, apparently under heavy Soviet pressure, she agreed to a joint communique lopsidedly weighted against the US position in RVN. Following strong US protests, the Indian government subsequently reverted to a public posture closer to its professed neutralism. The Indian press was moderate in its criticism of the US role in Vietnam, while objecting to each new "escalation." Indian military attitudes were strongly anti-Chinese and in support of US military actions in Vietnam, although these views were expressed only privately. Indian public opinion was largely apathetic, although there was the growing feeling that the war was changing from one in which the US was advising the GVN to one in which the Vietnamese were merely an ineffective auxiliary to a giant US effort to force NVN into submission.<sup>151</sup>

### Japan

(S) Japan was greatly alarmed by the initial period of US troop buildup and retaliation against NVN in early 1965, with widespread fear that the conflict would escalate into a Sino-American war. However, the Japanese gradually gained a more objective appreciation of the situation, and the Tokyo government declared on several occasions its basic view that the Vietnamese problem was the result of illegal NVN infiltration into RVN. As 1966 progressed, the Japanese government gave increasing public support to US forces R&R facilities, ship over-haul, and offshore procurement facilities. In contrast, Japanese mass media were generally critical of the US, especially of the bombing of NVN. The Japanese public was increasingly apathetic.<sup>152</sup>

### Indonesia

(S) Although preoccupied with internal consolidation following the October 1965 revolutionary upheaval, the Indonesian government was

PAGE 657 OF 872 PAGES

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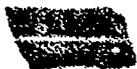
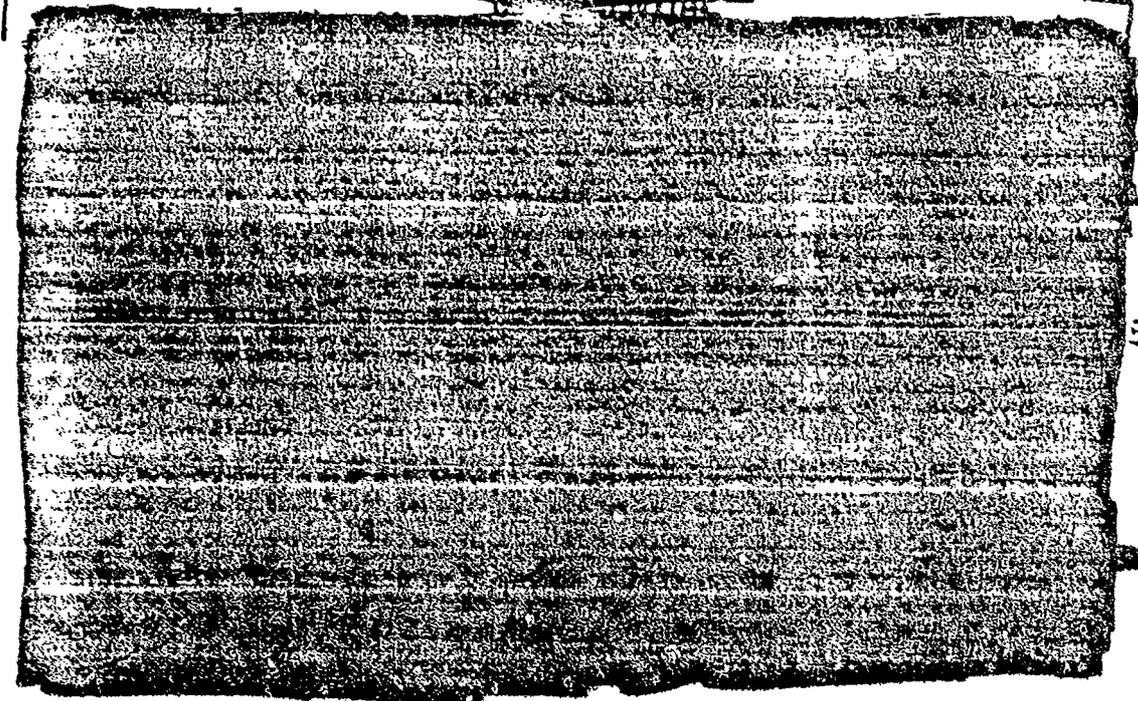
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PAGE 658 OF 872 PAGES

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Couve said, this might well mean a communist government in Saigon. However, Couve said the essential point was that the future government would not be under foreign--i.e., CHICOM--domination; he dismissed the possibility of domination by Hanoi, as such a move would be unacceptable to the RVN people and Hanoi was not powerful enough to impose itself on Saigon. An authoritative outline of French government views in late October showed that Paris felt US diplomacy had no way out; without unconditional and definitive cessation of bombing of NVN, Moscow could not make the slightest gesture toward permitting Hanoi or the VC to open negotiations. As for China, although Peking and Washington had a kind of tacit accord whereby China agreed not to enter the war if the US respected Chinese territory, ties between the two countries which might lead to a dialogue were blocked by the insurmountable barrier of the Formosa problem.<sup>154</sup>

(S) France maintained consular relations with the GVN during 1966, Saigon having broken diplomatic relations with Paris in June 1965. Approximately 8,500 French nationals resided in RVN, with French assets there worth about \$300 million; approximately one-third of RVN's exports went to France. In August 1966, the former NVN commercial mission in Paris was raised to a Delegation General, the same level as the French establishment maintained in Hanoi since 1954. French trade with NVN totalled \$4 million, and Paris extended nine-year export credits to NVN for industrial equipment purchases.<sup>155</sup>

(U). Public opinion polls taken in September indicated that Frenchmen largely approved de Gaulle's views on Vietnam and put most of the blame for the war on the US. In one poll, 68 percent of the French correspondents wanted the US to begin withdrawing from RVN, 8 percent favored the US maintaining its current military commitments, 5 percent favored increasing attacks on NVN, and 19 percent had no opinion.<sup>156</sup>

#### The United Kingdom

(S) Britain's contribution to the Free World effort in RVN was largely on the political side. The government of Prime Minister Wilson provided diplomatic support for the US position in RVN, although it disassociated itself from the bombing of the Hanoi-Haiphong POL facilities and voiced reservations in general about the bombing of NVN. The UKG quietly cooperated in bringing about the virtual removal of UK-flag ships from the NVN trade, and Wilson sought doggedly to help in getting negotiations started. At the Labour Party Conference in October, Foreign Secretary George Brown advanced a Vietnam peace plan calling for a conference of interested parties, a negotiated cease-fire, a negotiated political settlement based on the 1954 Geneva Accords, international inspection and control of free elections in both Vietnams, neutralization

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PAGE 659 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 660 OF 872 PAGES

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### Reactions to Hanoi-Haiphong POL Bombing

(U) Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the war during 1966 was the bombing of NVN. A common theme of much of the international criticism of US policy in Vietnam was that peace negotiations were impossible as long as the bombing continued. The 29 June attacks against the Hanoi/Haiphong POL facilities occasioned worldwide furor, which subsided rather quickly as recognition spread that civilian casualties had been exceedingly light. Free World government statements and press comment almost universally stressed that the POL raids represented a further escalation of the war. Much concern was expressed that the bombing increased the danger of CHICOM intervention. Such US allies in the war as Thailand, the Republic of Korea, and New Zealand declared their support for the raids, but these expressions were the exception.

(S) The reaction of the bombing in Thailand, where the US enjoyed wholehearted support throughout the year, was completely favorable. Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn wrote President Johnson that "we in Thailand fully concur in the reasons that lie behind this unavoidable decision." The ROK government called the bombing an "inevitable consequence of the fact that the communist have rejected all direct and indirect US peace efforts." New Zealand Prime Minister Keith Holyoake and other government leaders gave unqualified support to the POL raids. Holyoake charged in parliament that NVN, not the US, was escalating the war and that criticism of the bombing was largely misguided. He said the US was acting with great restraint and had made every effort to avoid harm to the population of Hanoi and Haiphong or the destruction of civilian property. 160

(U) UN Secretary General Thant, in a statement promptly refuted by the US but widely quoted by opponents of US policy, expressed his "deep regret" at "the report of the bombing of the heavily populated areas of Haiphong and Hanoi." Thant reiterated his belief that cessation of all bombing in NVN should be the first step toward peace. Attracting equal attention was a statement by British Prime Minister Wilson "disassociating" his government from the POL bombing. Wilson's statement drew considerable criticism at home, much of it on the basis that British influence in Washington would be reduced as a result of this public dissent from the policy of Britain's closest ally. France was predictably critical of the bombing, which was generally condemned as a new step in US escalation. An anti-American demonstration was staged near the US Embassy in Paris. 161

(S) There were also leftist-inspired demonstrations in India and Malaysia. Mrs Gandhi issued a statement expressing "deep regret and sorrow" at the bombing, and warning of great danger that hostilities

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PAGE 661 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 662 OF 872 PAGES

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### The Manila Conference

(U) The 24-25 October summit conference at Manila resulted in a joint communique stressing the unity of purpose of the seven allies and outlining progress achieved in Vietnam and objectives still to be met. In a statement of basic policy, the participants pledged: "we shall continue our military and all other efforts, as firmly and as long as may be necessary, in close consultation among ourselves until the aggression is ended." The allies called on Hanoi to begin cooperating with the International Committee of the Red Cross in the application of the Geneva Conventions on prisoners of war. The GVN leaders declared their intent to train and assign a substantial share of the armed forces to clear-and-hold actions, reflecting the shifting role of RVNAF into RD. The GVN stated its expectation that work on a constitution would be completed before the deadline of March 1967, with elections for a National Assembly to be held within six months. Village and hamlet elections would be initiated at the beginning of 1967. The GVN announced it was preparing a program of national reconciliation designed to entice the enemy to abandon arms and join RVN as free men. The conference participants reviewed the many peace efforts undertaken without response from Hanoi and agreed to continue seeking a peaceful settlement. 164

(TS) In the most controversial clause of the communique, the allies stated that their forces in RVN "shall be withdrawn, after close consultation, as the other side withdraws its forces to the North, ceases infiltration, and the level of violence thus subsides. Those forces will be withdrawn as soon as possible and not later than six months after the above conditions have been fulfilled." COMUSMACV reported to JCS and CINCPAC that he was "as surprised as most when this emerged in the final version." 165

(C) The six-month withdrawal provision was adopted partly in response to suggestions from many parties (including de Gaulle and communist sources) that enunciation of a time period would be more convincing evidence than theretofore available of the FVMAF intention not to maintain a military presence in RVN once peace was assured. US agreement to the provision was based on the consideration that if infiltration from NVN ceased and NVA forces and "subversive elements" were withdrawn, the "cutting edge" of the VC would in effect be removed. The US interpretation of the provision was that Allied withdrawal could begin when there was convincing evidence that withdrawal of the other side was underway. This was consistent with the long-standing US position envisaging mutual, time-phased withdrawal of foreign forces from RVN. 166

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PAGE 663 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 665 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 669 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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ANNEX A--PRISONERS OF WAR

(S) In 1966 the entire spectrum of the prisoner of war (PW) problem, which included both Viet Cong (VC) and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) PW's in friendly hands as well as US PW's in enemy captivity, was of political, military, and humanitarian concern to the United States Government (USG). The interrelation of the friendly handling of PW's with that of the enemy's handling of US PW's was evident during 1966. In spite of arrangements worked out by the USG with the Government of Vietnam (GVN) concerning the handling of enemy PW's in 1965 (see USMACV 1965 Command History, Annex I--Prisoners of War, for a discussion of developments in this field in 1965) GVN efforts to comply with the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war (GPW) could be described as marginal, due mainly to the deeply ingrained feeling against the communists by GVN officials. This made it necessary for both MACV and the US Embassy Saigon to stress constantly to GVN correct PW handling, not only for humanitarian motives but in order to create a favorable climate of world opinion toward Free World progress in the PW field, as well as to hope that US PW's would be treated reciprocally by their enemy captors in accordance with the GPW.<sup>1</sup>

US PW's in VC/NVA Captivity

(S) During 1966, the situation of US civilian and military personnel in enemy hands continued to cause concern at the highest levels of the USG. Beseet with legalistic complexities as well as an apparent lack of communication between the USG and VC/NVN representatives on this matter, an impasse had developed which made progress on the diplomatic front impossible. Every attempt to establish communication with Hanoi had met with rebuff. Various neutralist countries such as the United Arab Republic (UAR) had offered to act as a protecting power for US PW's in NVN under the GPW, but Hanoi turned a deaf ear to all appeals. The fact that the USG and to a lesser extent, the GVN, were adhering to the GPW in regard to VC/NVA PW's meant little or nothing to Hanoi.<sup>2</sup>

(S) The USG persuaded the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to attempt to establish various points of contact

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to discuss prisoner exchange with VC/NVN representatives, but the effort had yielded nothing. Other sources tried to arrange various exchanges of PW's. However, this meant dealing with the VC. There was some doubt on the part of the State Department as to how far negotiations with overseas representatives of the VC could be pursued since it might have involved a de facto recognition of the VC.<sup>3</sup>

(S) It was the position of the USG that the character of the conflict in SEASIA, although not a declared war, constituted an armed conflict within the meaning of Article 2 of the GFW relative to the treatment of PW's. Accordingly, it was the US position that US military personnel held captive by communist forces were entitled to PW status. Efforts to insure humane treatment of US military personnel held captive by the communists were being constantly pursued by USG agencies at the national level.<sup>4</sup>

(S) A total of 98 US military personnel were known to be prisoners in SEASIA at the end of 1966. A further 390 were missing and could be presumed to be detained.

MISSING AND CAPTURED US/FWMAF

PERSONNEL IN SOUTHEAST ASIA<sup>5</sup>

(As of 31 December 1966)

	RVN		Laos		NVN		CHICOM		Total
	<u>Missing</u>	<u>Captured</u>	<u>Missing</u>	<u>Captured</u>	<u>Missing</u>	<u>Captured</u>	<u>Missing</u>	<u>Captured</u>	
USA	34	12	10	0	5	0	0	0	61
USN	1	0	1	0	43	47	0	0	92
USAF	26	5	34	2	196	26	0	1	290
USMC	33	5	0	0	7	0	0	0	45
									<u>488</u>

Based on limited information, the USG believed prisoners held by NVN were generally receiving reasonably decent treatment. Those held by the Pathet Lao (PL) and the VC probably suffered more acute privation, and there had been a few reports of outright brutality (three murders by the VC and the sensational Dengler account). The chances of obtaining the release of US PW's during the continuance of hostilities were slim, but the USG continued to explore every possible alternative, for a discussion of

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PW exchanges or related issues conceivably could lead to broader talks. NVN, although party to the 1949 Geneva Convention, did not grant the benefits of the convention to US prisoners. Appointment of a protecting power, access by the ICRC, and full mail privileges, among other rights, were refused on the grounds the prisoners were "criminals" and not PW's. Some mail privileges had been allowed, but efforts of the USG to initiate direct governmental discussion of the PW question was met with silence by NVN. One approach, not tested, was the intervention of a private envoy on behalf of the families of the detained personnel; it was conceivable that Hanoi might accept a personal emissary although it rejected all official contacts. The USG was giving the approach serious consideration as 1966 came to an end.<sup>6</sup>

(S) During 1966 the VC had resisted several attempts to establish contact through intermediaries to discuss PW matters. Intense efforts were made by MACV to recover prisoners, but none of these special projects was successful as 1966 came to an end. (For a full discussion of these operations see Annex M—Special Operations [published separately]). The secretiveness, mobility, non-recognized character, and disrupted life of the VC made it very difficult to establish the contacts that might bring about release or improved treatment for PW's. Intelligence sources indicated that the VC officially considered American PW's a valuable asset to be protected.

(S) In Laos MACV carried two US military as being PW's of the Pathet Lao and 47 as missing in Laos. All attempts to open PW talks with the PL had been fruitless. However, the USG contemplated further approaches to the PL representative in Vientiane.<sup>8</sup>

(U) When DOD initiated separate casualty reporting in 1962 for casualties incurred in RVN, the category of "captured or interned" was used to describe those US military personnel who had been reported missing from their units and were believed to be held by enemy or hostile forces. This category continued to be used until 1964, when an amendment to the US Missing Person Act, Public Law 88-428, created the category of "detained" for the reporting of US military personnel who were being held against their will in any foreign country. At that time DOD adopted the phrase with respect to US military personnel in RVN. Because the terminology of "captured or interned" more properly described the status of US PW's in RVN, the reporting methods were modified in 1966 to return to the original system. US military personnel who were reported missing in RVN, NVN, Laos, or elsewhere in SEASIA, and were believed to be held by enemy or hostile forces, would be carried as "captured or interned."<sup>9</sup>

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PAGE 677 OF 872 PAGES

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(9) A French newspaper correspondent, in Hanoi from May until August, made some observations in regard to US PW's. In a meeting with US officials in August, the correspondent reported that he believed there were 200 to 260 PW's in NVN; he thought they were being held in dispersed groups of about ten. He believed that the PW's would not be tried or executed, and he also believed that the vast majority of the prisoners remained loyal to the US cause, and that the communists had been impressed by their attitude.<sup>10</sup>

(8) In another report from a French correspondent who had visited US PW's, more detailed information was obtained. According to this correspondent, the PW's were not held at one large camp specially set up for this purpose, but were scattered all over the country and held in small groups ranging from two to 30. Wherever possible, PW's were moved from time to time from one place to another as protection against US bombing and the possibility of US rescue missions. The health of the PW's was fairly good. All of those visited suffered from intense heat, but food, while not up to western standards, was adequate and considerably better than what Vietnamese themselves were eating. Those who had been taken out daily for physical exercise kept in relatively good physical condition. The morale of the PW's, according to these sources, was at best "fair." The correspondent pointed out that any pilot, regardless of nationality, who had been shot down had to make serious psychological adjustments. The change was much harder to make for US pilots, because overnight they had to adjust from being the hunter, dropping bombs, to being targets of bombing, thus sharing the fate of the Vietnamese. The correspondent was impressed that PW's when interrogated did not divulge military secrets.<sup>11</sup>

(7) NVN was trying to influence US PW's on their attitudes toward the war, but according to the correspondent, it appeared that NVN was using a soft sell rather than force. For example, every prisoner was given a full text of the Geneva Agreements, which was often the only reading material available to them, with the hope that the PW's would conclude that the US was violating these agreements. The PW's were also encouraged to discuss the Vietnamese war with their guards. No US PW's had asked to remain in North Vietnam, or had renounced their citizenship. On the other hand, some PW's had expressed concern over the destruction caused among civilians by US bombing, and had volunteered to record publicly their opposition to these raids. Some had denounced US policy in Vietnam, but none had attacked the US form of government or made statements which could be interpreted as treason. From the conversations with PW's the correspondent gathered that most PW's expected to be treated much worse upon capture, some even fearing torture; they were pleasantly surprised by the correctness of the treatment they received. The prisoners were receiving some mail, and all were eager to know whether their wives were receiving their letters. The US Embassy in Paris pointed out that the French correspondent who had visited the PW's was a hard-boiled communist party member whose past press reporting had been slanted in favor of NVN. This fact appeared to give his statements additional credibility.<sup>12</sup>

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PAGE 678 OF 872 PAGES

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War Crimes Trials

(S) During early 1966 Hanoi news media continued to denounce US bombing raids on NVN and to emphasize the theme that US pilots were "war criminals" who must be punished. On 7 June Hanoi broadcast a comparison of US raids to Nazi World War II raids, and declared that US pilots' crimes "are just like" those of Nazi war criminals tried at Nuremberg. The broadcast went on to state that US pilots would have to pay for their crimes before the tribunal of the NVN army and people. This in itself was not new, since the NVN regime had always claimed to consider the raids as "criminal," but the USG noted unusual intensity and shrillness in these Hanoi denunciations.<sup>13</sup>

(S) On 16 June Hanoi domestic broadcasts and the military newspaper Quan Doi Nhan Dan reported widespread meetings and petitions urging punishment of US pilots as war criminals and a campaign to bring the pilots to trial. The USG noted reiteration of the word "immediately," which indicated the trials might not be far off. On 29 June, after the first POLARIS strike on Hanoi and Haiphong, the Hanoi radio reported huge crowds milling outside buildings shouting "death to the US Imperialists! Let us severely punish the air pirates to defend our beloved capital city."<sup>14</sup>

(S) The official Czech news agency claimed in a dispatch from Hanoi on 7 July that NVN might soon begin trials of captured US airmen, and that death sentences would be demanded for some. The report stated that the trials would begin either on 20 July, the anniversary of the signing of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam, or on 4 August, the second anniversary of the Tonkin Gulf incident. The pilots would probably be tried before military tribunals in the provinces in which they were captured, according to the report. As yet there had been no announcement from NVN that trials would be held. However, Hanoi had mounted an unprecedentedly vehement propaganda campaign against what it called "criminal" US airmen. Specific threats had been made regarding both trials and demands for death penalties. The total number of US airmen held by NVN was unknown, but there were probably at least 35.<sup>15</sup>

(S) SSGSTATE on 10 July pouched a circular airgram on the subject, directing all Missions to be prepared to counter Hanoi's efforts. The USG believed it was necessary to see that NVN was given a firm and unequivocal message, through an appropriate third-country government, that holding such trials would be a serious mistake. Accordingly, all Embassy posts were instructed to approach host governments and ask them to relay a message along the following lines to NVN authorities:

USG has noted recent statements suggesting that North Vietnam is preparing to "try" US airmen it holds prisoner. USG categorically rejects NVN thesis that these prisoners are "war criminals."

PAGE 679 OF 872 PAGES

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They have committed no war crimes and are fully entitled to their rights as prisoners of war under the Geneva Convention. North Vietnam had adhered to these conventions; the prisoners are uniformed members of the American Armed Forces; and the conventions apply irrespective of a declaration of war. Thus any action taken to "try" or "punish" these prisoners would be nothing more than disguised reprisals against individual servicemen in retaliation against the United States effort to assist South Vietnam in resisting Hanoi's aggression.

The USG urges NVN to consider carefully consequences of any such action. Any "trial" or "punishment" of these prisoners would not be understood by the American people and would have an effect on American public opinion. Such action would increase the difficulty of bringing peace to Vietnam and would force the USG to consider seriously what action might be appropriate under the circumstances.<sup>16</sup>

(U) On 13 July SECSTATE advised the ICRC that the USG strongly protested the recent actions of NVN authorities in parading American prisoners of war through the streets of Hanoi. He pointed out that such conduct, calculated to intimidate and humiliate PW's by exposing them to public curiosity and insult, was a clear violation of the GPW, Article 13 of the convention, he noted, specifically provided that PW's must at all times be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity. The USG requested the ICRC to convey this protest to the authorities in NVN and to remind them of the humanitarian obligations accepted by NVN when it adhered to the GPW. The ICRC sent telegraphic messages to Hanoi on 14 July, giving detailed explanations and interpretations of the GPW and drawing NVN's attention to its obligations.<sup>17</sup>

(C) The first public NVN reaction came on 20 July, in the form of cables signed by Ho Chi Minh to US socialist leader Norman Thomas and others. Although Ho's message merely stressed NVN's "humanitarian" policy with regard to enemies captured in war, the tone of the message and its failure to use "war criminals" contrasted with Hanoi's earlier vengeful line. On 21 July a French correspondent in Hanoi reported that the "imminence of a trial of American pilots is not confirmed by informed circles," noting the following day that the trial of captured US pilots had been postponed until a later date. He also reported that US pilots would no longer be regarded as war criminals, but as criminals against "the Vietnamese nation," and that a committee of inquiry had been established to investigate crimes resulting from US air raids. On 23 July Hanoi officially announced the formation of a committee to "investigate war crimes of US Imperialists in Vietnam."<sup>18</sup>

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(C) In October ICRC representatives visited the US temporary-detention facility at Da Nang, housing 19 NVN PT-boat PW's (discussed hereinafter), and the ARVN PW camp in Fleiku. The ICRC was favorably impressed with the facilities and the treatment provided the NVN PW's in Da Nang. The conditions at Fleiku were also found to be good, the ICRC representatives commenting that much progress had been made in the preceding three months with respect to the PW program in RVN. The GVN MOD approved an ICRC request to make a PW documentary film at Fleiku PW camp, a project completed on 27 October. The ICRC also reported that they were receiving monthly rosters of PW's confined in the GVN PW camps.<sup>28</sup>

(C) Another ICRC representative accompanied by the Saigon delegate completed an extensive tour, during the period 29 November - 8 December, of the GVN, FVMAF, and US PW facilities throughout RVN. The facilities visited included ARVN PW camps in I, II & III CTZ's, two ARVN hospitals, the Australian PW collecting point and field hospital, the ROK Capital Div PW collecting point and hospital, the four US PW collecting points and six hospitals, III MAF Special detention facility at Da Nang, and the PHILCAGV hospital at Tay Ninh. The ICRC representatives were again favorably impressed by the progress of the PW treatment in RVN.<sup>29</sup>

(S) In late 1966, however, the GVN informed the ICRC by letter of 16 December of its decision to restrict ICRC visits to PW camps. Various reasons were cited to the ICRC for the decision, such as the fact that the ICRC had already made extensive visits and was satisfied with the treatment of PW's. US officials believed, however, that the basic reason was that the ICRC's sudden demand for access to all places of detention and its extensive visits to such detention places before approval was given had antagonized the GVN in various ways. Efforts were being made by US officials to have the decision set aside, and favorable response to these efforts was indicated by GVN, but the restriction was not rescinded as 1966 ended. US officials informed the ICRC, frankly, of the GVN complaint that the ICRC was demanding and even hostile toward the GVN. The USG believed that the ICRC should be aware that the GVN resented the "double standard" imposed on its behavior as opposed to that of NVN. The GVN had performed relatively well with regard to PW problems in 1966, which had led to further demands on them, while NVN had rejected the ICRC requests with relative impunity. US officials urged the ICRC to take into account GVN sensitivity in this respect, and to be tactful in its dealing with them.<sup>30</sup>

Release of PW's

(C) On 30 January 1966, 24 NVN PW's were released by the GVN and allowed to return to NVN. Three of the PW's elected to remain in RVN. US authorities did not participate in the PW release, as JUSPAO felt

PAGE 684 OF 872 PAGES

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that the GVN should receive sole credit for the release, which coincided with the TET (Lunar New Year) celebration period. The event was covered by the international press, and it was obvious that these PW's had received humane treatment in accordance with the provisions of the GPW.31

(C) On 14 July the GVN selected 18 PW's and offered each the option of repatriation to NVN, release to one of the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) camps in RVN, or retention in RVN as a PW. Two elected to enter the Chieu Hoi Program. On 20 July the remaining 16 were taken to the Hien Luong Bridge, where, in the presence of the ICRC, three additional PW's opted to remain in RVN under the Chieu Hoi Program. Thus 13 PW's actually were repatriated, of whom four had been captured by US forces and nine by RVNAF. The GVN released the 13 NVA PW's on 20 July as part of the 12th anniversary of the Partition of the Homeland (Geneva Accords). The Ministry of Information and Chieu Hoi asked JUSPAO to assist with propaganda leaflets, both before and after the release. The ceremony, held at the DMZ bridge, was similar to the PW release in January. The ICRC and ICC representatives were in attendance, and the MACV Provost Marshal insured that those prisoners for whom the US was responsible signed statements that they had voluntarily chosen to be repatriated.32

#### Construction of PW Camps

(C) In the wake of publicity concerning the possible trial of US PW's in Hanoi during July, interest in the PW problem began to focus on the extent of US/GVN compliance with the GPW. In particular, SECSTATE requested the status of construction of the new PW camps at Da Nang and Pleiku and the expansion of the one at Bien Hoa. COMUSMACV reported that of the four prison camps in RVN, only one was in operation as of 20 August, that at Bien Hoa with a capacity of 500; expansion of the camp to a capacity of 1,000 had begun and was expected to be completed in October. The GVN Pleiku camp completion date was estimated by the GVN to be 31 August. Construction had not started at Da Nang, which required the relocation of graves, nor at Can Tho, which needed a sizeable land fill as well as relocation of graves. Under these circumstances, it did not appear that the completion target dates of November 1966 for Da Nang and February 1967 for Can Tho would be met. On 10 August COMUSMACV sent a letter to the Chief JCS, RVNAF, expressing doubt as to completion of the PW camps by projected dates, the need for more suitable sites, and urgency in completing the PW camp at Da Nang.

(C) The GVN PW camp construction continued to receive priority command attention. The selection of a new I Corps PW camp site in the vicinity of Da Nang was undertaken in August; the surveying and ground leveling began in September, and by the end of the month preliminary construction had begun. Because of the urgency of the requirement for a PW camp in I CTZ, a USMC unit was assigned to assist the RVNAF Engineers in expediting the construction. The erection of structures

PAGE 685 OF 872 PAGES

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began in October, and the GVN programmed completion date of November was met. The construction of the II Corps PW camp at Pleiku was completed on 28 August and the initial input of PW's arrived on 1 September; by the end of September the camp population was 225. The III Corps PW camp at Bien Hoa became operational on 16 May, and construction for the expansion to a 1,000-PW capacity was ten percent complete in August, with a programmed completion date of October. The construction program suffered a setback in October through diversion of RVNAF engineer effort to National Day preparations throughout the country; completion dates slipped past the end of 1966. The new IV Corps PW camp site at Can Tho was selected on 20 August, with a completion date of February 1967. Dredging was completed in September, site draining in October, and Phase I construction was begun in December. A MACV study to determine future ARVN PW camp capacity requirements served as a basis for a COMUSMACV letter to MOD, GVN, on 28 November, recommending allocation of existing 1966 funds for Phase II expansion of the I, II, and IV Corps PW camps, already programmed for CY 1967, and Phase I construction of a new 1,000 PW capacity camp in Qui Nhon. The need for immediate planning, site acquisition, and commencement of construction efforts was stressed to enable adequate capacity for PW population projected by 30 June 1967. GVN recognized the urgency of PW camp requirements and, with US assistance, programmed and funded for the expansion of new construction, as outlined in the above mentioned letter, by the end of 1966.<sup>34</sup>

#### Status of Enemy Personnel

(S) One major subsidiary problem was the status to be accorded captured enemy personnel and returnees. MACV's concept for determining the status of captives taken into custody by US and FWMAF took into consideration three categories of personnel: returnees, VC suspects, and PW's. Following an initial tactical interrogation, returnees were to be turned over to the appropriate GVN civil agency under the Chieu Hoi Program. Suspects who had no further military significance were turned over to the appropriate RVN Province Security Committee for disposition. PW's and suspects having military information would be processed through appropriate combined interrogation centers. Upon completion of interrogation, PW's were turned over to GVN for detention.<sup>35</sup>

(U) A MACV instruction card on treatment of captives was issued to members of the US armed forces in RVN, and similar cards were issued to RVNAF and FWMAF. The card gave the combat soldier guidelines for the treatment of all captives, without regard to whether they were actually entitled to PW treatment--such entitlement to full protection under the GPW would be determined later by properly designated interrogators and tribunals. Captives would be disarmed, thoroughly searched, and carefully guarded. They were to be protected against all acts of violence, insults, public curiosity, and reprisal of any kind. Women captives were to have the benefit of treatment at least as favorable

PAGE 686 OF 872 PAGES

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as that granted to males, and, in addition, would be treated with all regard due to their sex. Before any captive, returnee, or suspect was released from US custody, his status would be ascertained by the division or separate brigade responsible for his capture. A detained person who had committed a belligerent act, but whose entitlement to PW status was doubtful, was to be referred to a tribunal authorized under Article 5, GPW, and in accordance with MACV Directive 20-5. When the status of a detained person was doubtful, the decision as to whether the tribunal procedure would be used would be made by a US interrogating officer after the interrogation. When a detainee had been determined to be a PW and was delivered to GVN authorities, it would be noted on the PW card which accompanied him that he had been determined to be a PW and that he was entitled to the treatment accorded such a person under the GPW. Any determination of a US tribunal of entitlement to PW treatment was also to be made available to the GVN authorities upon assumption of the individual's custody from US authorities. Normally, a NVA soldier captured in combat would be treated as a PW, as would a member of a VC Main Force, local force, or militia unit. In essence, US commanders were given a large measure of discretionary power, with the clear implication that in cases where reasonable doubt existed, PW status would be accorded captured personnel.<sup>35</sup>

#### US Responsibility for Captured Enemy Personnel

(C) The USG felt it had both a moral and legal responsibility for enemy personnel captured by US forces and subsequently transferred to GVN custody. Article 12 of the GPW required the GVN as the transferee power to insure that PW's transferred to them by US forces received proper treatment, but implied that the USG as transferor power had a continuing responsibility toward the PW's captured by its forces; according to Article 12, the USG could demand custody of the PW's if the GVN treatment of them was below the minimum standards prescribed by the GPW. A joint DOD-State message directed the US Mission to work out appropriate arrangements with the GVN to establish procedures for monitoring GVN treatment of PW's. US interests in this matter were protected by MP advisory detachments located at ARVN Corps PW camps; while the mission of these MP detachments was ostensibly one of aiding and advising the ARVN MP's, they were in fact given the additional mission of insuring that GVN acted in accordance with the GPW.<sup>37</sup>

(S) In late 1966 news reports and messages indicated some confusion in the classification of prisoners. An instance was the reporting of 386 "prisoners" taken early in Operation IRVING--which produced a final take of only 27 PW's. The problem was an outgrowth of the nature and type of military operation being conducted. In Binh Dinh Province (where Operation IRVING took place), which was a heavily populated area and long under VC control, all inhabitants were under suspicion, with the resultant tendency to classify, initially, all potentially hostile elements as VC. The requirement for detainees' safety while in US

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custody dictated that preliminary tactical screening and classification be accomplished rapidly at a forward screening point, to screen out those having information of immediate tactical value and to identify and screen out innocent civilians. The basic problem in processing a sudden large influx of detainees was a shortage of Vietnamese language-qualified US/FWMAF interrogator/translator personnel utilized for detainee screening. As a consequence, the initial classification of prisoners included elements who would not necessarily qualify for PW status; final classification was determined only after detailed interrogation. MACV reported that action was being taken to overcome the shortage of qualified Vietnamese-speaking US interrogator/translator personnel, and that in the future all detained personnel would be referred to as "detainees" until interrogation and final classification at division or brigade was completed. Those determined to be PW's were interrogated in accordance with MACV Directives 190-1 and 191-11, and accountability was maintained. PW's who underwent extended interrogation were evacuated to the Combined Military Interrogation Center (CMIC) or the National Interrogation Center (NIC) in Saigon. In all cases, those individuals entitled to PW status were sent to PW camps after the interrogation was completed.<sup>38</sup>

(C) Action was also initiated to establish a program for transferring PW's confined in civil jails to established PW camps. On 6 September MACV was represented at the first screening of GVN civilian jails. The RVNAF Screening Committee, consisting of representatives from JGS (J2 and FMG), the Corps (G2 and Surgeon), and observers from MACV (J2 and J15), conducted screening in the II and III Corps areas. The screening process included an interview and records check of all possible PW's, to determine those entitled to PW status. Those classified PW's by the committee were processed, given physical examinations, and transported to an ARVN PW camp or to a hospital. In September 180 PW's were transferred to PW camps and four to an ARVN hospital; of these 162 originated from GVN jails and 22 from a RF PW camp at Pleiku. During October MACV representatives accompanied the RVNAF Screening Committee on 15 visits to the provinces; during the month 73 PW's were identified and transferred from civilian jails to ARVN PW camps. By the end of November the committee had screened all 22 of the civilian jails in II and III Corps; a total of 403 PW's had been identified, of whom 346 were transferred into ARVN PW camps. Screening in I Corps was accomplished in December. A total of 533 PW's had been identified in I, II, and III Corps by the end of 1966, and 371 had been transferred to PW camps. The remaining 164 were pending transfer.<sup>39</sup>

(C) As of 28 December, the breakout of PW's being held in RVN was as shown:

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PAGE 688 OF 772 PAGES

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<u>Source</u>	<u>III MAF Camp Da Nang</u>	<u>ARVN I Corps</u>	<u>ARVN II Corps</u>	<u>ARVN III Corps</u>	<u>Total</u>
NVN	19	155	475	211	860
Regroupee	0	21	15	60	96
VC	0	91	414	169	674
					<u>1,630</u>
<u>Capturing Force</u>					
US	19	74	572	213	878
RVNAF	0	192	255	216	663
FWMAF	0	1	77	11	89
Totals	19	267	904	440	1,630

The figures shown under ARVN I Corps represent those formerly detained in a temporary facility at Da Nang who were transferred to the I Corps PW camp on 7 December. Additionally, unverified sources indicate that there were approximately 239 detainees in RVNAF, FWMAF, and US medical channels not reflected in the above totals.<sup>40</sup>

The Case of the NVN PT-Boat PW's

(S) On 1 July USN units operating on the high seas in the Gulf of Tonkin sighted three NVN PT boats approaching them at a high speed. The PT boats engaged in a torpedo attack on the US ships and launched several torpedoes. US aircraft, after being fired upon, returned the fire and sank all three boats. As a result of this action, 19 surviving crewmembers were recovered by US forces. These survivors were granted status, rights, and treatment due PW's, and were retained in US custody afloat. The OIC of the boats was wounded, not severely, and was most cooperative in offering information. The crews were kept isolated and were not aware of each other's presence aboard. In addition to the OIC, two crew members of the PT boat unit were also wounded, both seriously.<sup>41</sup>

(S) The USG was aware that these personnel were of considerable actual and potential value with respect to the overall prisoner situation, since, unlike the NVN personnel captured in RVN, Hanoi would find it difficult to disavow them. The circumstances of the capture of these personnel differed greatly from circumstances in which other NVN personnel had fallen into US hands, in that they were taken on the high seas outside RVN territory. The USG at that time (July) considered whether it would be preferable to retain these personnel in US custody rather than hand them over to the GVN, as was done in case of NVN PW's taken by US forces in RVN.<sup>42</sup>

(S) The initial interrogation of the PW's was by the Seventh Fleet Exploitation Team, on board the USS Cavalier. The team was activated on 6 July and began interrogation immediately, reporting completion of

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Phase I interrogation as of 24 July. Until such time as permanent facilities ashore were available, further exploitation, Phase II, was pursued on board the Cavallier. COMUSMACV's role was to coordinate between the GVN and CINCPAC in visits and interrogation of the PW's by GVN officials. COMUSMACV was also given the mission of preparing facilities in Da Nang for holding the PT-boat crews. The prisoners not only had to be housed in full compliance with the GFW, but also had to be isolated from one another and managed in such a manner as to prevent communications between them which would result in their knowing that others in their group were aware of the degree to which they had compromised themselves.<sup>43</sup>

(S) Under instruction from MACV, III MAF engineers prepared plans for a detention facility at Da Nang, to house the PW's in accordance with the GFW as well as to insure that they were "isolated from one another and managed in such a manner as to prevent communications between them." This latter requirement entailed a challenging problem of design and construction, especially if the facility were to conform with Article 12 of the GFW, which prohibited close confinement of PW's except for health reasons, and Article 22, which provided that "prisoners shall not be separated from prisoners of war belonging to the armed forces with whom they were serving at the time of their capture, except with their consent." The engineers were able to square the circle and comply with both the GFW requirements and those set forth by SECSTATE. Construction of the Da Nang facility was to conform to standards for a "transit or screening" camp within the meaning of Article 24, rather than as a permanent internment facility. COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC that the construction of the facility had started on 13 August, and estimated completion by 5 September.<sup>44</sup>

(S) On 31 July COMUSMACV requested and CINCPAC granted authority for RVNAF interrogation of the PW's. RVNAF interrogations were conducted in the presence of a US representative who was a qualified Vietnamese linguist in order to insure proper treatment under the GFW and the continuance of a cooperative spirit on the part of the captives. The RVNAF team was not given precedence over other priority interrogations already in progress. On 14 August COMUSMACV expressed RVNAF disappointment with the results of interrogation of the PW's and requested authorization to release the results of US interrogations of the PW's to RVNAF, recommending that future NVN captives be interrogated jointly by RVNAF and US to enhance the combined intelligence effort. CINCPAC replied that photos, names of PW's, and individual interrogation reports in the hands of RVNAF would soon result in complete knowledge in Hanoi of the degree of cooperation of each PW. In view of the repatriation talks then in progress and the possibility of future repatriation of others, it was felt unwise to provide these identifying details to RVNAF. RVNAF was to be told that these PW's had the unique status of being the first NVN personnel captured by US forces in international waters, and had become the subject of international bargaining with far-reaching implications. CINCPAC granted authority in September for the

PAGE 690 OF 822 PAGES

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release to GVN of any interrogation reports, sanitized so as not to identify any PW, which would be of value to the GVN. GINCPAC and COMUSMACV felt that the GVN interest in future NVN captives taken outside of RVN by US forces should be given full consideration, but that commitments should be avoided which would jeopardize the sole right of interrogation and US custody of some selected prisoners considered to be of exceptional value to US interests.<sup>45</sup>

(S) The special US PW detention facility at Da Nang was completed on 5 September, and the transfer of 17 of the NVN PW's to the new facility was effected three days later. The two wounded PW's were moved initially to the NAVSUPACT Da Nang for medical treatment and were transferred to the detention facility on 17 October. MACV now assumed the responsibility of providing the intelligence exploitation team.<sup>46</sup>

(S) On 7 November the US Mission requested guidance from SECSTATE, reporting that although no request had been made by the GVN, the question might have to be resolved when the ARVN I Corps PW camp at Da Nang opened by the end of November. The Mission felt it would be advantageous to retain US custody of the 19 PW's, as they could be handled in accordance with any subsequent arrangements for repatriation. Conversely, the continued retention of this group in US custody might appear to set a precedent for establishment of US PW camps and arouse the interest of the ICRC and the press as well as the GVN. SECSTATE replied that in view of the status of the 19 PT PW's, which made them of great potential value for exchange purposes, the USG preferred that they remain in US custody, with the understanding that the USG would review their status no later than March 1967 in light of exchange possibilities then existing. SECSTATE did not believe the ICRC would have any basis for objecting to the USG's retaining custody of the prisoners under conditions satisfying the GPW, nor did he believe that if the USG continued to hold the PW's temporarily, it would establish a precedent for assuming the responsibility for all PW's captured by US forces.<sup>47</sup>

(S) On 9 July the US Mission had suggested that consideration be given to direct repatriation by the US of the two NVN PW's who were seriously wounded. Articles 109 and 110 of the GPW required direct repatriation by the detaining power of seriously-wounded PW's who met certain criteria as set forth in Article 110. The Mission suggested that the advantages in so doing would be the demonstration of strict compliance with the GPW and the excellent medical care and humane treatment by US forces. If NVN refused to accept, it would indicate further non-compliance with the GPW by them; if the PW's refused repatriation under Article 109, favorable propaganda would result. The repatriation would serve as an example to the GVN in similar cases in the future, and the attempt would give some indication of NVN's attitude toward accepting PW's, with the faint possibility that NVN might reciprocate with seriously injured US PW's. The USG, however, wanted to explore the possibility of repatriating these two PW's via Cambodia, as the

PAGE 691 OF 872 PAGES

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prior repatriation of two US soldiers through Cambodia provided a precedent. Such repatriation might provide a useful precedent for the future, since prisoners sent to Cambodia could then proceed to their country of origin without any political concessions or admissions by either side. The USG envisaged that the Mission would inform the GVN of the USG intention to repatriate two PW's via Cambodia. Through the Australian Embassy in Washington, the USG would ask the Australian Government to approach and secure Cambodian agreement to the repatriation. If and when the repatriation of the two PW's was successfully effected, further approaches would be made to GVN and Cambodia with a view to arranging other repatriations and possibly establishing a permanent exchange facility in Cambodia.<sup>49</sup>

(S) The Embassy in Laos was instructed to arrange a meeting with the NVN Embassy and to provide NVN with the list of names, ranks and state of health of the NVN-PT-boat PW's; no mention of Cambodia as a possible channel for repatriation of the two wounded PW's was to be made, but the Embassy was to indicate that the USG was prepared to discuss repatriation of these and other prisoners on mutually acceptable terms. The Vientiane Embassy took the desired action, reporting the encouraging fact that the NVN Embassy did not reject the letter. The US Embassy in Geneva provided the ICRC with a list of the PW's, and the ICRC representatives in RVN were asked to contact the Saigon Embassy with a view to arranging a visit to the PW's. The US Mission informed the GVN Foreign Minister on 18 July of the proposal to repatriate the NVN PW's via Cambodia; the Foreign Minister readily concurred.<sup>50</sup>

(S) On 19 July the USG gave the Australian Embassy in Washington the background on the capture, custody, and general plans for the NVN PW's. The Embassy was asked to tell the Australian Government that the USG would appreciate its approaching the Cambodian Government (RKG) to secure its agreement, in principle, to the repatriation of unidentified sick and wounded PW's via Cambodia. The USG told the Embassy that the US intended to proceed on a basis of no publicity until the PW's were safely in Cambodia so as to prevent, among other things, any possible embarrassment to RKG. The Australian Embassy saw no objection of passing the USG proposal to the RKG, and in early August the USG was informed the RKG agreed, in principle, to the request, and was prepared, as a neutral for the humanitarian reasons to act as intermediary between the US and NVN in the return of the prisoners. The USG assumed that RKG would not have expressed its agreement unless it had secured NVN consent, and was inclined to view this as a hopeful development, perhaps related to Hanoi's apparent postponement of war crimes trials of US PW's. Pursuant to the plan, the USG proceeded rapidly to arrange, with ICRC cooperation, for repatriation of the PW's. The PW's were told of the plan and stated that they desired to be repatriated. The Saigon and Phnom Penh representatives of the ICRC, together with a Vietnamese interpreter supplied by the Vietnamese Red Cross, visited the NVN PW's aboard the USS Cavalier off Da Nang on 3 and 4 August. ICRC delegates informed the USG on 5 August that the visit was generally successful.<sup>51</sup>

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(S) The Australian Embassy met with State Department officials on 26 August and proposed to transport the two wounded PW's by air from Da Nang to Phnom Penh on 5 September, a date selected so as to provide adequate notice to the Australian Embassy in Phnom Penh. COMUSMACV alerted COMNAVFORV that he was to provide the armed and medical escort, and advised COMNAVFORV that the ICRC representative was scheduled to arrive at Da Nang on 4 September to accompany the PW's during repatriation.<sup>52</sup>

(S) After all the elaborate planning that had taken place for almost two months, the repatriation scheme fell apart at the last moment. When the Australian Ambassador in Phnom Penh was received by the RKG Foreign Minister on 2 September, the latter abruptly announced that the proposed transfer date of 5 September was "out of the question," as there would not be time enough for the RKG to obtain Hanoi's agreement and to make arrangements for onward movement of the PW's. Surprised that Hanoi's agreement had not been gained already, the Ambassador asked the RKG to suggest a suitable date. In lieu of a direct answer, the Ambassador's attention was invited to an article in the New York Daily News, dated Saigon 31 August, headed "US Paving Way for Possible Exchange of Prisoners." The story announced that "information" indicated that US authorities had been "exploring the possibility of exchanging 19 seamen for American airmen held in NVN."<sup>53</sup>

(S) The US Mission advised COMUSMACV of the press leak and of the resulting attitude of the RKG, but took the position that the repatriation had been postponed rather than cancelled. As the year ended, there had been no change in the status or disposition of the 19 PW's still being held in the special detention facility at Da Nang, but it was announced that there would be a joint State/Defense review of the situation and a decision, in March 1967, on possible further repatriation efforts.<sup>54</sup>

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PAGE 693 OF 872 PAGES

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THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED PAGE 694 OF 872 PAGES  
Order Sec Army By IAG per

830624

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PAGE 695 OF 872 PAGES

8-30624

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PAGE 696 OF 872 PAGES

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ANNEX B--THE MONTAGNARD PROBLEM

(S) During 1966, COMUSMACV and the US Mission had a definite interest in the Montagnard problem because of its visible effect on the war effort. The Montagnards were a group of primitive mountain tribes that resided mainly in the central highlands of RVN, and although all the various tribes were not compatible, ethnically at least three were represented in the FULRO Movement (United Front for the Struggle of the Oppressed Races). There were reportedly 2,000 men under arms in the FULRO forces, mainly Rhade tribesmen, and MACV estimated that FULRO had the capability of rallying from 2,000 to 10,000 additional men. It was of course, desirable that this potential force be favorable to the GVN. FULRO had indicated that it was anti-communist, but MACV felt that if GVN did not satisfy FULRO's aspirations, FULRO could create a divisive trend that could work only to the advantage of the VC.<sup>1</sup>

(C) Under the French, the central and northern highlands had been a Montagnard preserve. Therefore, Montagnards resented and resisted Diem's policy of assimilation, which tended to disrupt their tribal life without preparing them for adjustment to the laws of the new nation. The watershed in GVN/Montagnard relations was marked by a decree issued by Premier Khanh on 17 October 1964, which granted many concessions to the Montagnards, among them reinstatement of tribal courts, a revised draft law, a practical system of land distribution, relaxation of school fees and entrance requirements, and authorization for the use of tribal language in elementary education.<sup>2</sup>

(S) The Montagnards had seriously embarrassed the GVN by rebelling in 1964, and again in September and December of 1965. As 1965 came to an end, the GVN had succeeded in putting down these revolts with military power, but the US Embassy and MACV recognized the gravity of the situation and were concerned over the GVN's lack of progress with the Montagnard problem. They reasoned that as the US commitment of troops and US casualties grew, the US public probably would become more aware of the Montagnard problem and wonder how the GVN could allow their major efforts to be weakened by this problem.<sup>3</sup>

(C) The Montagnard discontent had increased considerably by the beginning of 1966, despite GVN efforts to meet their legitimate aspirations. The GVN actions clearly had been inadequate, and the intensification of the war in the highlands had made things still more difficult.

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PAGE 697 OF 872 PAGES

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FULRO had become a serious problem, for it was playing on the discontent of the Montagnards to stir up the population against the government. There was danger that further outbreaks of violence might occur at any time, since FULRO agitators were known to be at work. There was no consensus in the GVN on how to handle the Montagnard problem, although one high GVN official told US Mission members in early January that the approach of the CG II Corps was wrong. The GVN official believed that CG II Corps was too harsh, was unwilling to make an effort to understand the Montagnards, and was too ready to use force as an answer to all problems. 4

(C) The GVN indicated in January that it would like to call a Montagnard conference at Pleiku, after TET, similar to the one held in Pleiku in October 1964, and to include those Montagnard representatives who had been present at the 1964 meeting. The conference would discuss the general political and security situation in the highlands, the difficulties GVN had encountered in trying to fulfill its earlier promises to the Montagnards, and the specific problem of FULRO. US officials in Saigon believed that in view of the seriousness of the Montagnard problem and the apparent genuineness of GVN's desire for assistance, the USG should respond favorably to the request for specific suggestions. Although the GVN had taken the initiative in approaching the US, there was still substantial residual GVN suspicion of US involvement in the Montagnard situation. For this reason the USG would have to proceed cautiously. 5

(U) The GVN created on 22 February a Special Commissariat for Montagnard Affairs (CMA). The CMA called for cooperation between Delta peoples and the Montagnards to create a new life and a new society. Typical efforts cited to illustrate government policies were the creation, at Pleiku, of a center to train Montagnard cadre and a school for children of Montagnard soldiers, the reopening of the traditional Montagnard court, and assistance to Montagnards in the fields of education and administration. 6

(C) While there remained considerable uncertainty as to what eventually would be accomplished, US officials reported in March that the GVN seemed to be moving toward the line of approach to the Montagnard question which the Mission had been urging. Both the new Commissioner for Montagnard Affairs, Paul Nur, and CG II Corps, Maj Gen Vinh Loc, had issued "action programs" for 1966 which embodied essential elements of the US Mission's recommendations for economic, social, and administrative action. At the same time GVN had been making some efforts to give the Montagnards the feeling that they were being given a stronger voice at the policy level of government. How far and how rapidly GVN would go in making good on its promises was a critical factor in whether or not FULRO agitation in the highlands would result in another uprising in early 1966.

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PAGE 698 OF 822 PAGES

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(C) Commissioner Nur drew up an all-inclusive program for action in early 1966, which included virtually all the past GVN and Montagnard proposals for economic, social, and administrative action and a number of new ideas. According to the US Mission, the program was so wide and disparate in scope that, if taken as a whole, it would be beyond the capabilities of GVN. The Commissioner claimed that the program had been approved by both Premier Ky and Gen Vinh Loc, but US officials believed this approval had been only in principle. More tangible encouraging development was the reported approval by GVN of a joint USAID/GVN plan for boarding schools, and the release of the necessary 30 million piasters for their construction.<sup>7</sup>

(D) The CG II Corps published and distributed widely a pamphlet entitled "II Corps Action Plan for 1966," which had a separate section on "Support of the Highlands." In addition to the standard Vinh Loc rhetoric, and the threat that "bandits and traitors" would be severely punished, there were a number of constructive proposals. These included increasing the number of Montagnard civil servants, greater emphasis on education and training, more medical care, rapid establishment of special tribal courts, and granting of land titles. Commissioner Nur returned from a two-day meeting with CG II Corps, 8-9 March, encouraged by the good working relationship he felt had been established; he claimed to have had assurance that the Commissariat would remain in Saigon and be responsible to the Premier for policy questions. The Commissioner indicated that operationally he would support the Corps commanders for projects in their respective CTZ's.

(E) On the political front the GVN had made increased effort. In addition to II Corps "seminars" rallies in which GVN representatives, including, in one instance, Ky personally, pledged equal treatment of Montagnards. There had been considerable fanfare in the highlands about the new GMA and the appointment of Gen Nur to the cabinet post. Nur had issued an appeal to all Montagnards for cooperation, stating the intention of the GVN to live up to all commitments made at the Pleiku Conference, and citing his appointment as evidence of GVN good faith. His appeal contained a special exhortation to FULRO to "return to eradicate Communism and, together with the Vietnamese, build a new society;" he pledged that he personally would "stand security" for returnees. Montagnard officials of the GMA toured the highlands explaining that the GVN had decided to put new emphasis on the Montagnard question and make a genuine effort to satisfy their legitimate needs. The Commissioner informed US officials on 10 March that he hoped to obtain the release of all Montagnards, arrested in the aftermath of 17 December 1965 revolt, who had not yet been tried and sentenced. He also hoped for a specific official offer of amnesty and guaranteed employment for ralliers from FULRO or the VC - an offer which was implied by not spelled out in his appeal.<sup>8</sup>

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PAGE 700 OF 715 PAGES

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(C) While there were continuing rumors of possible FULRO-inspired uprising, there had been no solid intelligence that this would be the case. FULRO organizers and agitators continued their work in the highlands and apparently were active with virtually all tribal groups. A capability certainly existed for FULRO to instigate some sort of armed action against the GVN at the moment of its choice, but it was the opinion of informed US observers who had been in the highlands that there probably would be a period of at least superficial calm while Montagnards generally and FULRO in particular assessed the real intentions of the GVN and observed the activities of the new CMA. US officials in Saigon reported in March that they intended to continue their efforts to move the GVN to carry out as rapidly as possible the key proposals contained in the action programs of CMA and CG II Corps which were susceptible of implementation with available GVN/US resources. In view of developments affecting the Directory and the relationship between the central government and the Corps commanders, the Embassy did not intend to pursue Premier Ky's suggestion that he and Gen Bien meet with Ambassadors Lodge and Porter to discuss Montagnard questions.<sup>9</sup>

(C) In drafting representation for the Constituent Assembly on 27 May, the Montagnard representative requested the Election Law Drafting Committee to reserve six seats for Montagnards. There were few objections. The Committee decided by vote of 28 to 1 to give Montagnards one seat in each of five provinces-Kontum, Pleiku, Darlac, Tuyen Duc, and Quang Ngai--plus one seat for the Cham minority in Ninh Thuan. In order to insure representation for Kontum's Vietnamese population, Kontum was allowed two seats, one Vietnamese and one Montagnard, even though it had less than 100,000 people.<sup>10</sup>

(S) The DSA II Corps was informed by CG II Corps that 12 FULRO representatives had been present at 21 June ceremonies at the Montagnard Training Center in Pleiku, attended by Premier Ky. The FULRO representatives had told the Premier that FULRO leader [Y Bham Enou] had accepted GVN terms for return of FULRO forces from Cambodia, offered during GVN-FULRO negotiations held in Ban Me Thuot. CG II Corps appeared highly pleased at the success of these negotiations, although recognizing the strain that [redacted] of FULRO forces and settlement of dependents would have upon GVN resources. The Chief of Staff of II Corps, however, cautioned that [Y Bham's] acceptance did not necessarily end the FULRO problem, pointing out that whereas [Y Bham] headed the most important FULRO group, there were other factions antagonistic to GVN as well as to [Y Bham].<sup>11</sup>

(C) Premier Ky rejected the four-point agreement that had been reached between CMA and FULRO and approved by the CG II Corps; the reason for the Premier's decision was not known, even by CMA, nor was it clear whether the rejection applied to all four points. This decision was not communicated to FULRO, and CMA began efforts to have the matter reconsidered, drafting a letter for the Premier giving his general agreement to the four points,

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which had been rephrased so as to be more palatable. The letter was approved by the CG II Corps in late July, according to CMA, and was sent to the Premier with the endorsement of both the CG II Corps and the Minister of Revolutionary Development. Repeated CMA requests for appointment with the Premier during the first ten days of August were not answered. The Premier's aide reportedly promised that the signature would be forthcoming before the Premier's departure for Manila, but nothing happened and the Premier left for Manila without signing the letter. The only concrete indications of sticking points were comments by CMA that the GVN would not be able to accept integration of FULRO into ARVN and GVN paramilitary forces as separate units; this was not surprising, and had been foreseen. However, DCMA also stated in late July he believed some formula acceptable to both FULRO and GVN might be found.<sup>12</sup>

(S) During June, July, and August there were indications that as many as 500 men from FULRO military forces had come out from forest areas along the Cambodia-RVN border and settled temporarily in Darlac and Quang Duc Provinces, awaiting the outcome of negotiations which they apparently expected to be favorable. They reportedly had shown eagerness at the thought of being able to abandon their hard, nomadic life and again to settle down, and appeared more ready to trust the GVN than at any time in the previous two years. US officials doubted that there would be a more favorable occasion than at that time (August) to heal the long-festering FULRO-GVN sore which the US had been doctoring for three years. Moreover, a FULRO reaction to what they would certainly consider another example of GVN bad faith could take several highly-undesirable forms. The US Mission realized the highly adverse reaction which could ensue in the US and elsewhere should FULRO and the entire Montagnard problem erupt again, just at the moment when worldwide attention was focused on the upcoming elections. The Ambassador stressed this point in urging Premier Ky to find accommodation with FULRO prior to the 15 August deadline set in a letter from Y Bham.<sup>13</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV realized the possibility of a confrontation between GVN and FULRO, and alerted CG I FFORCEV on 14 August. COMUSMACV stated the the confrontation could take forms running from demonstrations, violent or non-violent, against the GVN, to armed uprising against the GVN; critical areas would probably be Buon Ba Yang, Plei Do Lim, and Ban Me Thuot. COMUSMACV requested CG I FFORCEV to alert his subordinate commanders and advisors as he deemed necessary and further requested that as information developed on Montagnard attitudes and FULRO intentions, it be forwarded to MACV as soon as possible.<sup>14</sup>

(S) FULRO representatives stayed in Ban Me Thout after the 15 August deadline in spite of threats to depart for Cambodia unless the Premier agreed to the terms reached previously. Y Bham, who had ordered the representatives to return to Cambodia if an agreement could not be accomplished by 15 August, now asked the negotiators to be patient and

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not to allow any outbreak of violence against the GVN by FULRO members. Y Bham and his chief negotiator asked the GVN to consent quickly to FULRO demands so it could present candidates for the September elections, and to extend the time limit for presenting them until 25 August.<sup>15</sup>

(S) On 18 August Premier Ky signed the letter agreeing, in principle, to the FULRO demands. On 19 August he sent the following letter to the CG II Corps:

The Office of the Chairman of the Directorate agrees to the views of your headquarters concerning the four demands of the FULRO negotiators. Nevertheless, your headquarters must make it clear to the FULRO negotiators that the main concern is not one of terminology (as for example, regulation as opposed to policy, secretariat as opposed to commissariat), but rather is a matter of the use of resources and the coordination of efforts to push ahead with social development and the improvement of the living standards of our Montagnard compatriots. The government has been and continues working on these matters with good results. Regarding the matter of a FULRO flag, the government will call a Congress on all Montagnard Tribes in South Vietnam to discuss the problem in order to reach a decision. The government hopes for the early return of GVN authority of our FULRO Brethren in a spirit of national unity in order to make it possible to forge ahead in the struggle against the communists and in order to improve the life of the Montagnard compatriots. The government promises to preserve both the honor and the lives of all the cadres of all ranks when FULRO followers return.

Members of the CMA interpreted this letter as meaning that the Premier had agreed only in principle to the four demands of FULRO, and that details of the agreement were yet to be negotiated. They expected that some friction would develop during subsequent negotiations.<sup>16</sup>

(S) Upon notification that Premier Ky had agreed, at least in principle, with the four points, the FULRO negotiators requested that several minor conditions be met by the GVN. They wanted permission to announce over the radio at Ban Me Thuot the GVN accord with the four FULRO demands, and copies of the letter signed by the Premier for distribution among FULRO members. They asked for the immediate release of the six FULRO members imprisoned during the past year. They requested GVN transportation for a team to go to Buong Sar Pa for the purpose of contacting Y Bham in Cambodia. Finally, they sought the assurance of the GVN that all FULRO followers in hiding in the highlands could return safely to their families

REVIEW DATE: ~~Oct. 1983~~  
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PAGE 703 OF 872 PAGES

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and villages, so that FULRO members could contact them in their hiding places and tell them to come out.<sup>17</sup>

(C) After prolonged negotiations which had stretched over almost a full year, but which had begun in earnest in early May, the GVN apparently had reached an agreement with FULRO. The agreement called for FULRO leaders, armed units, and their dependents to return from Camodia and forest hideouts on the RVN side of the border to areas under GVN control. In exchange, the GVN agreed to a phased release of FULRO prisoners, to a Montagnard "bill of rights," and to some form of pennant which Montagnard military and paramilitary units would be able to fly under the GVN flag. FULRO armed units were to be integrated in some fashion into GVN military or paramilitary organizations. FULRO candidates would be permitted to run for the September elections.<sup>18</sup>

(FOUO) US officials reported on 29 September, after the successful elections, that GVN-FULRO agreements seemed to be holding firm, and that preparations were being made to celebrate the return of the first group of 500 in mid-October. The GVN plan called for a small ceremony in Ban Me Thuot on 10 October, followed by a maximum celebration in Pleiku which would last five days, 14-18 October, and would be attended by some 5,000 Montagnards from all over the highlands. The big day would be 17 October, the second anniversary of the issuance of the GVN decree favoring Montagnards by General Nguyen Khanh at the Pleiku Conference in 1964. Mission officials also reported that USAID assistance in resettling returning FULRO and their families had been requested in writing by the CG II Corps and the CMA. USAID had acknowledged its readiness to provide assistance, and was working closely with CMA to assess the actual needs; other elements of the Mission were prepared to assist as needed.<sup>19</sup>

(C) Also on 29 September, COMUSMACV outlined the GVN-Montagnard relationship as he saw it. The indications, he felt, pointed toward a lessening of tensions between the GVN and FULRO. The election of FULRO followers to the Constituent Assembly, the release of most of the Montagnards arrested (but not tried) after the December 1965 uprising, and the granting of permission for a FULRO team to travel to the highlands to explain the GVN/FULRO agreement, all had tended to reassure the Montagnards that the GVN was serious. COMUSMACV reported also that there were indications that the VC were attempting to sabotage this improving situation by trying to infiltrate FULRO, by endeavoring to create incidents between Montagnards and Vietnamese, and by "out-promising" the GVN with concessions to the Montagnards. The ultimate objective of most Montagnards was a higher degree of autonomy than any RVN government was likely to offer, and no final solution to the fundamental differences between Vietnamese and Montagnards was probable in the near future, no matter how much goodwill and determination were displayed by the present or future governments of RVN. US personnel were reminded that the USG supported fully the GVN and not any individual or groups within RVN. The USG interest in the Montagnards was the same as its interest in all

PAGE 704 OF 722 PAGES

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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other citizens of RVN--to assist them in winning the war so all citizens of RVN could enjoy peace, freedom, and prosperity. The Montagnards could serve their people best and attain their desired goals by working with and through the GVN. COMUSMACV directed US personnel whose duties and positions required contact with the Montagnards, to avoid interposing themselves between the Montagnards and the Vietnamese on any issue. US personnel were cautioned to insure that their words and actions did not suggest to the Montagnards that the US supported Montagnard independence in any fashion. On the other hand, US personnel were also to insure that their words and actions did not suggest US support for any GVN actions to suppress FULRO or any other Montagnard movement. If approached by FULRO or any other organization claiming to speak for the political interest of the Montagnards, US personnel were directed to report the fact immediately to their superiors, and to their Vietnamese counterparts or the nearest GVN official.<sup>20</sup>

(C) On 17 October a five-day "Highlander-Lowlander Conference," marking the return of the first contingent of FULRO, ended with an impressive ceremony in Pleiku at which CG II Corps, CMA, FULRO representatives, and the Premier spoke. FULRO returnees took the oath of loyalty to the GVN, administered by the GVN Chief of State. In addition to senior GVN officials, the US, British, and Japanese Ambassadors were present, as were senior US, ROK, and RVN military officers. Two leading FULRO negotiators told US officials that FULRO now saw no realistic alternative to cooperation with the GVN, and gave the impression that FULRO had abandoned its previous demand for autonomy and a separate army. The apparent reasons for this were strong pressure from hostile VC and NVN units in the Cambodian border areas, coupled with a more tolerant GVN attitude. However, only 250 FULRO returned from Cambodia to participate in the ceremony; most of the 3,700 Montagnards who attended came from the Montagnard Training Center at Pleiku. The great bulk of the FULRO forces, estimated at up to 7,000, and FULRO leader Y Bham Enoull, remained in Cambodia watching the GVN performance in dealing with the first-phase returnees before making the final decision in favor of the GVN.<sup>21</sup>

(C) The ceremony marked a milestone in GVN-Montagnard relations. Unfortunately, however, US officials believed that the GVN had missed an excellent opportunity to improve its position further. The CG II CTZ and other top GVN officials gave the unmistakable impression that they were more interested in celebrating their own accomplishments than in establishing closer ties with the Montagnards. The preliminary conclusion by USG was that while the FULRO-GVN agreement was still holding, much remained to be done before the bulk of FULRO could be expected to return to the GVN fold. All elements were fully aware of the problem and would be working with II Corps, Montagnard and Refugee Commissariats, and CMA to insure that favorable opportunities to improve Vietnamese-Montagnard relations were not lost.<sup>22</sup>

REVIEW DATE: ~~04-1983~~

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PAGE 725 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) Members of the US Mission Council Committee on Montagnard affairs, accompanied by DSA II Corps, met with CG II Corps on 14 December to discuss the general question of FULRO, and what steps might be taken in resettling and finding employment for FULRO who had returned in September. The decision to talk with CG II Corps was made after repeated efforts with CMA over two months had failed to produce a GVN program for dealing with returnees, and because the Mission believed that CG II Corps exercised de facto policy control over CMA. The discussion with CG II Corps was relaxed and friendly. Gen Vinh Loc gave the impression of being receptive to several specific suggestions for FULRO employment and resettlement, agreeing with the committee that FULRO was becoming more restive, although he did not think there was any danger of any immediate action such as revocation of the agreement with GVN or a return to Cambodia by the first group. The Mission Committee did not point out that the almost complete lack of GVN follow-through since the Pleiku ceremonies might be the cause of FULRO uneasiness, but did stress the necessity for making a successful effort with returnees if the remaining FULRO, including Y Eham, were to be persuaded to leave Cambodia despite Cambodian VC and probably French counterpressures. CG II Corps seemed to accept this line.<sup>23</sup>

(C) On 26 December COMUSMACV gave further guidance to his commanders on the Montagnard problem. Repeating his 29 September guidance, COMUSMACV indicated that there had been several instances of US personnel accepting communications from alleged FULRO representatives. These communications had been addressed to US Special Forces camp commanders and to COMUSMACV. COMUSMACV stressed again that US personnel were not to accept messages, letters, or any form of communications from FULRO, alleged FULRO, or other Montagnard representatives unless specifically authorized by MACV. When approached with such communications, US personnel would refuse to accept the document(s), and would recommend that the representatives deal with the local GVN officials. COMUSMACV believed it was vital that those US personnel likely to be approached by FULRO or Montagnard representatives be made aware of US policy, and reminded that significant events concerning GVN/Montagnard relations would be reported to MACV.<sup>24</sup>

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PAGE 706 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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ANNEX C--THE SAIGON PORT

Introduction

(C) As the buildup of men and material increased during 1965, the inadequate ports in RVN could not handle the increased military cargo loadings and still keep up the civilian imports, both normal commercial goods and those sponsored by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The result was congestion of the ports, requiring emergency procedures to keep vital cargo moving. Additional deep-water ports were planned and developed during late 1965 in an effort to relieve the pressure on Saigon. The first of these to become operative was Cam Ranh Bay, but not until December 1965 were there two deep-draft berths fully operational there. Meanwhile, the Port of Saigon became a major bottleneck--and a major headache to COMUSMACV and the US Mission.

(S) Saigon/Cholon is located on the west bank of the Saigon River 43 miles inland from the South China Sea. The combined population of this metropolis is approximately two million, and it constitutes the political, administrative, and economic capital of the RVN. The port complex consists of deep-draft, lighterage, and shallow-draft operations, and includes facilities located at Saigon, Nha Be, Bui Long, Cogido, Tan Tuy Ha, Bien Trieu, Cau Binh Loi, Song Dong Nai, Thu Duc, and Vung Tau. Primary access to most of these facilities is via the Saigon/Long Tao River. Although this river is completely navigable for deep-draft vessels, the channels are restricted, narrow, winding, and poorly marked. The Viet Cong repeatedly have attempted to sink a ship in a restricted portion of the channel in order to block the river. Although these efforts have not been successful, the possibility exists, and with it the possibility of complete stoppage of deep-draft shipping into the Saigon area. In addition to providing support for approximately 206,000 US and FW forces in the III and IV CTZ, the Saigon port complex is the major port of entry into RVN for Military Assistance Program (MAP), USAID, and commercial cargoes. The USAID class was further divided between Central Purchasing Authority (CPA) and Commodities Import Program (CIP) cargoes. The former are USAID-financed commodities consigned to the GVN, while the latter are goods purchased with US funds and consigned to civilian importers to increase the amount of purchasable commodities

PAGE 709 OF 872 PAGES

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on the civilian market as a deterrent to inflation. On 1 January 1966, Saigon port was handling 90 percent of all deep-draft shipping working in RVN, including all commercial cargo entering the country in deep-draft shipping and there were 164,164 measurement tons of cargo backlog in RVN ports or offshore waiting to move into the ports.

(C) The facilities at Saigon on 1 January consisted of ten deep-draft alongside berths, seven large berths at buoys, four small berths at buoys, two LST berths, three T-piers for coastal shipping, and six to ten miles of canals to warehouses alongside (go-downs). Factors contributing to slow discharge of cargo were insufficient deep-draft pier berths, insufficient barges for discharge at buoys, lack of sufficient open and covered storage, improper location and scarcity of LST ramps, obsolete lighters incapable of handling palletized cargo, and no GVN military control of the port. The allocation of facilities was three to four berths for military cargo and three to four for USAID cargo, with the balance to commercial cargo. The capability of the port was about 13,000 short tons (S/T) per day.

(C) Plans for improvement had been formulated and implemented during 1965 to augment the Saigon port with one LST slip and a quay wall with floating camels at the location known as the fishmarket. An additional cargo-handling complex, known as Newport, would provide seven lighterage berths, two LST slips with crane wharves, two LCU/LCH ramps and, later, four deep-draft berths. Newport would be located one mile upstream from the city of Saigon. There were adequate plans for material improvement to the port complex, but this was not to be a sit-and-wait situation that would cure itself when the hardware became available.

(C) Not all of the problem was due to the situation in RVN. There was a lack of coordination with the shipping agencies in the US. Ships were arriving with mixed-priority cargo, and cargo assigned both to the military and to civilian agencies. Many times low-priority cargo had to be offloaded onto already overcrowded piers to get at high-priority cargo. The result was that ships would be held at anchorage, fully loaded, for several days or in some cases weeks, as a floating storage until the cargoes could be offloaded. Occasionally these ships would find it necessary to leave RVN still loaded, sail to a commercial port in SEASIA to replenish fuel, water and provisions, then return to RVN and fall in at the end of the line again. All this cost money, since a ship under space/time charter was costing the government from \$2500 to \$5000 a day. The demurrage (waiting cost) of ten ships, each waiting ten days, would be a minimum of a quarter of a million dollars.

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PAGE 710 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) During 1965 plans were made for expanding the capabilities of ports other than Saigon, and construction was undertaken as a matter of priority. These ports are discussed in Chapter IV. The specific measures taken in the Saigon port complex—and the continuing problems—are discussed in this annex.

#### Saigon Port Operations in Early 1966

(U) The Saigon port, at the beginning of the year, was operated by a civilian port director under the direction of the GVN Ministry of Public Works. Many US agencies were already at work on the problem of the port congestion. A special group of representatives from the International Longshoremen's Union (ILA) spent several weeks in Saigon studying the problem. Their report was made to Defense and State Departments; several articles in US papers in early January reported conditions in Saigon. The head of the ILA was cautiously optimistic:

We've been here since December 16. We've worked every day, including Christmas, trying to straighten this thing out. It's an old port. They've been operating it lazy for a hundred years or so now. When you try to change old customs, you know, you're not too entirely welcome. But we're getting through to them.<sup>3</sup>

Other press statements pointed up the increase in tonnage resulting from the buildup in RVN. One correspondent wrote on 8 January that ships were waiting "as long as 11 days to unload"; another reported that "100 or so transports" loaded with cargo were waiting at anchor to unload, with demurrage costs reaching \$200,000 a day.<sup>4</sup>

(C) In response to a SECDEF query of 13 January, COMUSMACV described the current port operations under the Ministry of Public Works and predicted: "Significant operational improvements can be achieved by establishing a Saigon port authority under the Minister of Defense and by having the Port Director report through this channel." A proposal for such a port authority was to be presented to GVN within a week. SECDEF was also advised that there was no shortage of longshoremen, and that necessary equipment was on order.<sup>5</sup>

(C) Earlier in the month COMUSMACV had advised Director USAID that the MACV position on US military operations of the Saigon port remained unchanged: MACV should not operate the port of Saigon since the primary workload was USAID (40 percent) and civil cargo (40 percent); MACV would continue to require additional berths in the commercial port for the foreseeable future, and would operate the Newport facility when it was developed.<sup>6</sup>

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PAGE 711 OF 772 PAGES

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(C) A logistics briefing of 10 January put the backlog of cargo awaiting discharge by military resources in RVN, including all ships in port or holding in RVN or other PACOM ports, as 11 working days, or about 123,000 tons. Aside from the problems within the Saigon port, the problem of clearing cargo from point of discharge to user was highlighted:

Within the past few months, the backlog of cargo awaiting transshipment or retrograde movement, has mounted steadily. This situation is caused in part by the lack of sufficient deep water ports and piers which requires an inordinate amount of transshipment. For example, cargo must be moved from Da Nang to Chu Lai and Hue, from Cam Ranh to Qui Nhon and Phan Rang, and from Saigon to all of the other ports. Further, the situation has been aggravated by a lack of LST's and lighterage to meet ship discharge and intra-coastal shipping, we mean that cargo which is out-loaded at one port in Vietnam, and discharged at another Vietnam port. It is pertinent to note that these two needs do not include the requirements for movement of troops and equipment to support combat operations. At present, planned tactical requirements must be supported either by diversion of LST's in-country or by use of fleet LST's.<sup>7</sup>

(C) In February the picture improved somewhat due to improved facilities, arrival of terminal service units, and single port loading of ships. On 12 February the backlog had decreased to five working days, or about 55,000 short tons, and on 22 February, 30 ships were in the RVN area—20 working, nine waiting in port, and one enroute. The military cargoes were moving, but the commercial cargoes were not, mainly because of inefficient operating procedures, but also due in part to the lack of facilities. COMUSMACV felt that "too many people are involved on the US side with port operations. This situation has come about because of the port bottleneck several months ago when many people became excited."<sup>8</sup>

#### Military and Commercial Operations Coordinated

In early April the Port situation was discussed by the US Mission Council. USAID representatives recommended that the US take over operation of the Saigon port. No decision was made, but an

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PAGE 712 OF 822 PAGES

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adjustment in the allocation of warehouses and berthing spaces between MACV and USAID was directed by the Ambassador. COMUSMACV discussed the problem:

Prior to the Mission Council Meeting I had a session with MACJ4 and CO, 4th Trans Comd on the port situation and, following an analysis of the situation, decided to offer one pier to AID for civilian use with the understanding that they would do what they could to improve the efficiency of their port operation and to try to relieve congestion on the docks by diverting building materials, reinforcing iron, lumber and cement to barges and thence up the river to Thu Duc Island. Subsequently at the Mission Council Meeting this proposal was made by me and enthusiastically accepted by Director USAID and other members of the Council. This item came up on the agenda and AID brought in a couple of people to make a briefing which was going to suggest that we make a number of piers available to them, but I told the Ambassador that we could save time by my making a proposition. This thereby gave me the initiative and we had the position of our offering something rather than my having to respond to implied criticism which I suspect might have been the case. My view toward USAID and a number of other agencies of the Mission was we would do all possible to look at things objectively and in the Mission's interest and to cooperate with all parties. I had concluded in my own mind that we can get along with one less pier and, since the civilian economy needed it, I made the proposal which I hope will be helpful but at the same time not unduly restrict the flow of supplies required to support our effort.<sup>9</sup>

(C) By the end of April the working arrangement provided that US personnel would clear incoming shipments from the port area to separate customs yards some distance from the port. Commercial importers would claim their shipments there promptly, or else, if pickup was delayed too long, the GVN could sell the goods at auction. This was a positive approach to one of the greatest problems in the commercial port, that of moving the cargo off the piers and barges after it was offloaded from the ships. The importers were reluctant to pick up the cargo, as this would require payment of customs duties, and tie up their funds.<sup>10</sup>

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PAGE 713 OF 872 PAGES

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(U) A memorandum of understanding between USAID and MACV on a reallocation of Saigon Port assets was signed on 26 April. MACV released one berth and several hardstand areas to commercial use. USAID agreed to improve the efficiency of the commercial port by insuring 24-hour operations, expediting the clearance of commercial cargo, assuring that bulk goods were discharged directly to barges or to a holding area outside the port proper, and encouraging the GVN to streamline customs laws and import practices to assist importers to clear cargo in a timely manner.

(S) In a telegram of 30 April to the US Mission, SECSTATE agreed that it was difficult to deal with the supply side of the inflation equation by stepping up imports, unless the goods could be moved through the Saigon port:

Believe conclusion inescapable that bottleneck in flow of commercial cargoes through Saigon port is not likely to be cleared fast enough with present measures. As I see it, key problem is management of Saigon port, from ship call up through unloading, port warehousing, customs clearance and removal of goods from the port area with a degree of efficiency unknown in Vietnam.

He proposed three alternative solutions: 1) an IIA proposal to establish an association of stevedoring companies and an associated long-shoremen hiring hall, tied closely with an expanded staff at the Saigon port director's office, with US advisors and supported by all needed equipment, including trucks and military unloading help if required; 2) the GVN be asked to declare the port a military zone, and to draft all stevedores and work crews into a "Special Port Battalion," with USAID and MACV advisors; 3) the whole port area be taken over and operated by the US, primarily using MACV transportation battalion resources. The Mission was requested to comment on these alternatives.<sup>12</sup>

(S) On 4 May JCS advised CINCPAC that the White House was generating an across-the-board action program to cope with the rising inflation in RVN, including unilateral US actions of loading RVN with goods when the overall Saigon port congestion problem areas were alleviated. Specific suggested measures were a speed-up of Newport construction by assignment of "Super Priority," and use of military transport for inland movement of essential civilian cargo. As a long term program, the White House suggested establishing a joint shipping and priority system to forecast future USAID shipments, integrating them into the military shipping and movement control organization, and finally having COMUSMACV take over the Saigon port. Comments were solicited,

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PAGE 7/4 OF 872 PAGES

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including any other recommendations as to ways of combating inflation with less military impact. CINCPAC replied that every effort would be made to assist in moving AID cargo through RVN ports, and that Newport already had the highest construction priority. He pointed out the shortage of military airlift for internal distribution of civilian cargo. He also noted that a study was underway to determine the feasibility of developing Vung Tau as a major port for USAID and military supplies, and recommended that USAID plan the loading of some deep-draft shipping for discharge at anchor at Vung Tau directly into intra-coastal shipping. CINCPAC concurred in establishing a joint shipping and priority system.<sup>13</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV commented to CINCPAC on 12 May in great detail on the White House proposals. He confirmed that Newport construction enjoyed the highest priorities and estimated completion of the first barge landings on 31 July; this, with the hardstand of 90,000 sq feet open storage to be completed 30 September, and completion of the Fishmarket Quay No. 1 on 30 October, would ease the pressure on the Saigon port about December 1966. After describing the paucity of military trucks, he concluded: "We cannot at this time support USAID with military trucks. To do so would affect adversely tactical and logistical support missions in support of overall military operations." In regard to military operation of the port, COMUSMACV reviewed previous actions, including GVN rejection of proposals for a National Port Authority. Control of the port by the Minister of National Economy and Finance, and the absence of 24-hour port operation, were prime contributors to the congestion. The USAID agreement to improve port operations, which had become effective 1 May, had achieved little progress. The proposed Vung Tau expansion would assist the military but would contribute little to USAID because of a lack of contractual operating services outside of Saigon. Military operation of the Saigon port was considered impractical because of the lack of legal control of port assets, commodities, and customs. The political factors which had led to GVN non-acceptance of an earlier proposal for a port authority under the JGS still existed. The mechanics of handling cargo from hook to consignee would be terribly complicated and could result in adverse political effects and possible accusations of favoritism. There was no legal basis for control of civilian consignees, or of the banks which in many cases held bills of lading as loan security, to force prompt cargo pick-up or acceptance if it were delivered. Military capabilities were insufficient to divert 50 percent to commercial operations without curtailing logistics for US and ARVN operations and military construction. The diversion of military truck capability to handle one half of the USAID cargo handling deficit (3,000 S/T daily) would result in a 55 percent reduction in resupply of combat units. Under this reduced rate, combat operations would necessarily shift from offensive to defensive at a time when the success of the overall US program was dependent upon a posture of sustained offensive action.<sup>14</sup>

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 7/5 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) COMUSMACV summed up the entire problem as it affected the many facets of MACV operations:

. . . [the port situation] seems to be progressing except in the Saigon area where there is an almost desperate need for barge docks along the Saigon river where cargo can be unloaded and bypass the congested docks in the city. Later in the week I discussed construction priorities with the component commanders and [MACV Director of Construction], and again emphasized the high priority for the new port project and the preparation of barge docks. This is a serious matter and has overriding considerations to include construction essential to move troops and installations out of the Saigon area. Our construction capability is now extended to the utmost and priorities must be assessed almost monthly to insure that we place this construction capability where it can best serve our overall effort. The problem is a complex one. We now have many troops in-country that require logistical support for combat operations and their own administration. The presence of troops in Saigon has served to bring about inflation that has raised the cost of living and thereby created a political problem. Also the impact of American dollars in the city has tended to reshape the social structure, a matter resented in many quarters, since those people catering to soldiers such as night club operators and bar girls are benefiting most from the additional money in circulation. Meanwhile for the first time it is possible to move troops and installations out of Saigon as security will now permit such movement since more American combat troops are available. However, the pace of this effort is limited by the shortage of the construction capability which has to be spread to literally thousands of projects. The port project is the most important because this is the bottleneck of the buildup of American supplies and the introduction of commercial imports which are essential to absorb the additional piasters that are surplus on the economy. So, this whole complex goes more or less in a circle which dictates that all factors have to be balanced with certain give and take in many quarters.<sup>15</sup>

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830624

PAGE 716 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) The Deputy Ambassador, with COMUSMACV concurrence, advised SECSTATE on 16 May that in consonance with the COMUSMACV evaluation, the military could not takeover port operations unless additional personnel were provided, which would take four to six months, and by that time the civilian cargo problem would probably be well on the way to solution through increased facilities. In addition to the operational problems, it was considered politically unwise if not impossible to have the US military operate the civilian port. The solution to Saigon port congestion was seen as, first, to turn back berths, storage areas, and warehouses in the traditional civilian port as rapidly as possible, and, secondly but of equal importance, to continue pressure on the GVN to make its operations more efficient. In regard to the latter the Deputy Ambassador noted:

My eight months' stay in Vietnam and two recent experiences with CIP where we forced the Office of Small Business procedures on the GVN and the Air Vietnam airplanes incident has convinced me that if we judiciously bare our teeth, the GVN will cease its reticence and be responsive to our recommendations.

(S-NF) Although he agreed with the US Mission that the military should not take over the port, CINCPAC directed COMUSMACV to prepare and submit a contingency plan for taking over the responsibility for all Saigon port activities including those related to commercial imports; all work on the plan was to be limited to US personnel.

#### Contingency Planning for Military Operations

(S) In forwarding the contingency plans for military operation of the Saigon port, COMUSMACV advised that military assets on hand and due in were for programmed military tonnages only, and that diversion of these assets to clear USAID/CPA cargo as first priority would reduce cargo clearance by one half, and eliminate highway transport support to tactical and logistics operations of combat units. With the receipt of the required assets described in the plan, military clearance of USAID/CPA and commercial cargo could be accomplished without degradation of military cargo clearance. As a point of departure for the determination of the assets required for the assumption of military control and operation of the Saigon port complex, the plan assumed a basic requirement to discharge, and clear to first destination, all USAID/CPA cargo which was for support of the counterinsurgency program. This represented about 42 percent of the total forecast. Of the total volume of civilian and counterinsurgency imports, somewhat less than half were discharged

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 717 OF 872 PAGES

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over the fixed facilities of the commercial port. Since this was the area most responsive to improved management procedures, emphasis would be placed on routing high-priority civilian goods through the main port. It was deemed essential that the GVN enact and enforce legislation to oblige importers to remove their cargo from the port in an expeditious manner, under penalty of loss of import licenses or seizure of goods. The assumption by the military of the responsibility for distributing commercial imports, as opposed to USAID/CPA imports, was not recommended; this would involve moving about 58 percent of the total of all commercial cargo to an estimated 2,000 or more importers in the Saigon area. USAID/CPA cargo, consigned to the various government ministries and other agencies for use in the counterinsurgency program, could be distributed to first destination storage facilities in the Saigon area outside of the port area. A large portion of non-military imports was discharged into barges from vessels at buoy berths, and then delivered to various locations along the canals for ultimate discharge. This was the area which was the least amenable to military control and management because of the large numbers of lighters involved and the numerous landing sites. However, some degree of military control would be established over this traffic, since it was most susceptible to entry into the black market, required large numbers of lighters, drew down on the labor market, and required numerous trucks for movement to destination. 18

(S) The unskilled labor supply in the Saigon area was considered adequate to support present and planned levels of operation. Existing stevedore contractors would have to be expanded to support the increased tempo of operations envisaged if the port were placed under military control. Whether local commercial importers or GVN agencies would be willing to bear the costs of round-the-clock operations could not be determined at that time, but USAID would have to bear the increased costs of continuous operations for the discharge of USAID/CPA cargo. Equipment assets, both military and civilian, were inadequate to handle existing tonnages. Additional equipment, trucks, materials handling equipment, and lighters would have to be procured from either CONUS or Free World sources, or existing commercial contracts expanded, in order to discharge and clear projected monthly tonnage requirements for USAID/CPA cargo. Lead time would vary from four to six months between contract initiation to availability in Saigon but exceptional authority would be requested when opportunities arose to shorten lead times. The majority of the increased military personnel supervisors required for the assumption of military control were available from within MACV resources. USAID management personnel were extremely 19 limited in number and could not be expected to fill the shortfall.

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 718 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) The plan was based on several broad assumptions. All USAID and civilian GVN Port Authority-owned and leased equipment, real estate, associated facilities, and contracts for equipment, services, and operations would revert to military control. Civilian Port Authority personnel would continue to perform under military guidance, and stevedores, warehousemen, cargo checkers, laborers, and supervisors would work under military direction. To the extent available, additional barges, tugs, trucks, and port handling equipment would be rented or leased to the military or military contractors. GVN would enact the laws and decrees necessary to establish and maintain all port operations facilities and assets under military control. Real estate would be made available for a USAID/CPA intransit storage area to be located some distance away from the port, with USAID continuing its port funding program and paying all costs generated by its cargo, while GVN would fund for port costs in excess of port revenues. ARVN truck capability would be available for port clearance. The concept of operations was that upon execution of an interdepartmental agreement, the US military would assume responsibility for discharge and clearance to first destination of USAID/CPA cargo. Upon execution of an appropriate diplomatic agreement between the US and the GVN, the US military would accept the responsibility of acting as the agent of the GVN for the discharge of all commercial imports. Agreement by the US to accept this responsibility would be contingent upon GVN acceptance of the responsibility to clear this cargo from the port. The agreement should provide for the establishment of a Saigon Port Authority under the direction of a RVNAF general officer. The Director Saigon Port Authority would exercise supervision over, and establish policy guidance for, those matters relating to the management of the Saigon Port. The present USA port organization would assume responsibility for port operations, to include control and allocation of all port facilities, equipment, labor, harborcraft, and all other assigned assets. The USA Terminal Command was to be granted the necessary authority by the Saigon Port Authority to enforce compliance with established port rules and regulations by all users of the port. Military and commercial operations would be separate activities coordinated, controlled and supervised by the US Terminal Commander under the policy guidance of the Director Saigon Port Authority. Finally, the plan recommended that negotiations be initiated to permit the US military to assume responsibility for USAID/CPA cargo and the operation of the Saigon port complex in accordance with this plan; that the high construction priority currently assigned to the Saigon Port complex be maintained; and that the authority and funds to obtain the additional assets required for military operation of the port be finished on an urgent basis.<sup>20</sup>

(TS) At the end of May COMUSMACV analyzed what appeared to be an impending MACV mission:

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 719 OF 772 PAGES

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It appears quite clear that MACV is going to have to take over the AID and commercial port operations if this bottleneck is to be broken. I agreed to do this if acceptable to the Vietnamese government and if we could serve as their agent to unload the ships and deliver the goods to a designated spot where we will turn over control to the GVN or AID acting as agent for GVN. From there they could deliver the goods to the importers or auction them off if they were not picked up. I am now asking CG 1st Log Comd to work up a detailed plan which we can study to determine the cost and implications involved if these additional responsibilities are placed upon us. Fortunately several weeks ago I saw the "handwriting" on the wall on this, and USARV was directed to prepare a plan on the assumption we would be given the job.<sup>21</sup>

(S) The head of the IIA revisited RVN in early June and discussed the port situation with the GVN Minister of Economy; some agreement was reached to expedite identifying of delinquent cargoes so that the GVN could then move them out of the port. However, no action was forthcoming immediately.<sup>22</sup>

(S) Director USAID commented on the MACV plan on 10 June, calling it a "sound and useful step forward in resolution of the port problem." However, he believed the plan did not go far enough, and proposed that COMUSMACV supervise intransit warehouses and assume responsibility for moving goods from the port area to holding areas and warehouses outside of the port area, with USAID to supervise the management of goods in customs warehouses and holding areas outside of the port area, including seeing that goods unclaimed after a reasonable period were auctioned off. Further, USAID suggested forming a US civilian company to assume charge of port operations when the military moved to Newport. COMUSMACV agreed to this plan, contingent on receipt of sufficient men and material. The first and most difficult step, COMUSMACV thought, would be obtaining the authority from GVN to operate the Saigon port, and extending control into warehousing, trucking and auctioning.

I had a long discussion with Director USAID on how the efficiency of the Saigon port might be improved. I worked with him on a cable to be dispatched by the Ambassador which provides for MACV taking over the port and delivering civilian imports to a first distribution point away from the port area if required where custody would be assumed by either GVN or USAID. After lengthy

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 720 OF 872 PAGES  
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detailed study of the matter, I am convinced that we can handle this matter if an arrangement can be made with the GVN until Newport can be developed and we can vacate the Saigon port making it available for the exclusive use of civilian traffic. During the interim period I would hope that AID could organize to take over the port management from us.<sup>23</sup>

#### MACV Takes Over USAID/CPA Cargo

(S) A joint STATE/DEFENSE/AID message of 13 June desired that an interdepartmental agreement be drawn to be effective 1 July for the US military to assume responsibility for the discharge and clearance to first destination, outside the port area, of all USAID/CPA cargo. AID and DOD would develop a plan to control the flow of USAID/CPA cargoes to Saigon. Contingent on the completion of the necessary agreements between the US and GVN, COMUSMACV would assume responsibility for acting as an agent of the GVN for the discharge of all commercial imports, including CIP material. The agreement would provide for the establishment of a Saigon Port Authority under the direction of a RVNAF general officer. COMUSMACV and USAID were asked to propose how and what to negotiate with the GVN.<sup>24</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV determined his requirements in two increments: Phase I, MACV assumption of USAID/CPA cargo responsibility only; and Phase II, MACV assumption of responsibility for operation of the entire port. Phase I would require 560 additional military personnel and 275 local-hire civilians. Additional forklifts, tugs, and barges (contracted), together with the civilians' wages, totaled \$18,379,770 per year after deduction of \$3,851,000 for current USAID/CPA tug and barge contracts. Upon receipt of the detailed MACV plan SECDEF and SECSTATE authorized COMUSMACV to assume responsibility for USAID/CPA cargo on 1 July, as proposed, and advised that the personnel required would be provided as soon as possible; meanwhile the maximum number of slots would be filled from personnel in-country. COMUSMACV was authorized to incur costs as necessary with funding arrangements to be concluded in Washington. SECSTATE requested the Saigon Embassy to assist COMUSMACV in the negotiations required to implement Phase I. 25 JCS and CINCPAC paralleled these authorizations in military channels.

(S) The economic and political scene was less clear-cut. At that time important negotiations between USAID and the Ministry of Economics on the subject of 1967 AID/CIP funds were in progress.

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 721 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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It was felt in Washington that to attempt negotiations of the Phase II actions would cause delay of the AID/CIP decisions, which had to be completed prior to 28 June to meet a congressional deadline. However, the Ambassador was given full authority to decide how and when negotiations would take place. At a social function, Premier Ky had mentioned the Port problem to COMUSMACV and had alluded to the acceptability of MACV operation of the port. The Ambassador was eager to implement the plan and made preliminary contact with the Premier on 23 June. Indications were that the GVN would permit the US military to assume responsibility for the discharge and clearance of USAID/CPA cargo; the question of USAID/CIP cargo was undetermined.<sup>26</sup>

(S) On 27 June COMUSMACV and the Ambassador called on the Premier and obtained his agreement to US military operation of the Saigon port, details to be worked out with the Port Director-designate and the Commissioner for Finance. On 1 July a meeting with the latter cleared the major obstacle for assumption of the port operations. The plan was to handle USAID/CPA cargo in the same manner as military cargo, with delivery to GVN Ministerial depots or to USAID/CPA off-port holding areas. The draft agreement was presented to the Minister of Economy and Finance on 4 July and signed that date.<sup>27</sup>

(S) The mechanics of the operation were being developed concurrently with COMUSMACV and the port director:

(8 July 1966) I talked to [the port director] and his Deputy, about the Saigon port operation and came to a meeting of minds with him on the arrangements. After punning the two of them down and admitting to understanding fully our proposal that the US Army Terminal Command would operate the port as an agent of the GVN, their concern was to develop an operation that would be acceptable to the political sensitivities of the Vietnamese and make it appear that the Vietnamese were doing the job. I therefore called [CG 1st Log] and gave him further guidance to work up an arrangement which would set up a combined facade at appropriate echelons. I told [the port director] that we thought they should have appropriate representation and liaison at the various operating levels to enable them to gain some on-the-job training and experience. He agreed that the arrangements could be worked out to meet both of our requirements.<sup>28</sup>

(C) The GVN order appointing the Director General of Ports was published 8 July, although the decree establishing the port authority had not been promulgated. On 5 July the 4th USA Trans Comd (Terminal),

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By IAG per

PAGE 722 OF 722 PAGES

~~SECRET~~

830624

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which had responsibility for port operations under the 1st Log Comd, had begun handling USAID/CPA cargo. Phase II talks were being held. By 11 July, the port director had moved into the port offices and was beginning to take charge, and USAID/CPA cargo was moving without backlog. The commercial port had benefited from the military handling of USAID/CPA cargo by the military, freeing manpower and equipment for use on commercial cargo.<sup>29</sup>

#### The Commercial Cargo Problem

(C) Since commercial cargo was not being cleared from the port by the importers, the commercial port was in danger of being jammed with goods and, until some was cleared, cargo could not be unloaded from the ships; there just was no place to put it. The GVN had been urged to force importers to clear the cargo or face confiscation of the cargo and its disposal at auction. Unless the cargo was cleared, all efforts to increase port capacity would be to no avail. A GVN decree requiring removal of imports within 30 days of receipt had been promulgated 28 July, to become effective 28 August, but if it were not enforced it would be of no use. Washington concern over the increasing commercial cargo backlog was expressed by SECSTATE in late July. The non-military economic effort to combat inflation was based on flooding the RVN market with commodities and soak up the inflated piaster-levels generated by the buildup of US Forces. If the port of Saigon could not move the goods into the Vietnamese market, there was no hope for the plans. The GVN had been urged to reduce the allowable time goods could be held in customs from 30 to ten days. The decree, when published, stated that importers were encouraged (emphasis supplied) to remove goods within ten days. COMUSMACV replied to SECSTATE by noting that the military plan had been in effect only 30 days, the Port Director was "taking a positive and realistic approach" and had agreed to concentrate his efforts on the commercial sector, and COMUSMACV did not recommend any further intrusion into the activities of the commercial port. Although both military and commercial cargoes would increase during the following months, COMUSMACV planned to vacate the Saigon commercial port facilities when adequate facilities were available at Newport. To accomplish this, additional funding of the Newport project would be required. USAID was giving strong attention to the potential problem of distribution of CPA goods beyond first-destination so that first-destination<sup>30</sup> warehouses would not fill up and force a backlog of cargo on barges.

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 227 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) A complete Newport project had been estimated to cost approximately \$60.4 million; with two very desirable add-ons (rail and highway clover-leaf), it totaled \$64.4 million. However, the current funding level of \$27.604 million dictated elimination of warehouses, transit storage, administrative facilities, and cold storage, and adoption of a reduced wharf design. An increase in funding of approximately \$20 million would permit construction of solid wharves in lieu of sixty-foot quays, construction of limited storage and transit facilities, and provision of electric power for around-the-clock operations. These improvements would contribute to further reduction of the deficit in discharge capability and, perhaps most important, would expedite the move of the military out of the commercial port. Since the requirement at Newport had been made more critical as a result of military assumption of responsibility for CPA cargo, which represented approximately 50 percent of discharge at Newport, it was suggested that the \$20 million needed be supplied by USAID. USAID Saigon did not concur with the use of their funds, but applauded the concept. CINCPAC favorably endorsed the COMUSMACV request for funds to the JCS and said they should be provided at the "earliest practicable date."<sup>31</sup>

(S) A very close association had grown up between the 4th Trans Comd and the GVN Port authorities. As the US advisors and GVN Port personnel worked out bottlenecks, it became more and more evident that something had to be done to clear commercial cargo from the port. Although the Ministry of Economy and Finance had been given a tour of the port by the Deputy Ambassador, and had seen the goods jamming the port, he still insisted that the congestion was due to mismanagement by the Port authority, not the failure of importers to clear goods.<sup>32</sup>

(S) On 3 October COMUSMACV called a meeting with the cognizant staff sections and representatives of USAID to discuss the port situation. All agreed to a COMUSMACV suggestion to try to persuade the GVN to have ARVN pick up the commercial cargo that had been in warehouses over 30 days and move it to ARVN warehouses, for later disposal as desired by the GVN. A talking paper for the Ambassador was prepared for presenting this plan to Premier Ky. However, on 5 October, before the paper was available to the Ambassador, the Premier asked COMUSMACV to call on him and, among other things, mentioned the Saigon port. COMUSMACV recommended the plan agreed to at the previous staff conference. The premier indicated approval of the idea and agreed that he would be inclined to turn the goods over to the troops.<sup>33</sup>

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By IAG per

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PAGE 724 OF 872 PAGES

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(U) On 22 October the construction of Phase I of Newport was completed and the facilities turned over to the 4th Trans Comd. Although this made more facilities available for military cargo, the addition of the USAID/CPA and seven CIP commodities to the military workload precluded turning back areas in the commercial port to civilian operation.<sup>34</sup>

(S) As the increased CIP program started more and more civilian cargoes toward Saigon, the backlog of ships waiting to unload built up. Increasing concern in Washington was expressed in a series of messages from JCS, SECDEF and the White House, all deploring the situation and repeatedly suggesting that COMUSMACV take over complete operation of the Saigon Port. To these suggestions COMUSMACV, with Mission concurrence, maintained the position that the Saigon commercial port bottleneck was primarily due to the importers' refusal to move goods out of the port and the GVN refusal to recognize this and force compliance with existing laws. The GVN had been approached at all levels. When the Minister of Economy and Finance visited Washington in early October he was strongly urged by SECDEF, SECSTATE, and the President to enforce the decrees and move the cargo. The Ambassador and COMUSMACV repeatedly urged the Premier to take the necessary action, as did SECDEF during his October visit to RVN. In early November the Premier told COMUSMACV that he would put out the appropriate decree and "solve" the port situation. On 10 November COMUSMACV accompanied the Premier on a tour of the port, during which a briefing by the Port Director again pin-pointed the necessity for a firm stand on the importers. In the discussion following the briefing the Premier seemed sincere in his desire to open up and modernize the port, and clean up the corruption which he felt was prevalent throughout the port operation. It was apparent that the Premier did not have full confidence in the incumbent Port Director and would not, therefore, give him the authority and backing required. On 2 November the Premier had stated that he would give the Port Director 60 days to clear up the port mess; if he succeeded he would get another star, if not he would be fired. (The Port Director was replaced on 16 January 1967.)<sup>35</sup>

#### Advisory Efforts in the Commercial Port

(U) US advisors were on the scene and some progress was being made in organizing and streamlining the Saigon port. The first elements of the 125th Trans Terminal Comd had arrived on 4 September and immediately had begun to work with the Port Director. The 125th was an advisory unit tasked "to assist and support the Director General of Ports Vietnam in all aspects of his mission with the primary objective

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of improving the management and operation of the Saigon port." Using the study produced by the Saigon Port Study Group, published 2 August, as a kick-off point, the 125th tackled the port problem in depth. Their range of interest went from classroom and on-the-job training for stevedores to sanitation and preventive medicine, including a civilian mess facility, employment policies and wages, cargo accounting, public works projects, and cargo handling planning; it would be a long, involved process, but dividends were there to be accrued. The task was broken down into two phases: Phase I was to develop an efficient terminal operation, while Phase II would be devoted to developing an efficient Port Authority, including projects to achieve economic analysis, financial management, operational and engineering planning, administration, executive training and promotional activities.<sup>36</sup>

(U) The advisory efforts of the 125th Terminal Comd had begun to show results by December. Cargo accounting procedures and a barge locator section made it possible to identify and locate cargo within the port. Physical improvements in the form of a successful clean-up campaign (250 truckloads of trash), the construction of messing and sanitary facilities for the dock workers, and medical facilities improved the stevedores' performance. Physical security and traffic control were improved. A sound comptroller section had been formed and a 1967 budget produced. The most significant effort was initiation of cargo planning, whereby ships' agents provided cargo stowage plans to the stevedore companies prior to the ships' arrivals. The stevedore company then presented an unloading plan to the Port Director for approval before the ship was called on berth for discharge. By the end of December plans were being submitted seven days in advance of ship arrival, thus facilitating unloading.<sup>37</sup>

#### The December Port Crisis

(S) In spite of the improved cargo-handling procedures, it became evident at the beginning of December that, despite the Premier's earlier statement that the decree of 28 July directing confiscation of cargo after 30 days would be enforced, there would be in fact no confiscation. In conjunction with the US Mission, COMUSMACV worked out a course of action. The Ambassador would present the Premier with a list of goods which had been in the port well over 30 days, and remind the Premier of his previous statement about enforcing the decree. The Ambassador would also indicate that the US intended to ask the GVN to deny further import licenses to importers whose goods remain in the port more than 30 days, since the purpose of the USAID/CIF imports was to provide goods for the RVN market; importers who did not move their goods did not deserve further imports financed by the US. The worst

THIS PAGE PROGRAM DECLASSIFIED  
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PAGE 726 OF 872 PAGES

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offenders would be blacklisted by letter from the Minister of Commerce for a set period of time. The Premier would be asked to approve these steps. SECSTATE approved and requested the Mission to inform the Premier that Washington had proposed a two-month moratorium on USAID/CIP cargo shipments to Vietnam. This step was drastic, he admitted, but why ship goods that could not be moved through the port?<sup>38</sup>

(S) On 2 December SECDEF requested that COMUSMACV prepare a contingency plan for US take-over of the operation of the Saigon port. On 13 December a joint White House/State/AID/Defense message advised that Washington plans were for COMUSMACV to take over complete operation of the Saigon port by 1 February 1967, if feasible, and in any case not later than 1 March. If the GVN failed to demonstrate dramatic improvement in the commercial port situation within a few days, the Ambassador was to propose to Premier Ky that COMUSMACV take over complete operation of the port, including disposition of goods left beyond prescribed time limits and black-listing of violating importers. He was to explain that with the port in its present condition, US agencies concerned could not support GVN, US, and other forces, could not import enough goods to check inflation, and could not justify the "appalling" situation to members of Congress who were seeing it with their own eyes. CINCPAC requested COMUSMACV to comment on the additional personnel and equipment which would be required, and to advise what impact the take-over would have on military operations if personnel ceilings were maintained at presently programmed levels.<sup>39</sup>

(S) The contingency plan prepared by the 4th Trans Comd and forwarded by COMUSMACV was based on the same assumptions as the one prepared in May. The concept of operations was that to insure an adequate flow of all cargo (USAID/CIP and commercial) through the Saigon commercial port, the following major responsibilities would be assumed by the US military: planning the discharge of all cargo; establishing berthing priorities; supervising and controlling discharge operations and terminal handling; performing port clearance; establishing and operating bonded intransit facilities outside the immediate port area; notifying importers of cargo availability for release from the intransit facility; disposing of goods left beyond the prescribed time limit; documenting and accounting for all cargo handled; and operation of the commercial port under a revolving fund concept. To accomplish this, a firm government-to-government agreement would have to be executed which would give the US military sufficient authority to deal with government agencies and vessel operators or their agents; to insure rapid flow of goods and to prevent interference with the movement of cargo into the economy of RVN by such agencies as Customs, Harbor Police, National Police, or commercial enterprises.<sup>40</sup>

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PAGE 227 OF 872 PAGES

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COMUSMACV concurrently forwarded an evaluation of the impact of this plan. Additional troop units and additional troops required for the accomplishment of the plan were not available in-country, nor were they approved in SECDEF Programs. Any action to draw these troop requirements from current assets would have significant adverse impact on current military port and other related operations in RVN. Should this plan be approved by SECDEF, MACV would be required to submit organizations and units as new force requirements. A vehicular capability to move 63,350 S/T of cargo per month ultimately would be required, which would reduce military combat support capability by an equivalent amount unless such capability could be provided contractually. Government-to-government agreements were considered essential so that appropriate actions be enacted by GVN to promote expeditious port clearance. The social implications and loss of confidence by the populace in the current GVN appeared to be a by-product of any US military take-over of the civil sector of Saigon port. Implementation of the plan, step-by-step to its final phase, would probably make the port of Saigon fluid, but would not necessarily solve the problem of getting the goods into the hands of the consumer; it would simply transfer the point of congestion from the port to warehouses outside the port. Implementation of this plan would be counter to US revolutionary development and nation building programs, in that it would not prepare the GVN to assume the operation of Saigon Port in the future. Military take-over of this vital civilian function could lead to the US being branded as colonialist instead of a nation builder. Accordingly, COMUSMACV recommended against the implementation of the plan.

(B) During this critical period, labor disputes arose involving the Saigon port. A strike threatened in late November over wages, but did not materialize when satisfactory negotiations were conducted. However, the unions had demanded that stevedores who had been laid off because of the military operation of Newport be rehired for two weeks in accordance with GVN labor laws. A communique was issued on 7 December stating that the workers had been rehired, but establishing Newport as a military activity. On 20 December the unions again met with GVN and US officials about work at Newport. The Dock Workers Union said they would not honor the decisions made previously and stated in the communique, as they had not been consulted. After US authorities remained firm in terminating the Newport contract, as long planned. on 22 December, the Secretary General of the Saigon Workers Union (CVT) made the parting remark that he could no longer "guarantee the peace of the dock workers."<sup>42</sup>

(C) The Vietnamese dock workers' last shift at Newport ended at 1730 hours on 22 December. During the day a group of 40 to 60 dock workers lingered in the Newport area, but there were no

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PAGE 728 OF 822 PAGES

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disturbances. It was rumored that a sitdown strike would be held and that a march on Newport would be organized. The next day a group of workers, varying in number from 40 to 300, milled around outside the fence at Newport and a few signs were hung on the fence, but work continued undisturbed at Newport as well as in the Saigon port. On 24 December the signs came down and the demonstrators dwindled to 30 or 40.<sup>43</sup>

(C) A meeting with unions, stevedore companies, GVN labor Ministry, US military, and Mission representatives on 23 December tried to clear the air. The Dock Workers Union objected to loss of jobs at Newport; fearing that US military personnel, without any Vietnamese assistance, would handle more and more cargo, the union insisted on drawing the line at Newport to stop the trend. The stevedore company said it worked where the military ordered, and so its hands were tied. Military representatives said that Newport had been planned and built as a military port, where US military would handle cargo, and that no change in that high-level decision was possible at that late date. But it was becoming increasingly clear that the Newport dispute was only partially a labor dispute; it was a skirmish in the much larger business and political battle affecting control of the whole port of Saigon. On 31 December the US Army's contract with the six major stevedoring companies in the Port of Saigon would expire. Negotiations were underway at that time for short-term (one to three months) renewal of this contract. Stevedore companies feared that in bidding, other stevedores might take away their lucrative contracts. The Saigon Dock Union had ties--some strong, some weak--with the six stevedore companies. It was charged, even by the CVT president, that leaders of the Saigon Dock Workers Union were paid off by the stevedore companies; whether this was true or not, the fact was that the union and the companies had strong common interest in seeing that the Saigon Port's status quo was not disturbed. They had a particularly strong interest in making sure that Korean contractors and Korean workers did not move in. The Labor Inspector told US representatives that if they could assure the dock workers that Army contracts with companies would be renewed, the union's "main worry" would be relieved. The issue was further complicated because of a falling-out between two CVT officials, including the president, and two top men in both the Saigon CVT Council and in the Dock Union.<sup>44</sup>

(U) At 0900 hours on 26 December the stevedores went on strike. All unloading stopped in the military sector of the Saigon port, and partially stopped in the commercial sector. Work at the Nha Be ammunition discharge complex continued uninterrupted, as did unloading at Newport, which was a US military operation. Preparations had been made for the US military to operate the military sector of the Saigon port, but the Ambassador requested that the military not move in at time, in order to permit the GVN Labor Minister to discharge his

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PAGE 729 OF 872 PAGES

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responsibility. The real basis of the strike was still unknown, but the stated union reason was the stevedores' desire for continued civilian employment at Newport.<sup>45</sup>

(U) By the morning of 27 December all unloading, commercial and military, had halted. At 0730 the Ambassador granted permission for US military personnel to begin discharging military cargoes in the military section of the Saigon port, and at 0815 the first cargo was moved without incident. Later the Mission Council agreed that the military should continue to operate the Saigon military sector until the civilian workers returned, at which time the military would withdraw. In the interim, the Mission would continue to apply pressure on the GVN to get it to settle the strike. Negotiations with the union continued throughout the day, without success; the unions insisted on civilian hire at Newport, and the Labor Ministry and US officials maintained that that issue was decided and not open to negotiations.<sup>46</sup>

(C) Direct hire (non-union) workers were still on the job, but by 28 December were requesting permission to stop work because of threats against themselves and their families, and they were allowed to leave. Since the duration of the strike could not be predicted, COMUSMACV requested that shipments from CONUS to Saigon be curtailed by 50 percent, in anticipation of a backlog in February 1967 when future shipments would arrive. Plans were finalized to supplement US military cargo operations by air movement of one transportation service company from Okinawa and one from Cam Ranh (later changed to Qui Nhon), and USN personnel and equipment from Da Nang.<sup>47</sup>

(S) The GVN started to move from the sidelines into the arena on 28 December. The Premier had expressed his displeasure with the strike to the GVN officials involved, and a government communique was issued urging the workers to return to work. The Premier had summoned the Port Director and the National Police Director to give them instructions, but no positive results were seen and the dock workers union was threatening to extend the strike to other ports and industries. Immediate airlift of the 154th Trans Co from Okinawa was requested.<sup>48</sup>

(C) Activity on all fronts increased on 29 December. COMUSMACV alerted COMNAVFORV and desired to know what assistance could be provided by in-country USN personnel, and when. COMNAVSUPPACT Da Nang replied for COMNAVFORV that 100 men were "ready now." The first elements of USA personnel arrived from Qui Nhon in the early afternoon, and the USN personnel from Da Nang were scheduled to arrive on the next day. The Premier was reported to be in full support of the US position on Newport as a military port, and suggested that the US make a "gesture" to help the workers. The USA civilian personnel director made a concrete offer that the USA was ready to order the stevedore company to hire the 288

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PAGE 230 OF 872 PAGES

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additional workers displaced from Newport to augment the company's operation at the Saigon port. The Mission felt that the leader of CVT's position was weakening; no other unions in Saigon had struck as threatened, nor had dock workers struck other ports. However, it was rumored that the Saigon bus workers would strike the following day. The Premier later instructed the National Police Director to change his "hands off" policy toward the strike, as it was encouraging the strikers.<sup>49</sup>

(C) The General Secretary of CVT called a general strike for 30 December, but it "fizzled." No more than 3,000 workers walked out in sympathy with the 5,000 dock workers. At a meeting with the unions, the USA civilian personnel director put in writing his previous offer concerning jobs for 288 stevedores, and the union agreed to resume work on the 2000 shift that night. The workers reported as agreed, and by 0800 the next morning, port operation was back to normal civilian operation of the Saigon port and military operation of Newport. The additional USN and USA personnel had arrived from Da Nang and Okinawa; not being needed, the USN personnel returned to Da Nang.<sup>50</sup>

(S) The year ended with much left to do in the Saigon port. Twenty-nine ships with commercial cargoes were waiting at anchor to get into Saigon. Contingency plans had been drawn up for a complete take-over by COMUSMACV and pressures were still rising in Washington for just this action. In COMUSMACV's view the eventual solution to commercial jamming of the Saigon port was strong action by the GVN. As 1966 ended, COMUSMACV made this point to the Ambassador:

A US military take-over of the civilian sector of the Saigon Port would involve much more than the apparent physical operation. I recommend that you take every possible action to prevent this unnecessary disruption of the internal civilian operation of the Republic of Vietnam. Our course of action should be to continue to assist the Vietnamese in every possible way to increase the flow of customs cargo out of the port rather than taking the job away from them.<sup>51</sup>

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PAGE 731 OF 872 PAGES

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Footnotes

1. Material in the introduction is taken primarily from MACJ44 Study (C), Subj: Port Development Program, RVN, 5 Dec 66 (U), and US-MACV Command History (TS), 1965. Additional sources are identified.
2. USN Hydrographic Office, Chart H. O. 3150. Locations of Facilities center on: FISHMARKET 10°45'24"N - 106°43'13" W; Commercial Port 10°45'30"N 106°42'25" W; Newport 10°47'15" N 106°42'50" W.
3. New York Times, 6 Jan 66, p. 3.
4. Salt Lake City Tribune, 8 Jan 66, p; 14; Philadelphia Inquirer, 9 Jan 66, p. 10.
5. Msg (U), SECDEF to COMUSMACV 131357Z Jun 66, Subj: Port of Saigon Operations; Msg (C), COMUSMACV to SECDEF 190417Z Jan 66, Same Subj.
6. Memo (C), MACJ4 021, 4 Jan 66, Subj: Operation of Saigon Port.
7. Briefing (S), MACJ4, 11 Jan 66.
8. Briefing (S), MACJ4, 25 Feb 66; General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 27 Mar 66.
9. Mission Council Action Memo No 60 (S), 6 Apr 66; General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 9 Apr 66.
0. Mission Council Action Memo No 66 (S), 26 Apr 66.
11. Memorandum of Understanding, COMUSMACV and USAID (U), 20 Apr 66.
12. Msg (S), SECSTATE 4-3932-B, 30 Apr 66, Subj: Port Congestion (U).
13. Msg (S), JCS to CINCPAC 041916Z May 66, Subj: Port Congestion in Vietnam (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC to JCS 070810Z May 66, Same Subj.
14. Msg (S), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC 120750Z May 66, Subj: Port Congestion in Vietnam (U).
15. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 18 May 66.
16. Embtel (S), Saigon 7753, 16 May 66.
17. Msg (S), CINCPAC to COMUSMACV 180315Z May 66, Subj: Saigon Port Operation (U).
18. Ltr (S), COMUSMACV 00932, 29 May 66, Subj: Saigon Port Operations (U).

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19. Ibid.
20. Study (S), MACJ48, 262200Z May 66.
21. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 5 Jun 66.
22. Embtel (S), Saigon 6-1171-A, 9 Jun 66, Subj: Saigon Port (U).
23. Emotel (S), Saigon 6-1320-A, 10 Jun 66, Subj: Saigon Port (U); General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 12 Jun 66.
24. Msg (S), SECDEF 132242Z Jun 66, Subj: US Military Operation of Saigon Port (U).
25. Msg (S), COMUSMACV 161150Z Jun 66, Subj: US Military Operation of Saigon Port; Msg (S), COMUSMACV 191200Z Jun 66, Same Subj; Msg (S), SECDEF 190108Z Jun 66, Same Subj; Msg (S), SECSTATE 210118Z Jun 66, Subj: Saigon Port Phase I (U); Msg, JCS 222132Z Jun 66, Subj: Saigon Port (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC 252333Z Jun 66, Same Subj.
26. Msg (S), SECSTATE 212350Z Jun 66; Msg (S), COMUSMACV 261311Z Jun 66; Embtel (S), Saigon 6-2562-A, 21 Jun 66; General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 22 Jun 66.
27. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 3 Jul 66; Msg (S), COMUSMACV 040810Z Jul 66, Subj: Military Operation of Saigon Port (U); Msg (S), COMUSMACV 060259Z Jul 66, Same Subj.
28. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 10 Jul 66.
29. Msg (G), COMUSMACV 091030Z Jul 66, Subj: Saigon Port (U).
30. Msg (S), COMUSMACV 301156Z Jul 66, Subj: Saigon Port (U); Embtel (S), Saigon 021145Z Aug 66, Subj: Port Clearance - Distressed Cargo; Msg (S), SECSTATE 260303Z Jul 66, Subj: Saigon Port (U).
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32. Embtel (S), Saigon 031221Z Oct 66, Subj: Thanh and Hanh on Port (S); MFR, 4th TC AVCA-TC-20, 14 Sep 66; Mission Council Action Memo (S), 15 Sep 66; General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 8 Oct 66.
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PAGE 733 OF 872 PAGES

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35. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 6 Nov 66 and 11 Nov 66; Embtel (S), Saigon 031221Z Oct 66; Msg (S), SECSTATE 050240Z Oct 66; Embtel (S), Saigon 080439Z Sep 66. Subj: Saigon Port; Msg (S), COMUSMACV 010754Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port (U); Embtel (S), Saigon 251000Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port (U); MFR, 4th Trans Comd, 17 Jan 67.
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37. Ibid.
38. Msg (S), SECSTATE 070300Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port.
39. Embtel (C), Saigon 2098, 9 Dec 66; Msg (S), SECDEF 022021Z Dec 66; Msg (S), JCS 032002Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port Plan (U); Msg (S), SECSTATE 130345Z Dec 66; Msg (S), CINCPAC 140327Z Dec 66, Subj: Port Operations - Saigon (U).
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42. MFR (FOUO), 4th Trans Comd AVCA-TA-CG, 21 Dec 66.
43. Embtel (C), Saigon 221130Z Dec 66; Embtel (C), Saigon 240600Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port.
44. Ibid.
45. Msg (U), COMUSMACV 260726Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port Strike.
46. Msg (U), COMUSMACV 270704Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port Strike; MFR (U), 4th Trans Comd AVCA-TC-CG, Jan 67, Subj: Chronology of Labor Dispute, Saigon Port.
47. Ibid; Msg (C), COMUSMACV to PANPA Oakland, 281055Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port Strike (U).
48. Embtel (S), Saigon 281100Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port Strike (U); Msg (C), CG USARV to CG 2d Log Comd, 281224Z Dec 66, Subj: Deployment of 154 TC Co (C).
49. Msg (C), COMUSMACV 290224Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port Strike (U); Msg (C), COMNAVSUPPACT DaNang 290715Z Dec 66, Same Subj; Msg (U), COMUSMACV 300922Z Dec 66, Subj: Saigon Port Strike 29 Dec SITREP; Embtel (C), Saigon 290530Z Dec 66, Subj: Port Strike (U).

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PAGE 735 OF 872 PAGES  
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ANNEX D--THE HOP TAC SECRETARIAT

(C) In early 1964, the Viet Cong, challenged by GVN pacification success, concentrated its activities on fragmenting and disrupting GVN control in the city of Saigon and the immediate surrounding provinces. The situation in the Saigon plain during this period was obviously deteriorating: 50 percent of all VC-initiated incidents were occurring within a 50-mile radius of the city. In order to inhibit VC activities in the Saigon area and to secure the national capital complex as a rear base, Ambassador Lodge and COMUSMACV prepared a plan, approved at the Honolulu Conference in May 1964, to achieve these objectives: During the period May to October 1964, the plan was presented to and accepted by the GVN. The Vietnamese chose for the operation the word HOP TAC, meaning literally "many working together," a name quite appropriate for an activity which was to require a combined US/GVN military-civic effort.<sup>1</sup>

(U) A US/GVN military and civilian planning staff was established to develop detailed plans and to assign missions; this staff was designated the HOP TAC Secretariat. It consisted of a chairman, who was the personal representative of the Chief, Joint General Staff, RVNAF; the commanders of the three major commands in the HOP TAC area--Capital Military Region (CMR), Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ), and III Corps Tactical Zone (III CTZ)--and ministerial representation from the GVN. The mission of HOP TAC was, in essence, to pacify the surrounding area adjacent to the capital. The HOP TAC area, located within the III CTZ, encompassed the province of Gia Dinh in the center, the southern three districts of Binh Duong to the north, Bien Hoa Province to the east, the western three districts of Phuoc Tuy Province and the RSSZ to the southeast, Long An Province to the south, and Hau Nghia Province to the west.<sup>2</sup>

(U) The initial concept of operations for accomplishment of the HOP TAC mission was to:

- 1) Expand outward from Saigon, following the spreading oil drop concept.
- 2) Use existing operations adjacent to Gia Dinh as stepping stones.

PAGE 216 OF 872 PAGES

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3) Conduct clearing operations to prepare for successful securing operations.

4) Conduct coordinated search-and-destroy operations in support of clearing and securing.<sup>3</sup>

(U) HOP TAC was to follow closely what have become established Revolutionary Development principles. The clearing operations were designed to find, fix, and destroy or drive off VC organized main force and guerrilla units. The technique used was area saturation by patrolling and ambushing. The clearing phase was followed by the securing phase which stressed the use of platoon and squad patrols and ambushes. In this phase it was necessary to discover and render the VC secret-cell infrastructure ineffective. When the security phase conditions improved, the ARVN forces were replaced by the RF/PF. The third or development phase, which consisted of social, economic, and political activities, was to attempt to strengthen and improve local governments, the end result being "nation building."<sup>4</sup>

(C) The HOP TAC operation got underway in September 1964, and in October numerous visits were made to the HOP TAC provinces by deputies of USAID, USIS, and MACV. The conclusions of their report revealed the difficulty in energizing a program with the scope of HOP TAC. "Generally speaking, HOP TAC, as a program, does not appear to exist as a unified and meaningful operation . . . a long tough, slow process of mobilization and organization lies ahead."<sup>5</sup> During November and December, however, the learning process began to pay dividends: cadres became more effective, rallies to the Chieu Hoi appeals increased, police capabilities more than doubled, and confiscation of supplies reached an all-time high. At the end of 1964 HOP TAC was one of the few pacification areas that showed some success and greater promise.

(C) In October 1964 the VC strength located within or on the periphery of the HOP TAC area included three regiments, five separate battalions, six separate companies, and 14 separate platoons. During 1965 the VC began a large-scale buildup of their forces in reaction to early success of HOP TAC. By mid-summer of 1965 they had increased the strength of their forces by about 65 percent and had equipped main force units with CHICOM weapons. The growth continued through 1966; by the year's end the confirmed enemy strength was six regiments, seven separate battalions, 14 separate companies, and 15 separate platoons within or on the periphery of the HOP TAC area. These VC strength increases required additional ARVN forces to counter them; ARVN grew from 28 battalions in October 1964 to 34 in December 1966, within the HOP TAC area, and an additional 14 battalions operating in the bordering provinces. The RF increased by six percent, PF by

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PAGE 737 OF 872 PAGES Order Sec Army By TAG per

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25 percent, and National Police by 21 percent during the same period. To augment these forces, further US forces were utilized on operations in provinces within and bordering the HOP TAC area.<sup>6</sup>

(S) In early 1965 COMUSMACV had felt that there was urgent need to consider major changes that could drastically stiffen the GVN and give forward momentum to pacification; he was seeking the best means of making a dramatic improvement in concept, organization, and discipline of the pacification effort. The HOP TAC program had come to a standstill; the problem was not enough GVN support. In order to gain wider interest, COMUSMACV suggested that the HOP TAC idea might be extended to each of the other three CTZ's, with priority areas established in each CTZ.<sup>7</sup>

(S) On 3 April 1965, Minister of Armed Forces Maj Gen Tran Van Minh directed the I, II, and IV Corps commanders to develop HOP TAC type plans for each of their CTZ's. HOP TAC-like areas were selected by the individual Corp commanders: in I Corps, the Da Nang area; in II Corps, the Qui Nhon area; and in IV Corps, the Can Tho area. COMUSMACV recognized that the problems in these CTZ's differed from those in the original HOP TAC area. Special organizational arrangements did not have as great importance as had been the case in the original HOP TAC area. Under the new organization for rural reconstruction, the Corps commanders had the requisite authority to follow through and correct any matter that might be obstructing progress. It was critically important that the US advice and support be consistent, and attuned to the Corps civilian-police-military plan.<sup>8</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV maintained that for success in any of the Corps HOP TAC operations, there must be:

- 1) Full integration of the civilian-military-police efforts under unified direction.
- 2) Adequate and timely GVN support in accordance with local plans and requirements, not Saigon-developed programs and desires.
- 3) Military support for clearing and support operations, committed on a long-term basis.
- 4) Expansion, not pushed ahead on arbitrary schedules, but paced to the development of lasting security as provided by RF/PF.
- 5) District and province authority; these were the key echelons in rural reconstruction, but their efforts had to be coordinated by local HOP TAC councils.<sup>9</sup>

PAGE 738 OF 822 PAGES

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(S) The HOP TAC organization, COMUSMACV felt, was unique in providing a forum for the military and civilian officials to address common problems. He also felt that the program received good publicity, stressing that regardless of losses elsewhere, pacification programs had continued in the original HOP TAC area. The problems which beset the program were to a large degree national in scope, and outside the control of the HOP TAC organization, which was a coordinating body dealing with problems which cut across political and military boundaries and which by its very nature, generally interacted on two or more ministries. However, such a body was essential if problems of rural reconstruction in the capital complex were to be isolated and solved. Had it not existed, something similar would have had to be invented. The organization of HOP TAC was in being and COMUSMACV believed the HOP TAC concept remained sound. It provided a channel of communication from province to national level, by which top-level attention could expedite the solution of problems which otherwise would be lost in the administrative maze. The lack of government stability had had a heavy impact on the program; five governments had been in power during the program. This had caused numerous personnel and organization changes; as an example, 28 of the 31 district chiefs had been replaced during the period. Militarily there were three major VC strongholds on the periphery of HOP TAC: War Zone D to the north and northeast; the Phu Hoa/Ho Bo/Boi Loi safe haven to the northwest; and the Plain of Reeds to the west. The presence of these strongholds, and the need to meet the threat emanating from them, diverted military effort from within HOP TAC.<sup>10</sup>

(S) By the end of 1965, the inclusion of the HOP TAC area in the National Priority Area (NPA) for the III CTZ, and other developments related to the 1966 program, necessitated changes in the HOP TAC program. Consideration was given to the possibility of MACV's turning the program over to another Mission agency, but COMUSMACV emphasized the necessity of keeping "hands off" the existing GVN organization of the HOP TAC.<sup>11</sup>

(S) In early June 1966 the HOP TAC Secretariat informed J3 MACV that the GVN had taken steps to dissolve the Capital Military Region and place Gia Dinh Province under the command of the CG III CTZ. The command structure within the HOP TAC area was reorganized on 7 June. According to RVNAF JGS Memorandum the new "Capital Military District" would include Saigon, Gia Dinh Province, and the Con Son Special Zone; it would be subordinate to III CTZ and would be considered equivalent to a Division Tactical Area.<sup>12</sup>

(S) On 25 June, J3 MACV advised COMUSMACV that the time had come to inform the Mission Council and the GVN that the HOP TAC Council had been overtaken by new developments in the III CTZ and should be dissolved. These developments included the reorganization

PAGE 771 OF 872 PAGES

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of the command structure affecting the HT area on 7 June, wherein the CMR became the CMD and was placed under the command of the III Corps, and the assumption of the chairmanship of the HOP TAC Council by the new III CTZ commander, Gen Khang. Gen Khang confirmed that the HOP TAC Council Resident Chairman, Brig Gen Dzu, would act as both the Deputy Chairman of the HOP TAC Council and the III Corps RD Council; as Gen Dzu was currently reporting to CG III Corps, it was felt that the Senior Advisor to III Corps should, under the new command structure, also assume the advisory responsibilities connected with the HOP TAC program. CG III Corps had access to ministry representation required to coordinate the civil functions in the HOP TAC area, and the Deputy Minister for RD confirmed that the HOP TAC program was being absorbed by the III CTZ RD program. It was noted however, that J3 JCS and CG III Corps felt that the HOP TAC Council should continue as organized until the end of 1966.<sup>13</sup>

(S) As a result of the recommendations from J3, COMUSMACV brought the matter before the Mission Council on 5 July. He summarized the purpose of the HOP TAC concept at its implementation two years before, and said that while it had enjoyed only modest success over the past two years, the situation in the area surrounding Saigon/Cholon would have been "comparatively worse today" without the HOP TAC arrangement. He described the recent organizational changes which had resulted in the CMR becoming the CMD (as part of the III CTZ), with Saigon remaining as an autonomous city. In view of these changes, he noted, there was some question of the validity of continuing with the original concept, particularly as III Corps now had both an RD Council and a HOP TAC Council, which resulted in some duplication of effort. COMUSMACV formally recommended dissolution of HOP TAC, and offered to Deputy Ambassador Porter the services of some of the US officers and NCO's who had been working with the HOP TAC Secretariat.<sup>14</sup>

(S) With the concurrence of the Mission Council, COMUSMACV sent a letter to Defense Minister Co describing the developments affecting the HOP TAC programs, and recommending that the HOP TAC Council be phased out and its responsibilities be assumed by the III Corps RD Council. Unofficial information received by COMUSMACV indicated that Gen Co agreed with the recommendation, but wished to hold up action on the matter until some time after the September elections. It appeared that the GVN remained reluctant to place all of the military forces located that close to the capital under the control of a single commander.<sup>15</sup>

(S) Although J3 MACV had recommended an August termination of the HOP TAC program, a later termination date would provide a period of transition from HOP TAC to the III Corps RD Council; during the phase-out period the HOP TAC Council would have a reduced reporting

PAGE 740 OF 872 PAGES

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function and a reduction of 15-20 percent of its personnel. On 24 August the Minister of Defense approved the recommended dissolution of the HOP TAC Planning Council as of the end of the calendar year. The HOP TAC Secretariat was officially terminated effective 31 December by MACV GO No. 2000, 27 December 1966.

(U) COMUSMACV evaluated the results of HOP TAC in a letter of appreciation to Col C. H. Armstrong, Jr., the last Senior Advisor of the HOP TAC Secretariat:

The many accomplishments of the HOP TAC Secretariat, throughout the HOP TAC area are reflected directly in the improved security and stability of the hamlets and people . . . . Although the HOP TAC Council and Secretariat have given way to the III Corps Revolutionary Development Council, their work has left a permanent record in the firm foundation laid for nation building, in the cooperative relationship established and strengthened between US and GVN agencies, and in the growing integration of their efforts by the separate agencies and ministries of the GVN.<sup>16</sup>

Footnotes

1. MACV Command History (TS), 1964; Msg (C), COMUSMACV 02728, 23 Jan 67, Subj: Appraisal of HOP TAC Operation (U); Briefing Notes (U), Col C. H. Armstrong, Jr., Sr Adv to HOP TAC Sec, n.d. (Jan 67), (hereafter cited as Armstrong briefing).
2. Armstrong Briefing; Msg (C), MACV 02728, 23 Jan 67. Subj: Appraisal of HOP TAC Operation (U).
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6. Msg (C), COMUSMACV 02728, 23 Jan 67, Subj: Appraisal of HOP TAC Operation (U).
7. Msg (S), CHJ45 MAGPHIL, Cite 1278, A/3, 18 Jun 65.
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  11. MFR (S), MACJO3, 25 Dec 64, Subj: Rural Construction Plan, AB 140  
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  12. DF (S), HOP TAC Secretariat, 11 Jun 66, Subj: Future Status of the  
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  14. Mission Council Memo 91 (S), 9 Jul 66, Subj: Minutes of the Mission  
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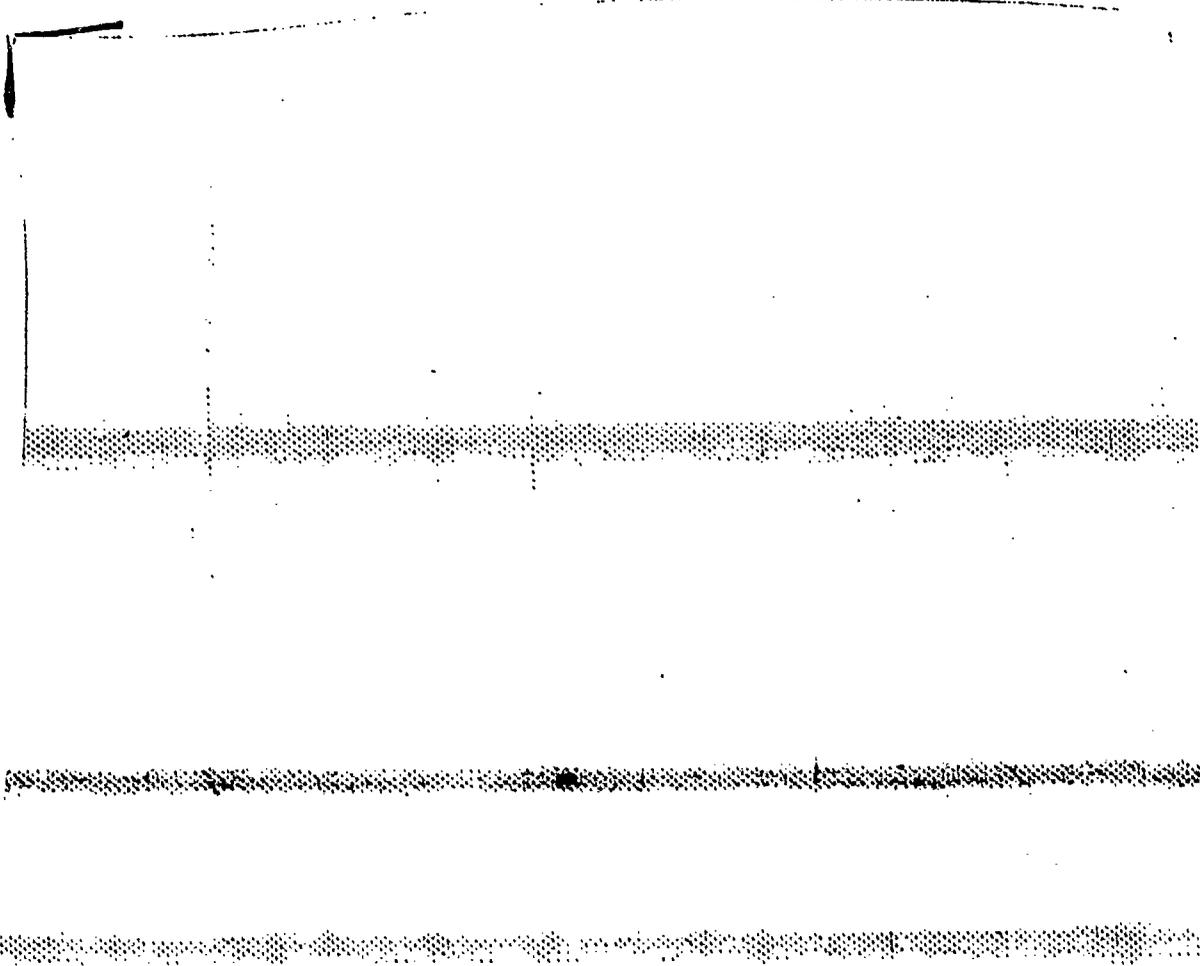
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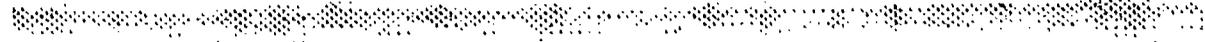
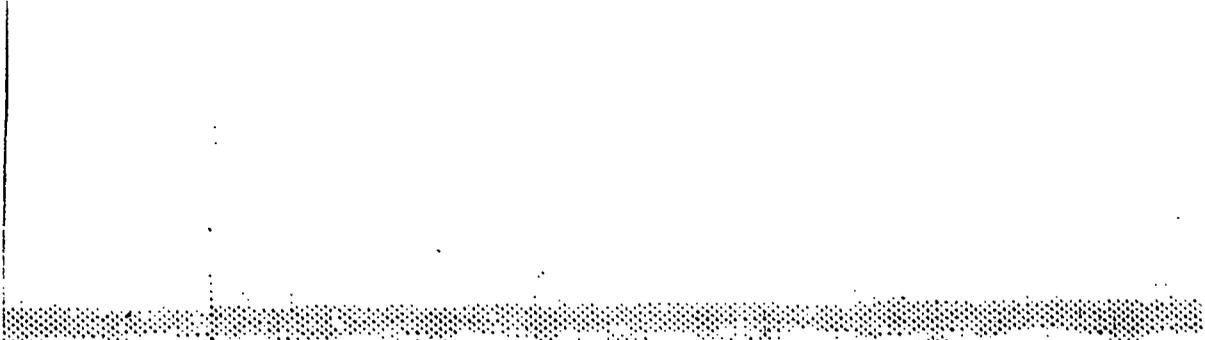
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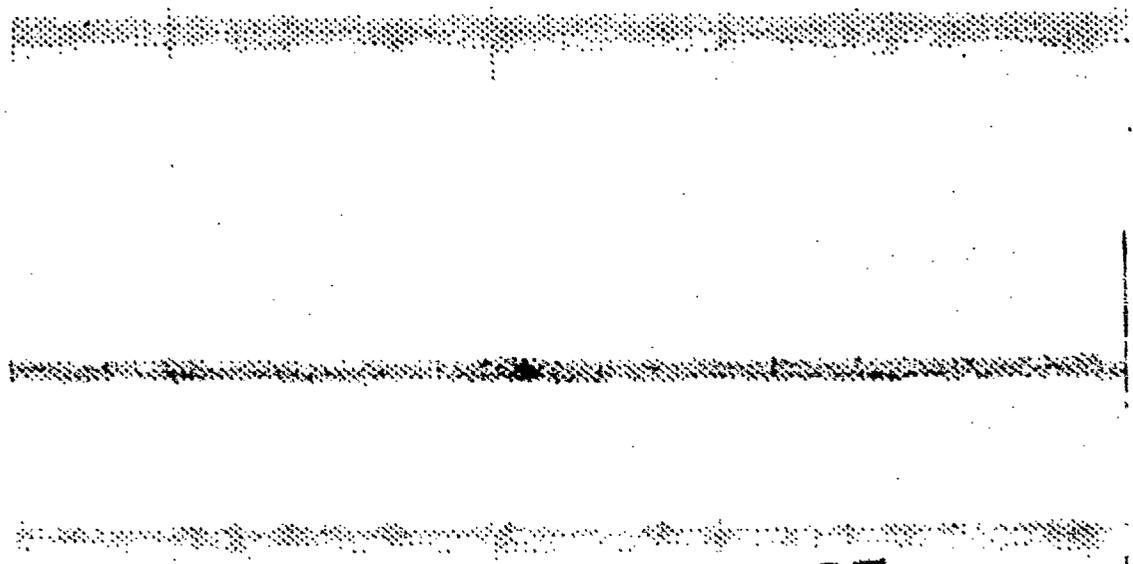
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8. All MACJ5 studies summarized are derived from DF (TS-ID, MACJ5 to Chief MHB, 20 Feb 67, Subj: MACV History 1966 (U).

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ANNEX F--CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

(U) By its very nature war is destructive, and historically civilians have suffered. But the war in Vietnam is different. It is fought among the people, many of whom are not, participants in, or even closely identified with, the struggle. People, more than terrain, are the objectives of this war, and we will not and cannot be callous about these people.<sup>1</sup>

(S) In a war so thoroughly covered by the news media, perhaps it was inevitable that the subject of civilian casualties should assume especial prominence. During 1966, over 150 civilian deaths resulted directly from military operations of the US and its FW allies. Often these casualties, resulting from error or from a deliberate attempt by the enemy to wage war while hiding behind the civilian population, were treated in the world's press as the only civilian casualties in RVN. Too little notice was given to the willful campaign of the enemy to terrorize civilians, to extort money from them, to induct them forcibly into military service, and to murder them when they resisted. In the summer of 1965 COMUSMACV had provided guidance to his subordinates which stressed that commanders "must strike a balance between the force necessary to accomplish their missions, with due regard to the safety of the commands, and the high importance of reducing to a minimum the casualties inflicted on the non-combatant populace."<sup>2</sup>

(S) In response to a SECDEF request, prompted by a report from the Chairman of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations that he had been unsuccessful in securing official data on civilian casualties in RVN, and that USAID had stated that no such estimate was available, COMUSMACV provided such data as he had. From August 1965 through February 1966, 109 civilians had been killed and 170 wounded as a result of US/FW military operations. At the same time, COMUSMACV informed SECDEF that procedures for handling compensation claims for death, injury, and property damages were well established, and that through rapid reporting of civilian casualties by BACKLASH reports,<sup>3</sup> the possible adverse effects of civilian casualties would be minimized.

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PAGE 756 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) COMUSMACV reflected that civilian casualties were:

. . . . the inevitable accidents that happen among the civilian population during the course of fighting a war throughout the countryside. Regrettably a number of civilians are killed accidentally despite efforts to prevent such sad occurrences. . This reminded me to again investigate measures to prevent noncombatant casualties. I believe that our directives are adequate, but perhaps additional emphasis should be placed on them. I have decided to do this by having the Inspector General make a special tour of the units, investigating compliance with these directives plus those concerning the orientation of troops in their conduct toward civilians and captives.<sup>4</sup>

(S) By March SECSTATE also had become very interested in civilian casualties. A report released by a Congressman stated that some operations resulted in six civilian casualties for every VC, and reached the extraordinary conclusion that a two-to-one civilian-to-VC ratio appeared likely. Press reports on civilian casualties continued to create adverse publicity in the US. During DEPSECDEF's visit to Saigon in early April, he was informed that it was practically impossible to obtain a reliable count of civilian casualties, and often that it was even difficult to tell whether a casualty was in fact a VC or a civilian. COMUSMACV explained the hopelessness of providing definite figures on the number of non-combatant casualties resulting from US combat operations; any attempts to develop valid statistics were difficult, and the results were unreliable. While criticism could never be silenced entirely, it could be countered somewhat by publicizing the casualties of the VC terror campaign.<sup>5</sup>

(S) In late April a report submitted to SECDEF provided the conclusions of a comprehensive study of the question of civilian casualties. The six-to-one or two-to-one ratio of civilian-to-VC casualties cited in Congressional comments were erroneous, and indications were that US/PWMA forces operations caused only a fraction of those caused by the VC. Even these indications were qualified by the difficulty of determining which casualties were non-combatants, as well as whose fire caused them. US and PWMA forces adopted unusual measures to avoid civilian casualties, while consideration of the problem was likely to emphasize the cause of civilian casualties. The study recommended that no civilian casualty reporting requirements be placed on MACV beyond those already in effect.<sup>6</sup>

(S) While COMUSMACV was confronted by non-combatant deaths stemming from US and Allied combat operations, he also was asked constantly about news reports inaccurately reflecting civilian casualties. COMUSMACV

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PAGE 257 OF 772 PAGES

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commented about one such questioning:

. . . a delegation of three members of the New Zealand Parliament called and expressed great interest in my appraisal of the situation. One member had been reading US newspapers and had concluded that a great number of civilians were being killed on the battlefield by American troops. I believe that I convinced him that this was exaggerated and blown out of all proportion.<sup>7</sup>

(U) During July and August there occurred a rash of unfortunate accidents and incidents involving air firepower in which non-combatants were killed. As firepower was increasing constantly in-country, there were concurrently greater risks in operations conducted in the vicinity of non-combatants. It was prudent that every conceivable step be taken to use firepower with discrimination by setting up appropriate controls so as to avoid mishaps. Yet it was recognized that if firepower was to be effective it had to react rapidly against the elusive enemy. The problem was to set up controls in order to provide for the necessary safety, but not to inhibit rapid reaction of firepower against the enemy. Although accidents during July and August resulted in many Vietnamese civilian casualties, there was no apparent trend or pattern in these occurrences and they constituted less than one percent of the total strikes against the enemy during the period. COMUSMACV had already directed that all existing instructions pertaining to air strikes and artillery attacks be reviewed and republished quarterly. A system of compensatory payments and remuneration to victims had been developed and was found to be responsive.<sup>8</sup>

(S) By August MACV directives required that all targets be approved by the province chief directly or through higher authority. Air strikes would not be executed if identification of friendly forces was in doubt. All pilots would have knowledge of the disposition of friendly troops and/or civilians prior to conducting a strike. Control by an air liaison officer (ALO) or forward air controller (FAC), MSQ-77 or TPQ-10 (ground control radars) was required, except that FAC's were always required for strikes on villages. These rules generally had been observed in the conduct of the air operations involving those in which accidents occurred. In no case, with the possible exception of a DMZ incident and the air attack on the USCGS Point Welcome, were the rules disregarded. The incidents had involved almost every element of the entire spectrum of weapons and weapons systems employed. Every conceivable type of accident had occurred; there was no common denominator. Nevertheless, when it became apparent that such incidents were increasing, COMUSMACV dispatched to all commanders instructions to review all control procedures, and to reemphasize the importance of

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the procedures to all personnel. Further, he instructed a board of officers to review and analyze all control procedures, and to republish directives with certain additional controls. Previous directives had been published on 2 July 1965, 20 December 1965, 6 February 1966, and 28 June 1966.

(S) On 27 August the III CTZ DASC issued changes in rules of engagement. Immediate requests for air strikes against targets, other than close support of ARVN/FW forces engaged in specified operations, or installations, outposts, and units under attack, would "be closely supervised by the DASC deputy director, and by sector and Corps ALO's." Targets would not be struck if the possibility of friendly casualties existed. DASC, ALO's and FAC's would insure that rules of engagement were applied rigidly to gain absolute minimum risk of friendly casualties or incidents which might be exploited by the VC. Strikes in specified strike zones not associated with a specific military operation would not be made by USAF FAC's or aircraft unless the target was positively identified and approved by RVN military/political authorities. Rockets on O-1E aircraft would be fired only to mark targets for fighter strikes and would not be used for harassment or interdictions. FAC's would not fire guns from inside the aircraft. If the ALO/FAC acquired a target that was in any way doubtful, no air strikes would be made. Ground fire directed at the FAC would not be sufficient justification for calling an air strike.<sup>10</sup>

(S) With respect to ARVN, any FAC-generated immediate request would be coordinated with and concurred in by the division commander or his representative, plus the senior advisor and the division ALO, prior to submission to the DASC. FAC-generated immediate requests by the FFORCEV's would be coordinated and concurred in by the division G-3 Air, and the division ALO would advise and assist in the coordination. It was recognized that ARVN/VNAF system could proceed on its own, but in such cases the US FAC would not direct the strike. Emphasis was placed on the instruction not to "proceed into the unknown." Thorough and careful analysis of the target by the FAC and the ALO, and cross coordination with their counterparts at all levels would provide all echelons the necessary air support and render the essential positive control. Compliance with and strict adherence to MACV rules of engagement would allow success as well as safety of missions.<sup>11</sup>

(S) On 7 September COMUSMACV again expressed his concern and instructed unit commanders to exercise safety precautions to preclude incidents and to take all possible steps to minimize adverse effects when they did occur. Immediate action would be taken to repair damage and alleviate suffering; letters of condolence would be prepared and sent to the victims or next of kin by appropriate commanders. In cases involving extensive damages, pertinent data would be provided to COMUSMACV to enable him to prepare personal letters to those concerned.<sup>12</sup>

PAGE 759 OF 872 PAGES

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(U) COMUSMACV continued to be concerned about the inaccuracy of news items reporting civilian casualties. Several newspapers contributed to this with articles concerning the incidents of July and August. Inaccurate news reporting could be as bothersome as actual hostility. An article appearing in the New York Times on 30 August quoted a figure of 63 persons dying in a 9 August air raid on two hamlets near Can Tho. In actuality, 24 civilians died in that accident and 82 were injured. The Newport Press of 27 August reported that an accidental "napalm bombing was the 16th reported 'unfortunate incident' since 1 July. In these errors of battle more than 150 people, mostly civilians, have been killed." Official figures showed that 56 civilians were killed and 185 wounded.<sup>13</sup>

(U) Perhaps the best answer to press criticism in the field of civilian casualties would prove to be other segments of the press. On 27 August the Denver Post contained an article which refuted allegations of American brutality and atrocities. Pointing out that constant Red propaganda, often aided unwittingly by our news media which give it circulation, was a factor, the paper went on to say:

Then the publishers of some of our newspapers are bitterly opposed to our presence and effort in Vietnam. Their reporters and photographers in the war zone, being human, send back material tending to support the well known editorial policies of their papers. Strangely, one rarely sees in such papers anything critical of the Reds, such as the fact that they murdered 12,000 South Vietnamese civilians last year. This newspaper group, while not consciously disloyal, could scarcely do more harm if it were. It is the most influential segment of the anti-Vietnam bloc whose shrill protests are the prime reason Moscow, Peking, and Hanoi still believe the United States will quit. These critics must therefore share the blame for the continued conflict with the growing casualty lists.<sup>14</sup>

(C) Refined figures on Vietnamese civilian casualties resulting from military operations during 1966 showed the casualties to be:<sup>15</sup>

<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>KILLED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>	<u>MISSING</u>
Air (Fixed Wing)	83	185	0
Air (Rotary Wing)	16	29	2
Artillery	46	134	0
Small Arms	9	7	0
Naval Gunfire	0	0	0
Naval (Other Surface Craft)	2	4	0
Total 1966	156	359	2

PAGE 760 OF 872 PAGES

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(U) As the year wore on, concern over the question of civilian casualties appeared to abate. Other matters arose to demand attention: the Vietnamese Constituent Assembly election, the President's Asian trip, US Congressional and gubernatorial elections, and speculation that Christmas and New Year's truces would lead to peace in Vietnam. Even so, the question of civilian casualties was never really far out of mind. Indeed, all indications were that the subject would appear again with the coming of the New Year.

## Footnotes

1. COMUSMACV, as quoted by Eric Pace, "Civilians' Deaths Laid to Viet Cong," New York Times, 30 Aug 66.
2. Embtel (C), Saigon 2-210-A, 3 Feb 66.
3. Msg (C), NMCC from OASD (ISA), 022203Z Mar 66; Msg (C), COMUSMACV 031200Z Mar 66.
4. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 20 Mar 66.
5. Msg (S), COMUSMACV, MAGOI 10715, 041820Z Apr 66, Subj: DEPSECDEF News Backgrounder (U); Msg (S), CINCPAC 060147Z Apr 66, Subj: Civilian Casualties in RVN (U).
6. Memo (S), MACJ03, 00773, 3 May 66, Subj: Civilian Casualties in SVN (U).
7. General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 31 May 66.
8. Mission Council Action Memorandum No 112 (S), 24 Aug 66; MFR (U), General Westmoreland's Press Briefing, 24 Aug 66, Subj: Non-combatant Combat Casualties (U)
9. Msg (S), COMUSMACV 021450Z Aug 66, Subj: 7th AF JOFREP/OPREP-3/PINNACLE; Msg (S), IV Corps TOC, 101245Z Aug 66, Subj: Post Strike, Phong Dinh Sector, 091805 Aug 66; Msg (S), 7th AF, 170835Z Aug 66 Subj: 7th AF-JOFREP/OPREP-3/PINNACLE/OOS/CHG NER 2; Msg (S), SA IV Corps, 200540Z Aug 66, Subj: Air Strike, 9 Aug 66, Phong Dinh Sector; MFR (U) General Westmoreland's Press Briefing, 24 Aug 66, Subj: Non-combatant Combat Casualties (U); Msg (S), 7th AF, 111149Z Aug 66, Subj: 7th AF/JOFREP/OPREP-3/PINNACLE; Msg (S), 7th AF TACC 140801Z Aug 66.
10. Msg (S), COMUSMACV to Comdr IV CTZ Advisory Group, 191039Z Aug 66, Subj: ARC LIGHT Program 019 (U); Msg (S), III DASC, 270520Z Aug 66, Subj: Change in Rules of Engagement.
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12. Msg (S), COMUSMACV 070140Z Sep 66, Subj: Property Damage and Death or Personal Injury to Vietnamese Civilians (U)
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14. Denver Post, 27 Aug, "Why Do Reporters Prefer 'our' Atrocities to Reds?"
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ANNEX G--RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Organization and Responsibilities

(U) The Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), recognizing that the research and development community could do a great deal to enhance the immediate and future counterinsurgency capabilities, authorized the conduct of US Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RD&E), and Combat Development (CD) activities in RVN. The MACV theater provided a combat environment for data collection, research, analysis, development, and engineering, as well as operational tests of equipment, concepts, doctrine, and techniques. In April 1964 SECDEF approved the consolidation of all research and test activities in RVN into a single organization to be known as the Joint Research and Test Activity (JRATA). JRATA exercised operational control over the Advanced Research Project Agency's Research and Development Field Unit, Vietnam (ARPA RDFU-V); the Army Concept Team in Vietnam (ACTIV); the Air Force Test Unit, Vietnam (AFTU-V); and the US Navy Research and Development Unit, Vietnam (NRDU-V). Operational control over JRATA was vested in COMUSMACV.<sup>1</sup>

(C) At the time of JRATA's creation there had been no component commands as such within MACV. With establishment of the component commands, COMUSMACV was of the opinion that it would be appropriate to consider assignment of the JRATA test units to the component commanders, and the ARPA team to a MACV staff agency. These recommendations were submitted to CINCPAC on 29 June 1966. COMUSMACV's recommendations stemmed from the conviction that RDT&E and CD activities essentially were Service matters, and that component commanders were by then in a position to absorb the test units and to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The three Service test units (ACTIV, AFTU-V and NRDU-V) would be reassigned to their Service commanders. ARPA would continue to be a primary MACV agency to advise and support the development of indigenous RDT&E capability, and would provide the point of contact with US military Service test units to insure appropriate participation by BVNAF personnel in US testing and evaluation activities. Certain residual joint RDT&E functions of monitorship and control were assigned to MACJ3.<sup>2</sup>

(C) Despite his feeling that the components should absorb Service-oriented RDT&E activities, COMUSMACV felt the need for scientific technical advice on his own staff. He was keenly aware that the course of

PAGE 763 OF 872 PAGES

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the war was evolving to an ever-increasing degree the use of sophisticated weaponry and new scientific techniques, and he was eager to assist in any way possible the stimulation of the US scientific community toward this end. In May he had "made a film to be used as an introduction to a program to be shown to scientists and engineers in the area of research and development," and a few months later noted that he "was very much in support of the development of new weapons by the scientific and engineering communities." COMUSMACV was thus particularly receptive when in March 1966 the JCS had recommended that he establish on his staff a small group of technical advisors under the direction of a nationally-prominent scientist. The head of this group would serve as a scientific advisor to COMUSMACV, would be responsible to MACV, and would translate into appropriate language and action the scientific or engineering requirements growing out of the war in SEASIA. As JCS foresaw it, this group would operate in much the same fashion as had the Field Service Offices of the Office of Scientific Research and Development in WW II. COMUSMACV replied that this proposal conformed to a concept he had had in mind, and that he considered that such a group could make a positive contribution to MACV. CINCPAC felt, and COMUSMACV agreed, that a large number of civilian R&D personnel could not be accommodated in the theatre; it was recommended that not more than three civilians be employed as scientific consultants. JCS approved this concept and took steps to recruit a prominent scientist for the senior advisory position. JRATA was deactivated as of 15 November, and on 8 December the Office of the Science Advisor, HQ USMACV, was established, with Dr. William G. McKillán as the Chief.<sup>3</sup>

(U) The functions of the Office of the Science Advisor were to monitor and conduct independent review of R&D activities within MACV and to make recommendations to COMUSMACV as appropriate; to review and make recommendations to COMUSMACV concerning new equipment of a scientific and technical nature; to monitor and coordinate the activities of scientific and technical personnel on duty in RVN; to maintain contact with OSD's Director of Defense Research and Engineering on scientific and technical matters; to be alert to possible new applications of advanced technology deserving of increased R&D emphasis; and to exercise staff supervision over ARPA's RDPV-V.<sup>4</sup>

(U) Under the overall supervision of JRATA until its deactivation, the three Service RDT&E units tested new concepts and new materiel during 1966, as well as trying to devise better ways to employ older weapons and equipment. JRATA published progress reports in January and July, and a wrap-up report in November, covering in detail most of the activities summarized in succeeding paragraphs.<sup>5</sup>

Army Concept Team in Vietnam (ACTIV)

(C) An evaluation of the 125th Air Traffic Company to determine the significance of the role that an air traffic company played in the

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counterinsurgency environment of Vietnam was conducted. The final report concluded that no missions not already assigned should be assigned to the company, nor should currently-assigned missions be deleted.

(C) An evaluation was made on the employment of the Helicopter 20-mm Automatic Gun System XM-31 to determine the operational suitability and the concepts for employment of the 20-mm automatic gun system mounted on the UH-1B helicopter in the counterinsurgency environment of RVN. It was found that as long as the XM-31 was functioning properly it was a very effective weapon system.

(C) A study to evaluate the jungle canopy platform and to determine the feasibility of employment of a platform in support of combat operations by US forces in RVN was conducted. USARV had stated that a requirement existed for a means of resupplying and retrieving troops in jungle areas. The final report of this project was to be completed in 1967.

(C) The suitability of the armed/armored CH-47A helicopter, to fulfill the requirement for an interim armed-escort helicopter for use in a counterinsurgency operation, was evaluated. Employment was in direct support of the 2/20 ARA, the 227th AHB, the 229th AHB, and the 1/9 Cav. Generally, all agreed that the firepower was impressive.

(C) A study was carried out to determine the suitability of a lightweight flamethrower, modified M-9-7 (E36-7), for use by RVNAF. The study recommended that the E36-7 flamethrower not be issued to RVNAF troops at this time, but that the 20 E36-7 flamethrowers used in the evaluation should be turned over to the RVNAF Combat Development Test Center (CDTC-V) and reissued to service schools for instruction and indoctrination on the use of flame warfare. If, as a result of command emphasis, interest was generated in the use of flame during combat operations, the flamethrower should be issued to RVNAF for further evaluation.

(C) A study was conducted to evaluate night-vision devices used by USA units in RVN. ACTIV tentatively concluded that there were no significant deficiencies in the design and construction of the first generation of passive image-intensification night-vision devices. At the same time it recommended tentatively that those minor deficiencies noted during the course of the field evaluation be corrected, and that procurement and issue of this material to US combat forces in RVN be accomplished without delay.

(C) An evaluation of the capability of the USA Special Forces Group in RVN to advise and provide planning, training, and operational assistance to selected indigenous military and paramilitary forces was completed. The recommendations of the evaluation were that the intelligence capability be further improved; greater emphasis be placed on theory and practice of psychological operations; steps be taken to

PAGE 265 OF 872 PAGES

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Order Sec Army By TAG per

8-30624

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

insure that Special Forces personnel had the psychological adaptability and understanding of cultural patterns required to perform operational tasks in RVN; language-proficiency pay incentives be expanded; and the logistical system currently used be considered for application in other counterinsurgency situations.

(C) The organization, equipment, support, and employment of armor units were studied in relationship to their capabilities and missions in counterinsurgency, in order to determine their adequacy and to determine methods for improving ARVN armor capability. The conclusion of this study recommended that each ARVN division have an organic armored cavalry squadron.

(C) A project started in 1965 and completed in 1966 was an evaluation of the USA Aviation Company (Aerial Surveillance) in counterinsurgency operations. The final report drew some of the following conclusions:

- 1) The IR and SLAR electronic surveillance systems used were effective in providing information on VC activities.
- 2) Photographic sensors were effective during daylight hours, but their use was not fully exploited.
- 3) SLAR sensors had a 24-hour near all-weather capability and were effective under instrument flight condition.
- 4) The existing navigation equipment was inadequate for IR surveillance in mountainous terrain at night and during periods of reduced visibility.
- 5) Ground navigation aids available to RVN were adequate for SLAR and daylight visual/photo reconnaissance.

(C) Completed in 1966 was an evaluation of the 40-mm grenade launcher for the UH-1 helicopter. This system was evaluated to determine its operational suitability in the counterinsurgency environment and to develop concepts for its employment. The final report noted that the M-5 armament subsystem, when employed in areas other than dense jungle, was suitable for employment in a counterinsurgency environment and was capable of delivering a high volume of non-nuclear area fire in support of airborne and ground maneuver operations; and that the M-5, with its traverse capability and accuracy at short ranges, would provide close-in protection when mounted on troop-transport helicopters entering and leaving landing zones.

(C) Another study started in 1965 and completed in 1966 was the testing of a bar armor kit for the M-113 APC to determine the suitability of the kit for use in RVN and to recommend a basis for issue. This kit was designed to reduce the effect of shaped charges by causing them to detonate prematurely. ACTIV recommended that the bar armor kits, as presently designed and constructed, not be issued to ARVN or US units in RVN.

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(C) Started in 1965 and completed in 1966 was a study to determine whether the use of airboats would increase the capability of ARVN to intercept insurgent forces operating in inundated areas containing aquatic grasses. The final report, published on 10 May, was approved by COMUSMACV and forwarded to CINCPAC; it recommended that airboats be considered for introduction into the MAP for issue to elements of ARVN and LLDB units operating in the Delta.

(C) Projects proposed by ACTIV included:

- 1) A study to determine employment, performance, suitability, and basis of issue of the CAR-15, SMG, as a possible replacement weapon for selected personnel presently armed with caliber .45 pistols and sub-machine guns. The weapons would arrive and be issued in increments from September through December 1966. The evaluation would be conducted from November 1966 through January 1967, with final report to be published by 31 March.
- 2) A project to evaluate the doctrine, organization and employment of the field artillery battalion (aerial rocket), as equipped with interim aerial artillery weapons, when introduced into the counterinsurgency environment of RVN.
- 3) A project to evaluate the employment of an armored cavalry squadron in the counterinsurgency environment of RVN.
- 4) An analysis of the role and effectiveness of USA advisors to ARVN combat units, with emphasis primarily directed toward the advisory effort at ARVN battalion and regimental-size units. Formal coordination of the evaluation plan was completed by 31 October 1966. The scheduled time period for the project is 1 February to 1 August 1967.

Air Force Test Unit, Vietnam (AFTU-V)

(C) The WDU-4/A flechette warhead was evaluated against operational targets in SEASIA. The conclusion of the evaluation was that SEASIA was not a suitable environment for obtaining and documenting terminal weapons effects. The WDU-4/A flechette warhead, although undoubtedly effective against exposed personnel when fired at optimum ranges and speeds, must properly be considered inferior to the M151 warhead (PMI) for use in SEASIA. The recommendations of the evaluation were that all USAF weapons should be tested in CONUS.

(C) An evaluation to investigate the feasibility and desirability of installing and operating the M60 machine gun in a side-firing position for the rear cockpit of the O-1 aircraft indicated that the M60 side-firing system in the O-1 was both feasible and desirable.

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Order Sec Army By TAG POF

830624

PAGE 767 OF 872 PAGES

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(C) An evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the Airborne General Illumination Light Set (AGIL) in night air-strike operations, village defense, surveillance of transportation routes, search and rescue missions, and other combat operations in SEASIA was carried out. The conclusions were that the AGIL illumination was better than the present flare capability but, because of inherent weather limitations, a back-up flare capability must be incorporated.

(C) A study was conducted on the use of light-intensification devices for USAF aircraft to determine their usefulness of FAC's and AC-47 crews. The final report was approved by Director JRATA and published 11 May 1966. AFTU-V recommended that the USAF develop light-intensification devices suitable for installation and use in mission-support aircraft such as the O-1 and AC-47 aircraft. As an interim measure the USAF should procure devices with at least the capability of the Night Observation Device for use in AC-47 aircraft, and devices with at least the capability of the Starlight Scope should be procured for the O-1 aircraft.

(C) The AMRL Two-Light Landing System and associated airfield-lighting equipment was studied to determine whether or not it would meet the requirements for a basic system capability and suitability for austere airfield operations. The conclusions of AFTU-V were that the Portable Visual Approach and Airfield Lighting System evaluated was not acceptable in the present design configuration.

(C) The AFTU-V was advised by DCS/Research and Development, USAF, that equipment was available for an evaluation of an Airborne Ground Fire Detection Device. Evaluation of this item is to be accomplished as a continuation of a previous JRATA project.

USN Research and Development Unit, Vietnam (NDRU-V)

(C) The potential military usefulness of the Patrol Air Cushion Vehicle in various Naval missions along the coast and in the inland waterways of RVN was evaluated. Testing was scheduled for completion on 5 December 1966; the final report was to be completed by 25 January 1967.

(C) A study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness and utility of an anti-swimmer net as a countermeasure device in the harbors and on the rivers of RVN. The evaluation was conducted in January and February. NDRU-V concluded that the net was not an effective anti-swimmer device as currently constructed and utilized, because the net was unable to defeat swimmers, was extremely susceptible to fouling by debris, and would require a high level of logistical support.

(C) To determine the operational effectiveness of the AN/SQS-19 small-boat sonar as a mine detection device for use on the rivers, canals and harbors of RVN, a test was performed. Based on the data collected during the evaluation, NDRU-V concluded that an AN/SQS-19 sonar would

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED PAGE 768 OF 872 PAGES

Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

not achieve a high probability of detection of inland waterway mines of the type utilized by the VC.

(C) An evaluation was conducted in January and February on the effectiveness of magnetic gradiometers in detecting contraband aboard sampans and junks being inspected in MARKET TIME operation in RVN. NRDU-V concluded that the Naval Ordnance Laboratory contraband-detection device was effective as a tool to enhance the search capability, and recommended that the contraband-detection device be procured in quantity for issue to MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN forces.

(C) Projects proposed by NRDU-V included the development of a rapid fire, hand-cranked 40-mm low-velocity grenade launcher, and a vehicular-mounted version of the Condensation Nuclei Device ("people sniffer"); studies were planned for detecting and neutralizing mines (e.g., High Speed Chain Drag, Catenary Bottom Chain Drag, Mine Neutralization Device).

ARPA Research and Development Field Unit, Vietnam (ARPA/RDFU-V)

(C) The purpose of the Swamp Forest Warfare study was to develop concepts of operations and derive therefrom generalized weapons systems and operational requirements. During the study, a detailed analysis was made of the physical environments of the several types of swamp forests extant in RVN. Two swamp forest areas with different physical characteristics were selected for detailed study, the Rung Sat area immediately southeast of Saigon and the Man Gan area at the tip of the Cau Mau peninsula.

(C) ARPA requested RDFU-V to compile a report of all defoliation projects undertaken in RVN. The report covered both airborne and hand defoliation projects conducted by ARVN and other forces, and reported dates, locations and amounts of defoliant used. Data collection will continue until 30 March 1967.

(C) A project to evaluate Ground Surveillance and Intrusion Detection Operational Analysis was conducted. The objective was to provide field commanders in RVN with practical examples for ground surveillance and intrusion detection. The study, completed in March 1966, recommended specific areas for further research on the short-range radar (AN/FPS-6), magnetic intrusion detectors, and seismic detectors.

(C) A study was performed to evaluate the Multipurpose Concealed Intrusion Detector (MCID), Model T8, to determine its ability to fulfill the operational requirements of disclosing the presence of intruders by audible and visual signal. The evaluation commenced on 15 December 1965 and terminated 1 April 1966. JBRATA recommended that the MCID be introduced into RVN for both US and RVNAF units defending fixed and semi-fixed installations.

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Order Sec Army By IAG per

PAGE 769 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

830624

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Special Programs and Studies

ARCOV Battalion Study

(S) Implied in the commitment of US forces to RVN was a requirement to evaluate promptly the suitability of existing doctrine, materiel, and organization for operations in such an environment. This evaluation was conducted by examination of extensive data collected and segregated for analytical study during the first three months of 1966. It incorporated material from after-action reports, observer reports, questionnaires, interviews with key personnel, and commanders' evaluations. Evaluation teams' analysis and findings provided the basis for recommended improvements. The study showed that the battalion, the basic USA fighting unit, suffered one serious shortcoming: it lacked sufficient rifle strength for operations in environments like RVN.

(S) In guidance to the Chief US Army Combat Operations in Vietnam (ARCOV) Evaluation Team, COMUSMACV directed that four alternatives be explored during the study of the battalion organization best suited for operations in RVN. These alternatives were:

- 1) The infantry battalion as presently constituted (a headquarters and headquarters company and three rifle companies).
- 2) The airmobile battalion as presently constituted (a headquarters and headquarters company, a combat support company, and three rifle companies).
- 3) A battalion with a headquarters and headquarters company and four rifle companies, less units and weapons determined to be of marginal or no value in RVN.
- 4) A battalion with a headquarters and headquarters company (including a reconnaissance platoon) and four rifle companies, less units and weapons determined to be of marginal or no value in RVN.

(S) After study of the alternatives, the ARCOV Team recommended the third alternative, which provided for four rifle companies per battalion, but which specifically eliminated the reconnaissance platoon:

. . . . which is not habitually employed in the role for which it is designed. This is attributable solely to the nature of operations in Vietnam. At present, the only reason the platoon has for being is to serve as the nucleus of a composite maneuver element. The addition of a fourth rifle company to the battalion eliminates this requirement.

THIS PAGE REQUESTED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

830624

PAGE 770 OF 822 PAGES

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COMUSMACV did not agree with the conclusion as to the reconnaissance platoon, and so stated in recommendations to the CofS USA:

Whereas the team recommends elimination of this platoon (when the fourth rifle company is added to the battalion), I feel that the battalion should continue to have a specialized combat intelligence and reconnaissance capability. Under current conditions the reconnaissance platoon can also be used for ranger type patrols and pathfinder functions in airmobile operations. I also foresee growing opportunities for ground, including road reconnaissance as additional ground forces are deployed in Vietnam. Command emphasis will ensure that the reconnaissance platoons capabilities are fully exploited. To emphasize the proper role, I prefer to call it an intelligence and reconnaissance platoon.<sup>6</sup>

#### Area Denial Weapons

(S) In his constant search for ways and means of limiting enemy movement, for interdicting lines of communications, and for eliminating enemy sanctuaries, COMUSMACV showed extreme interest in several new area-denial, anti-materiel weapons which were then available or which could be made available in the near future. The four most promising of these weapons were:

- 1) Tetrahedron (Missile, free-fall, tire puncturing), a tire puncturing barb constructed of tubular metal. It was approximately four inches high and had four pointed sides.
- 2) Gravel (XM-47), a small incapacitating anti-personnel mine with the appearance of a rock weighing approximately 3 1/2 ounces.
- 3) A trip-wire anti-personnel mine (MLU-42/B). This mine on landing automatically threw out trip wires in different directions.
- 4) Dragon tooth (GBU-28), a small incapacitating anti-personnel mine, triangular in shape, that burrowed just beneath the surface of the ground.<sup>7</sup>

(TS) Development criteria included dispensing systems compatible with attack/fighter, B-52, B-57, A-1, and UH-1 aircraft, and a self-sterilization capability such that the weapons could not be picked up and used against friendly forces. The self-sterilization aspect of these weapons was emphasized by COMUSMACV as an absolute necessity. It was felt that a 900,000 monthly production of Gravel would provide continuous denial with a reasonable kill-probability in a swath only

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 771 OF 872 PAGES

~~TOP SECRET~~

830624

~~TOP SECRET~~

70 feet wide by three miles in length. SECDEF requested COMUSMACV to furnish quantitative requirements for each type of weapon plus delivery vehicles through CY 67. COMUSMACV's concept for employing these weapons was to destroy personnel and equipment and to delay, channel, and block enemy movement, using Gravel alone or in combination with other weapons. Gravel limitations of incomplete self-sterilization and no self-destruction capability would restrict its application in the proximity of friendly troops. Primary emphasis therefore, would be out-of-country use. COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC of his concept for employment in Laos and NVN (Route Package 1). With the introduction of Gravel munitions to SEASIA, COMUSMACV planned to employ this weapon extensively in the harassing area-denial role. It was to be used on infiltration routes, near bridges and road segments, at fords, ferry slips, and choke points. COMUSMACV stated the air-emplaced mines would be dispensed in many sequences providing variable-size patterns. He considered that the risks inherent in the use of munition were not unique and were acceptable in light of the potential advantages offered by its employment. The problem areas associated with Gravel had been recognized by MACV and certain disadvantages had been noted when the original recommendations were made to Gravel as an interim weapon. COMUSMACV desired that MACV continue with plans for the employment of Gravel:

The importance of a prompt decision to lift the suspension of use of this munition is underscored by the current buildup of enemy units to division strength in Quang Tri Province. If approval is granted for the use of Gravel, special precautions will be taken by careful target selection or by providing suppressive fires on enemy anti-aircraft installations to minimize the risks of canister detonation from ground fire.

COMUSMACV reaffirmed the original recommendation to employ Gravel as soon as possible and to introduce improved weapons such as Dragon Tooth and trip-wire mines as soon as they could be provided.<sup>8</sup>

(S) Because of urgent operational requirements for aerial delivery, SECDEF in early 1966 requested COMUSMACV to select the delivery vehicles contemplated through CY 67 for Gravel, Dragon Tooth, and trip-wire mines. COMUSMACV specified that the dispensers must be compatible with tactical fighters, B-52, B-57, A-1, and UH-1 aircraft. On 15 November COMUSMACV requested that the development programs for dispensing the XM-27 from the F-100, F-105, and F-4 aircraft be expedited, and that a certified delivery system be deployed to SEASIA for operational use. JCS informed CINCPAC and COMUSMACV in December that provided the dispenser tests were satisfactory at high speeds, the USAF would initiate action to certify the F-4 or F-105 in approximately four to six months. As 1966 ended, the A-1E aircraft used for Gravel had been modified, the USAF loading crews in RVN were certified, the 7AF was in a "Go Condition," and the UH-1B capability was being developed.<sup>9</sup>

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per  
8-3-06-24

PAGE 772 OF 872 PAGES  
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(S) Caltrop was a non-explosive tetrahedron anti-infiltration device for route and trail interdiction; its unique feature was that it was self-neutralized by corrosion. During July DA informed MACV of an R&D program to develop Caltrop and requested guidance on a 30 to 90-day sterilization time. COMUSMACV felt that the sterilization time was acceptable, and that a delivery system for high performance aircraft should be developed. After reviewing Caltrop, COMUSMACV stated that it appeared to have great potential value for route and trail interdiction; it was decided that Caltrop would be employed initially in areas where enemy air defense did not prevent the use of low performance aircraft. COMUSMACV strongly urged the expeditious deployment of Caltrop for operational testing in SEASIA, rapid development of a high-performance aircraft delivery system, and preparation of a contingency plan for urgent procurement of Caltrop in large quantities. The MACV Science Advisor was informed in November that 500,000 Caltrop, with dispensing systems, would be shipped to ACTIV for operational evaluation during March 1967.<sup>10</sup>

#### Jungle Burning

(S) In the search for measures to deny the VC/NVA the concealment afforded by the jungle, interest was shown early in 1966 in the use of forest/jungle fire to destroy selected jungle target locations. It was felt that the use of fire could have the dual effect of trapping the enemy in the target area as well as destruction of the jungle area by fire. In this endeavor SECDEF gave ARPA the project of development of field operational teams for determining the specific jungle moisture-content conditions under which there was the greatest possibility of destroying jungle/forest by fire, and the quantitative reduction in jungle-moisture content that could be achieved through defoliation. The US Forest Service was called on to perform this work and a team of technicians in the field of forest fuels began work on this problem in January 1966. USAF, in coordination with CINCPAC, was authorized to conduct in RVN a test of a fire ignition source. Cofs USAF, advised of the MACV plan to conduct a jungle-burn operation in RVN, recommended to CINCPAC that the BLU-29/B delivered by B-52 aircraft be evaluated as the fire-ignition source in this test.<sup>11</sup>

(S) On 19 January MACV J3 suggested that since ARPA had been directed by SECDEF to initiate tests on burning jungle foliage, and as JRATA had a technical team to plan, advise, and evaluate such tests, that JRATA be the responsible office for the test project of burning Chu Pong mountain forest. He further indicated that although this project was essentially a test, it could yield substantial operational benefits if successful. Suggested phases for the operation were:

- Phase I - defoliation of target area.
- Phase II - weather evaluation to determine time for ignition.
- Phase III - air operations.
- Phase IV - evaluation.<sup>12</sup>

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By IAG per  
830624

PAGE 773 OF 872 PAGES

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(S) The original test of burning Chi Pong was executed on 11 March, using M-35 bomblets. The initial report stated that the test was an outstanding operational success but apparently only a qualified technical success. All phases of the test were conducted under optimum conditions at precise times and with spectacular delivery accuracy, but heavy flames were not observed and fire storms did not develop. On 16 March CINCPAC assigned the nickname PINK ROSE to all jungle-fire activity. He indicated that the initial reports of the jungle-burning test showed that jungle-burning might be a feasible and practical tactic, and requested COMUSMACV provide preliminary plans for exploiting this or similar-type operations.<sup>13</sup>

(S) COMUSMACV replied to CINCPAC on 2 April that the effectiveness of techniques used in the jungle-burning test had been indeterminate and that further evaluation would be necessary prior to considering and selecting areas for this type of operation. He suggested that the best defoliant was Herbicide Orange, which killed foliage and produced drying in four to six weeks. In answer to CINCPAC's query on aircraft spraying, COMUSMACV replied that the C-123 aircraft with A/A45Y, an internal defoliation dispenser, was considered the optimum configuration for aerial spraying, and that an evaluation of adequacy and number of aircraft for the herbicide program was in progress. On 2 September COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC that the next test of PINK ROSE would be in War Zones C and D. The zones would be sprayed by defoliation agents, allowed to dry, then sprayed again with "Agent Blue," a drying compound.<sup>14</sup>

(S) In October COMUSMACV designated the AFTU-V as action agency for the upcoming PINK ROSE test. He desired that a coordinated test plan be developed and necessary actions be taken to permit project execution on a selected date, which was anticipated to be early in 1967. The planning continued and the first defoliation treatment of all selected targets was completed on 27 November. Because of enemy forces and installations uncovered in War Zone C during Operation ATTLEBORO, which required increased tactical air strikes and long range patrols, the completion of the War Zone C targets for Phase II and III of PINK ROSE was delayed, and COMUSMACV recommended that the War Zone D target be designated the primary target. COMUSMACV reported that no major operations were planned in War Zone D before the scheduled PINK ROSE testing, and the targets could be made available for ignition test during the last two weeks of February 1967.<sup>15</sup>

#### Forest Clearing

(C) Many forest areas in RVN were long-established VC base areas. Although periodic military sweeps were conducted in these areas and the VC eliminated, the enemy returned to them and continued to harass the surrounding countryside. COMUSMACV formulated plans to deny the sanctuary permanently in these areas by cutting and clearing the forest growth. The project would be undertaken initially by specially tailored USA Engineer units, equipped with Rome plows and other special devices which had been

THIS PAGE RECLASSIFIED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

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PAGE 774 OF 872 PAGES

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used successfully in other parts of the world in similar projects. The plan considered later participation of both ARVN and PHILCAG units. In addition to eliminating enemy bases, forest clearing was expected to benefit the Vietnamese economy significantly. COMUSMACV expressed his desire that testing on the jungle-clearing operations be implemented as soon as possible. He identified this project as one that had "sex appeal" because it was a new idea for denying VC cover and would both raise ARVN morale and produce badly-needed lumber for construction and other wood products.<sup>16</sup>

(C) The two methods COMUSMACV was considering were:

1) The ROME FLOW method, which used a standard military dozer equipped with a special cutting blade and operator protective cab. The blade was equipped with a horizontal cutting edge and a stinger for splintering the larger trees. Felled material would be windrowed for destruction or recovery.

2) The King Ranch method would use two dozers operating generally in parallel, 100 to 200 feet apart, towing a 600-foot heavy anchor chain. The debris was subsequently salvaged or destroyed as desired.

The Ambassador approved the concept as a very sound idea and stated that MACV should move ahead toward implementation. USARV and II FFORCEV had been given the mission of developing a plan for leveling forests. The guidance provided by COMUSMACV was "think big"—select a VC base area and level it. Upon arrival of the additional plows and personnel early in 1967 the plan was to be put into effect.<sup>17</sup>

Footnotes

1. Report (C), JRATA, 5th Semi-Annual Progress Report, 31 Jul 66; CINCPAC Instruction 03960.1, 13 Mar 64; JCS SM-197-6, Feb 64; Msg (C), COMUSMACV, 201445Z May 66.
2. Msg (C), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, 290240Z Jun 66; Msg (C), CINCPAC to COMUSMACV, 090345Z Aug 66, Subj: Disestablishment of JRATA (U); Msg (C), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, 131106Z Aug 66, Subj: Disestablishment of JRATA (U); Msg (C), CINCPAC to COMUSMACV, 160108Z Oct 66; Msg (C), COMUSMACV 031059Z Nov 66, Subj: Deactivation of JRATA (U); DF (C), MACJ3 to CofS, MACV, 13 Aug 66, Subj: Disestablishment of JRATA (U); GO, 1703, HQ MACV, 2 Nov 66, Historical Summary (TS), ACoFS J3, 23 Nov 66, Subj: Historical Summary for Oct 66 (U); and Historical Summary (TS), ACoFS J3, 21 Dec 66, Subj: Historical Summary of Nov 66 (U).
3. Msg (S), CJCS to COMUSMACV, 250030Z Mar 66, Subj: Scientific Advisors (U); Msg (C), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC/JCS, 292202Z Mar 66, Subj:

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
Order Sec Army By TAG per

PAGE 775 OF 872 PAGES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

830624

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4. Organization and Functions Manual (C), HQ USMACV w/change 3; General Westmoreland's Historical Briefing (TS), 26 Apr, 10 May 66.
5. For individual projects completed during 1966, refer to Rpt (C), JRATA 6th Semi-Annual Progress Report, 15 Nov 66; Rpt (C), JRATA 5th Semi-Annual Progress Report, 31 Jul 66; Rpt (C), JRATA 4th Semi-Annual Progress Report, 15 Jan 66.
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PAGE 776 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 777 OF 872 PAGES

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**ANNEX H--WATERWAYS CONTROL**

(U) The inland waterways of RVN have always been important as avenues of commerce in peace, and as lines of communications in war. In the Delta this is particularly true, as 1,500 miles of canals--1,000 miles of which constitute primary canals connecting main waterways--criss-cross the area. Besides these man-made arteries, important rivers also flow through RVN, especially the Mekong River. Like so many of the world's great waterways, the Mekong is important not only to the nation in which its mouth lies, but also to the other countries through which it flows. Until 1960, the main port for RVN's neighbor, Cambodia, was the Mekong River port of Phnom Penh. Even though it has been replaced by Sihanoukville as Cambodia's main port, Phnom Penh is still used rather extensively by smaller cargo ships of up to 3,000 tons gross.<sup>1</sup>

**Control of Mekong River Shipping**

(U) Since the Mekong was so significant in the lives and development of the SEASIA countries of Laos, Cambodia, and RVN through which it flowed, the three nations had signed a Tripartite Agreement to regulate navigation on the river. Signed in Paris on 29 December 1954, the agreement provided that on the basis of equality of treatment, navigation would be free throughout the course of the Mekong, its tributaries, effluents, and navigable mouths located in the territories of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, as well as on the waterways giving access to the port of Saigon and to the sea. Such freedom was automatically granted to states which recognized the high contracting parties diplomatically, and freedom of navigation would be subject to their consent. (Neither the US nor RVN has diplomatic relations with Cambodia.) Navigation had to conform to the requirements prescribed by the riparian states, particularly in sanitary, police, and customs matters and with respect to the maintenance of general security. Each riparian state had the right to subject the transportation of persons and goods to certain conditions, provided they were applied equally, and provided that freedom of navigation would not be in violation of the national laws of the riparian states concerning the importation and exportation of goods, or immigration and emigration.<sup>2</sup>

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(S) Under the terms of the Tripartite Agreement, ships flying the flags of the contracting countries, and of the countries which recognize these countries diplomatically, were to be allowed freedom of navigation on the Mekong. This had special significance for sea-going ships bound for Phnom Penh, because the mouth and lower reaches of the Mekong were in RVN. Until late in 1964, the GVN did little to interfere with ships proceeding up the Mekong to Phnom Penh. A pilot and a customs official normally boarded the ship near the mouth of the river and accompanied it to the Cambodian border. Cargo manifests were examined in a routine fashion, and no attempts were made to inspect cargo. Intelligence developed over many years, however, indicated the increasing role played by Cambodia in infiltrating men and materiel for the VC in RVN. In October 1964, using the mechanism of the Tripartite Agreement, RVN acted to stem the flow of goods into Cambodia from the sea, with the issuance of a new decree governing transit traffic on the Mekong. This decree stipulated that commercial vessels were required to apply at the appropriate GVN customs office (Vung Tau for ships going up the river, and Tan Chau for ships coming down) for authorization to transit the RVN sector of the river. No authorizations were permitted to ships enroute from Communist ports, those flying the flags of countries which did not recognize GVN (applied, at first, to all communist ships but not to Cambodian ships), or those carrying weapons, ammunition, or commodities of military significance, without advance permission from the Ministry of Defense. An RVN pilot was required to be aboard at all times between the mouth of the Mekong and the Cambodian border. GVN officials were authorized to inspect cargoes and customs papers, seal holds, and, if necessary to take commercial ships to Saigon for inspection and sealing. Navigation was authorized only between sunrise and sunset and night layovers were authorized only at prescribed anchorages, except for mechanical breakdowns, accidents, etc. During the first two months that the decree was in effect, RVN officials confiscated a consignment of cartridge belts aboard a Japanese ship bound for Phnom Penh, and prevented six other Free World ships (mostly Japanese) from entering the river—four carrying cement from the USSR and Communist China and two carrying chemicals of possible military significance.<sup>3</sup>

(S) In January 1965 the GVN introduced certain changes in its regulations for shipping on the Mekong. Cambodian vessels were denied access to the river because the Cambodian Government (KRG) did not recognize the GVN. Authorizations were to be refused to ships that had called at Communist ports since leaving their home ports; all ships carrying cargoes of Communist origin, regardless of flag and port of loading, were to be detained with their holds sealed until the GVN Ministry of Defense investigated the circumstances; and all small craft were prohibited from coming alongside commercial freighters.

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During March 1965 the decree was enforced and access to the lower Mekong was denied to two small Cambodian freighters which normally operated between Singapore and Phnom Penh. Later, however, enforcement of the regulations stopped, and the Cambodian ships resumed their former activity on the Mekong. Apparently the Mekong shipping regulations previously imposed by GVN caused a decline both in the number of calls at Phnom Penh by dry-cargo ships and in the volume of dry cargoes discharged from seagoing ships in 1965. The number of calls by dry-cargo ships dropped from 372 in 1964 to 316 in 1965, and the volume of dry cargo discharged dropped from 147,000 to 75,000 tons.<sup>4</sup>

(8) Examination of cargo manifests revealed that war materials had been shipped into Cambodia as early as 1964. Many items were those which the VC could use and, in fact, had obtained. Large quantities of rice and other supplies had been infiltrated into RVN from Cambodia, in some cases even with the active participation of RKG officials.<sup>5</sup>

(28) In December 1965 COMUSMACV requested CINAVADVGRU to develop plans for a naval blockade of Sihanoukville and of the Mekong entrance to Cambodia. Specifically, COMUSMACV wanted to know the requirements necessary to achieve an effective blockade; the organization and command arrangement; dividing the effort between USN and VNN; the assets available; and what additional means would be required. Results of the study were provided on 20 January 1966. The mechanics for effecting a blockade already existed in a CINCPAC plan which, while not specifically covering Cambodia, could be expanded to include Sihanoukville. The plan called for the establishment of a Maritime Control Force (CTF 74) to control traffic "in the Pacific Ocean and its tributaries contiguous to the Asian mainland" when directed. The study pointed out that "blockade" was a belligerent act leading to the most complex ramifications of international law, and discussed the use of such substitutes as interdiction--commonly termed "quarantine" from the Cuban situation of 1962. VNN resources were not sufficient to enforce a blockade of Cambodian ports. The estimated force requirement was for six USN destroyers and seven SP-5 aircraft based at a mobile seadrome at An Thoi, utilizing a USN Seaplane Tender (AVP). Ten Swift boats (PCF) would provide adequate inshore patrol. Blockade was considered the only practical method of cutting the supply of war material to Cambodia by sea. Interdiction was deemed impractical because of the nature of the cargo being interdicted. Crates of missiles or pieces of B-28 bombers, deck loaded, could be spotted by interdiction ships and aircraft; not so the war materials for the VC, which could be concealed easily or mixed in with legitimate cargo. As CINAVADVGRU said:

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It Interdiction fails as a workable solution because it is unenforceable. Presidential proclamation, publicity, great and enthusiastic deployment of forces. . . all would fail because even the most flagrant infiltrator, with her lower holds full of contraband, could innocently face the militant US Navy warship and state: "OK, go ahead and search me."#6

(TS) Three possibilities were considered by the study for the control of contraband shipped via the Mekong River: strict enforcement of existing GVN regulations; harassing actions of a "nuisance" nature, which inevitably would cause a shift of Cambodian-bound traffic to Sihanoukville; and outright abrogation of the Tripartite convention, closing all rivers to all traffic, thus also diverting all traffic to Sihanoukville. These measures were all within the capability of GVN. The last was rejected as too broad a move which would, by establishing a blockade, be a belligerent act signifying that a state of war existed between RVN and Cambodia (and probably Laos, since it also was one of the signatories to the convention.) The recommended course of action was the first—enforce existing regulations with harassing actions to follow, if required.

(TS) Concurrently with CHNAVADVGRU's study, the JCS directed CINCPAC to formulate plans, in conjunction with COMUSMACV and the US Mission, to improve surveillance of the sea LOC's between RVN and Cambodia and to intensify and make more effective controls of the Mekong/Bassac waterways." This was to be done without violating the Cambodian border, territorial waters, or legitimate rights of navigation. COMUSMACV referred to the CHNAVADVGRU study and expanded on the proposals:

Each of the many possible regulatory measures relating to the Cambodian problem has a correlative alternative (available to any potential infiltrator) which necessitates additional measures applied elsewhere. This is suggested by the following: if contraband were eliminated on the Mekong/Bassac (or its introduction made substantially more difficult) it would obviously be diverted to Sihanoukville, or flown into Phnom Penh. This would necessitate similar regulatory measures to control contraband entering overtly through the gulf of Thailand; but if the overt traffic were controlled, the desperate would-be aider of the VC, would be forced to attempt covert infiltration of contraband via the Cambodian coastline, or to increase his efforts along the RVN coast. Consequently, the entire Cambodian problem represents a complex array of

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inter-related causes and effects, of actions and reactions, which must be foreseen and considered as as part of a "package program" for controlling all of the sea lines of communications in Southeast Asia potentially available to the VC.<sup>6</sup>

(TS) COMUSMACV approached the problem in two broad categories: those measures which could be taken immediately within existing authority and protocol, and those which would require USG actions and authority to implement. Under the former category there were several measures which could be taken. GVN enforcement of existing regulations could be strengthened, including embarkation of customs agents, security police, and/or military personnel. Strong representations to this effect were made to GVN, including the use of RVNAF troops and national police; if GVN so requested, US troops would be made available to assist. COMUSMACV did not expect an early implementation of this measure, due to the "complex interaction of diverse political/military factions in GVN." Small boat patrols could be maintained alongside ships during the transit of the river and at overnight anchorages. This also was urgently proposed to the GVN, but the same problems of military/political intrigue were involved. The shortage of VNN boats was expected to be corrected when US River Patrol Ecats (PRR) became operational in May. These two measures were designed to preclude the off-loading of supplies to sampans while ships were transiting the Mekong within RVN. The GVN would be encouraged to commence an inspection program of periodic spot checks of cargo, with the threat of complete offload and inspection, with the assistance of US personnel and the use of US facilities if required. This measure might result in owner complaints and in litigation due to voyage delays and cargo damage. Also, enforcement of the complete offload measures would require the ship to be in Saigon, and would take about ten days per ship for offload, inspection, and backload; this would consume already overtaxed pier space and cargo-handling facilities in Saigon, further delaying other high-priority cargoes. The most severe measure, under existing authority, would be for the GVN effectively to close the river to all traffic by means of harassment at the river mouths by nuisance actions such as interminable paperwork, "non-availability" of pilots, and cumbersome health quarantines. After these measures had been tried and had failed to halt or divert cargoes from the river, a measure requiring a change of US policy, closing the Mekong/Bassac Rivers to all traffic "for the maintenance of general security" under the provisions of Article II of the Tripartite Convention, would be considered. COMUSMACV recommended that this be proposed only if and when it was desired to close the Mekong to all traffic, for such a course necessarily would include a guarantee of US backing and assistance.

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PAGE 767 OF 772 PAGES

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COMUSMACV foresaw that "great pressure" by the US would be required to get GVN concurrence in this plan, and noted, "Enforcement is relatively simple if will exists, but foresee small hope until US exert influence on GVN." Should the proposed river-control measures prove effective, Cambodia-manifested cargoes would be diverted to the remaining seaport, Sihanoukville. COMUSMACV pointed out that controlling overt salt water shipping into Sihanoukville would require certain measures, "all of which are tinged with the international consequence of 'blockade' and/or 'interdiction,' all of which are clearly beyond the capability of the Vietnamese Navy (except for token participation) and all of which would involve unilateral action by the US."

(TS) COMUSMACV recommended that CINCPAC approve the concept of implementing gradually-tightened regulatory measures by the GVN, and that diplomatic plans be made in anticipation of possible international consequences should GVN close the river. He also recommended expansion of contingency plans to include the Cambodian ports and littoral. He pointed out that the protection of land routes for infiltration from Cambodia into RVN would require control of the borders and stream, canal, and river branches by ground forces. In summarizing, COMUSMACV said:

It is considered that substantial gains can be effected in minimizing the introduction of contraband destined for the VC via Phnom Penh, or by off-loading to small craft on the RVN side of the border. Actions by COMUSMACV are now underway to motivate the GVN to strict enforcement of existing customs and police regulations pertaining to river transit. This includes embarkation of RVN troops and use of VNN river craft to prevent off-loading. Embarkation of US troops to assist the GVN is a future possibility. The threat of complete cargo inspection, and the actual conduct of spot checks should be effective. All of these are within the scope of existing protocols, require a minimum of US involvement, and require no action by higher authority.

If the foregoing are ineffective, the river and Gulf of Thailand entrances to Cambodia can be effectively blockaded by USN and VNN forces. These actions have serious international implications in that they would violate (to varying degrees) the Cambodian border, territorial waters, or legitimate rights of navigation.

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PAGE 283 OF 872 PAGES

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Mining of the Cambodian salt-water ports has certain advantages over classic blockades in that (after appropriate mining warnings and notices have been promulgated) the burden of decision to proceed from (or into) a Cambodian port is with the master of the vessel; whereas the burden to stop, search, or sink a blockade violator rests unilaterally with the enforcer.

The planning and execution of all actions in the Gulf of Thailand lie within the CINCPAC/CINCPACFLT/COMSEVENTHFLT chain of command. . . .

(TS) In commenting to JCS and COMUSMACV's proposal, CINCPAC said he did not think it necessary to employ patrol boats for escort if armed guards were posted on the ships. He concurred that off-landing shipping for inspection at Saigon was presently unacceptable due to port congestion. Closure of the Mekong and Bassac Rivers was not considered warranted at that time, and extension of MARKET TIME into the Cambodian coastline would serve only as a ship-counting operation. Blockade also was dismissed as unwarranted, but CINCPAC concurred that high priority be given to plans for gaining control of the border, land areas, and waterway beaches. The addition of Swift boats (PCF) and USCG WPB's to MARKET TIME Area 9 should reduce the movement of infiltrating watercraft from Cambodia by sea to the Southwest coast of RVN. He also pointed out that the planned implementation of GAME WARDEN river and air patrols would intensify and make effective Mekong and Bassac controls. Increased intelligence activity, already initiated by COMUSMACV, would provide data on the VC use of the waterways and the support they were receiving from Cambodia.

(S) In a memorandum to the Ambassador, COMUSMACV requested the assistance of the Embassy in getting GVN to increase controls on the Mekong and Bassac Rivers. In the meantime, infiltration continued apace. On 25 February, a US official observed an anchored ocean-going freighter offloading supplies into several sampans about one kilometer from the city of Tan Chau, in Chau Doc Province. When assault boats attempted to approach the ship, it weighed anchor and steamed toward Cambodia before it could be halted. The sampans also escaped, so that no cargo was confiscated or identified. In March, intelligence sources reported that a CHICOM ship had unloaded field guns, ammunition and other war material in Sihanoukville.<sup>2</sup>

(S) Replying to proposals by COMUSMACV and CINCPAC, a joint State/Defense message of 22 March requested that the Embassy urge the promulgation of regulations by GVN to require RVNAF personnel to be embarked on ships transiting the Mekong and Bassac Rivers, including a statement of intent to search ships in transit. The military personnel were to assist customs officers inspect cargo, to crosscheck on the performance

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of customs officials and pilots, and to provide additional intelligence on the waterways shipping. It was also recommended that GVN inform RKG in advance as a diplomatic courtesy. Further, the Embassy was requested to coordinate plans with GVN, COMUSMACV, and CINCPAC for further tightening of the controls, and to submit them for Washington review. The JCS endorsed this requirement to CINCPAC, who requested COMUSMACV to represent him at the initial discussions. COMUSMACV recommended that the Mission approach GVN to request US assistance in enforcing waterways controls, in anticipation of Operation GAME WARDEN becoming operational. Because of special conventions governing navigation on the Mekong River, it was advisable that the GVN formally request US assistance to give a legal basis for US participation in the enforcement of controls on the Mekong. A similar request had been used previously as the legal basis for MARKET TIME operations, but it was limited to the territorial seas and contiguous waters of RVN. The Mission advised on 16 April that the GVN Foreign Ministry had been approached informally and was agreeable. CHNAVADVGRU, as COMUSMACV's agent, and CINCVNN were to work out the rules of engagement, which were to be forwarded to JCS for review.<sup>13</sup>

(TS) COMUSMACV reported to CINCPAC on 19 April that GVN had taken encouraging preparatory actions suggesting acceptance of some of the control measures which had been offered by the US. Continuous efforts by COMUSMACV and the Mission were being made to push the decisions, and the Premier had received a letter from the Chief JCS which requested, inter alia, "that a ministerial order or memo relative to the establishment of the Water Traffic Control Committee to be promulgated so as to put an end to the clandestine supply, by foreign merchant vessels, to the Viet Cong in the territory of Vietnam." It was also noted that convoy escorts "will be adequately armed and manned by customs, police and navy personnel to control briberies and opposition to searches."<sup>14</sup>

(TS) On 24 April CINCPAC promulgated new rules of engagement for SEASIA. Significant in this context was the inclusion of "internal waters of Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, North and South Vietnam." This recognized the pending use of US forces in the Mekong Delta waterways, including the Mekong River. Additionally, a "hostile vessel" was defined "as a vessel in RVN or Thailand internal waters" which was engaged in one of the hostile acts described.<sup>15</sup>

(S) At this stage in the development of the overall waterways control program, two separate and distinct programs were being considered. First, control of third-country shipping from the sea to Cambodia, to be accomplished strictly by RVNAF, customs and police forces. Second, control of the smaller inland waterways of the Delta and RSSZ with operation GAME WARDEN, a US operation. GAME WARDEN forces might be called upon to provide escort duty for shipping through VC-controlled areas, but only as a defensive measure to protect shipping from VC attack.<sup>16</sup>

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PAGE 785 OF 872 PAGES

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### Control of the Mekong Delta Waterways

(TS) In early May, in proposing rules of engagement for GAME WARDEN, COMUSMACV felt that "the rules should be equally applicable to all RVN inland waterways, including those of an international character (Mekong/Bassac)." The Mission agreed to the rules of engagement prior to their transmission to CINCPAC, and the previous position that US personnel not be involved with third-country shipping was abandoned. Further assumptions were that GVN would request maximum assistance from US forces in patrolling all such waterways; that GVN actions in patrolling and establishing control of waterways would equal that requested of the US; that Article II of the protocol to the Tripartite convention was sufficient legal basis for the GVN to establish strict control of the Mekong/Bassac; and that the eventual abrogation of the Tripartite convention by RVN was a recognized possibility. The rules were to be effective for US forces engaged in surveillance operations on the inland waterways of RVN, to assist GVN in enforcement of GVN regulations and to counter infiltration of RVN which supported the VC insurgency.<sup>17</sup>

(TS) During May and June there were several exchanges of proposed rules between COMUSMACV and CINCPAC, primarily concerning wording of the paragraphs defining the Mekong River, i.e., "international waters" or "inland waters with special international status." A final proposal was sent to JCS by CINCPAC in July, and final GAME WARDEN rules of engagement were promulgated by JCS in December. The rules specified that GAME WARDEN units would follow the basic rules for SEASIA, with certain specific directives. GAME WARDEN forces would follow MARKET TIMES rules if actually operating in MARKET TIME areas (defensive sea area of RVN and the high seas, including the contiguous zone of RVN); immediate pursuit was not authorized over Cambodian territory, airspace, or internal waters. In an emergency, when operating near the Cambodian border, necessary counteractions could be taken in accordance with existing rules, to include returning hostile fire from VC/NVA forces across the border, and maneuvering while actually in contact with VC/NVA forces, into Cambodia as necessary for the preservation of the force. While the rules were being developed, GAME WARDEN forces began their interdiction of the inland waterways of RVN with rewarding results. COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC in early July that, "Intelligence indicates that GAME WARDEN operations have hampered VC efforts significantly. Several Vietnamese watermen have stated that they can now move on rivers in comparative safety for the first time in years."<sup>18</sup>

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PAGE 786 OF 822 PAGES

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### Mekong Controls Implemented

(S) Problems of control of shipping on the Mekong/Bassac Rivers still remained. Reports of explosives or their chemical components entering RVN via the Mekong were verified on 29 April when 1,200 kilograms of sulphur-type explosives were intercepted by border patrol forces. Intelligence reports also indicated that a portion of the 15 tons per day infiltrations of non-rice cargo along the Mekong route was being transloaded to sampans from Cambodia-bound ships transiting the Mekong. COMUSMACV continued discussions with appropriate GVN agencies throughout May and into June, and on 27 June GVN formally requested US assistance in "improving control of river waterways in Vietnam." The GVN Foreign Ministry advised that its note constituted the legal basis for USN participation in waterways control (GAME WARDEN).<sup>19</sup>

(S) During July the US Mission established a waterways committee to study the problem and develop US plans for increased controls. On 29 July GVN established a Waterways Control Committee under the Ministry of Defense. The delay in GVN action was caused by internal political problems during the summer. With the establishment of the waterways committee, it was possible to begin negotiations for an integrated US/GVN plan. The US Mission committee recommended a plan which would require ships to transit the Mekong in convoys under armed escort, and which also developed possible actions to cause delays in transit, both designed to make the transit of the Mekong River unattractive to shippers and thereby divert traffic to Sihanoukville, thus saturating that port and the connecting overland LOC's. The US and GVN committees met in October and considered a GVN-developed plan, to be implemented on 1 November, which required all merchant shipping to transit the Mekong in convoys, three each way per month. The ships would be required to arrive at Vung Tau or Tan Chau 48 hours prior to convoy departure for customs, health, and sanitary inspections, and cargo inspection if required. A Shipping Surveillance Center was to be established in Saigon, with representatives of all interested GVN authorities and a US Advisor. The plan was implemented on 6 November, when all shipping bound for Cambodia was stopped at Vung Tau to await convoy. The first convoy, consisting of four Japanese, two Cambodian, and two French ships, departed Vung Tau 15 November. No ships aborted when informed of the convoy requirements.<sup>20</sup>

(S) International reaction to the GVN action was immediate. ESSO and SHELL representatives in Phnom Penh complained to the Australian Embassy there, and the New York ESSO office to the State Department, that the convoy system would delay servicing Phnom Penh and would raise petroleum prices in Cambodia. SECSTATE responded that although legitimate arguments could be made in defense of the convoy system and that "we

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ understand rationale from a military point of view," it was important that the operation be "handled carefully in order to avoid unfortunate political repercussions, in particular ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ charge that the action was motivated politically in ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ effort ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ put pressure on Cambodia rather than from legitimate security consideration." SECSTATE insisted that the GVN insure that it was not open to charges of "hobbling legitimate commerce," and pointed out that if the immediate effect of the convoy system was a rise in petroleum prices in Cambodia and increased operating costs for shippers, the "political loss might exceed the military gain. . .USG does not wish at this time to participate in action intended to damage Cambodian economy." The Mission in Saigon was requested to provide the considerations which prompted the convoy action at that time, and information to justify it, and to assess the feasibility of increasing the frequency of the convoys to reduce lost time for ships in Phnom Penh. The Mission reply to SECSTATE noted that ESSO, CALTEX, and SHELL had called on the GVN/VNN, and NAVADVGRU, that the Japanese Embassy had talked to the GVN Foreign Ministry, and that ESSO had talked with the Deputy Ambassador about the new controls. All had been advised that the convoy was a "legitimate measure aimed at maintenance of security and prevention of illegal importation of goods." The GVN understood the problem and was stressing that the measure was not aimed at damaging the Cambodian economy. After reviewing the rationale and planning that had gone on with the GVN, the Mission stated that the petroleum aspects had been studied; it was realized that the oil companies would have to make adjustments, and that Cambodia would be affected. Nevertheless,

. . .value to US of denying this considerable logistical asset outweighs, we believe (and GVN, of course, feels even more strongly on this point) adverse commercial impact in small market for huge international oil companies. This also applies to politico/economic consequences of Cambodian reaction.

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Nonetheless, convoy system is far less stringent than other measures we could have taken, and is not repeat not aimed at Cambodia, but at VC. CINCPAC views are invited on question.

On timing, we had projected implementation of control measures for end of 1966. GVN, however, for once moved crisply and efficiently ahead of expectations, and was in position to start this month. Since measure is sovereign matter within their prerogatives, South Vietnamese went ahead and clamped down.

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CINCPAC concurred in full, and additionally pointed out that the GVN could close the river completely to all shipping whose country of registry had not recognized all three riparian states, or had not specified in writing their willingness to abide by the terms of the protocol.

(S) On 24 December, the US Mission Waterways Committee forwarded its study of the Mekong waterways control problem to CINCPAC for consideration of further actions which might decrease infiltration of supplies to the VC via the Mekong axis.<sup>22</sup>

(S) From a state of "no control" in early 1966, COMUSMACV had worked with US Government agencies in Vietnam and with GVN authorities to develop and implement plans for controlling the waterways of the Mekong Delta and of the Mekong River traffic into Cambodia. An order of battle study published by the combined intelligence center had concluded:

Control of traffic on the inland waterways of the Mekong Delta is one of the key problems facing the Allied Forces in South Vietnam. The Viet Cong presently have the freedom of movement required to support logistically all of their combat units in the Delta. Moreover, the present lack of waterways control allows them to use the Delta as a gigantic food supply depot and export foodstuffs and other material to units in other areas of the country. Freedom of movement over the waterways of the Delta also affords Viet Cong units lacking the strength of the better equipped and larger units in the Northern Corps areas, the mobility required to tie down large Government units and to exert their control over areas that would normally be beyond their influence. Viet Cong lines of communication are probably most vulnerable in the Delta. Waterways control measures would effect all areas of VC endeavor and substantially reduce Viet Cong ability to function effectively in combat or supply roles.<sup>23</sup>

The implementation of convoy systems by GVN and the continued success of GAME WARDEN operations were definite steps to exercise control of the waterways to stop VC infiltration. The end was not in sight, but the tools were in hand, and most important, the will was apparent.

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PAGE 789 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 790 OF 872 PAGES

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PAGE 791 OF 822 PAGES

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## ANNEX I--MEDICAL ACTIVITIES

### Preventive Medicine

(C) Preventive medicine activities in RVN became increasingly important in early 1966 as major forces arrived in-country. These activities were oriented toward the establishment of health standards and conditions which would enable the fighting forces to adjust to Vietnam's environmental conditions with little or no loss of combat effectiveness. The Preventive Medicine Section of the MACV Surgeon's Office (MACMD) was closely associated with troop living conditions and assisted the MACV Surgeon in the following endeavors: supervising, coordinating, and monitoring the preventive medicine activities in RVN; surveillance of the health of US personnel in RVN; compiling MACV monthly relative incidence of disease morbidity reports; maintaining current information on disease epidemics in all population groups in RVN, in coordination with USAID Public Health Division and the GVN Ministry of Health; and advising and aiding FWEAF in preventive medicine matters in RVN. The Preventive Medicine Section was concerned not only with the myriad of tropical diseases in RVN and their prevention, but also with mess sanitation, water supplies, and sewage disease.<sup>1</sup>

#### Environmental Sanitation.

(U) The climate of RVN is characterized by high humidity and high temperatures; therefore, personnel must consume daily amounts of potable water based on their activities. Average daily water consumption rate is 10 quarts for moderate activity and 13 quarts for very strenuous work. When sufficient water is not consumed, the result is a rapid loss of efficiency and reduced ability to work. This fact emphasized the importance of locating and evaluating available water supplies.

(U) In July MACMD published a technical report compiled by their sanitary engineers, which pointed out that the water supply situation in RVN was quite complex, due to both hydrological and chemical quality considerations. The geology of Vietnam is represented by an old and new alluvial plain; ground water quality and

PAGE 792 OF 872 PAGES

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yield in the new alluvial plain is poor, while the quality and yield of water from the old alluvial plain is good. Water quality data is being developed throughout RVN in order to locate sufficient water supply for both military and civilian use.

(C) On 3 July the MILMED message

Water supplies are the cause of much medical concern in RVN. Military water supplies are generally too few in number, too low in output, and of too low quality to satisfy medical requirements. Civilian water supplies are almost exclusively non-potable supplies, by American standards. The lack of adequate amounts of potable water throughout RVN is the cause of much sickness in US/Vietnamese and Third Country units . . . .

(U) Efforts have been made to prevent contamination of water sources and fishing nets observed during recent months. Specific cases were investigated by MAF and other engineers, with recommendations for additional treatment facilities made when appropriate. The MACV Construction Directorate published a technical bulletin, Standards for Water and Sanitary Systems, which sets forth minimum standards for sewage treatment prior to disposal.

(U) The availability of potable water supplies reflected directly on the disease rate. In particular, the diarrheal diseases were the leading cause of admissions to US military hospitals in-country, a goodly portion of which attributed to ingestion of contaminated water. Another significant waterborne disease is amebic dysentery, which is surprisingly common among the US forces in Vietnam. Medical officials stated that diarrheal diseases, amebiasis, and cholera, as well as other waterborne intestinal diseases, could be reduced significantly by more stringent treatment of drinking water.

(U) The principal cause of inadequate water supplies for US troops was shortage of water purification equipment. The most reliable piece of equipment is the erdlator, a positional-flow purifier, but during 1966 there were far too few in-country to handle the water purification requirement. The old model distonite water purifying set had a limited capability; it was outdated and was being replaced by erdlators. However, the old sets were used in remote areas where the more modern and expensive erdlators were not available. The shortages of trained water-point operators and equipment, such as pumps, water tanks, filters, generators, and hoses, all added significantly to the water treatment problem. Action was underway to establish a higher priority on requisition and dispersal of purification equipment to the field.

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(U) Water supply for US forces in RVN has not been a major problem for units operating primarily in I, II, and III CTZ's, where adequate water sources are available in the form of deep wells, shallow wells, and surface water sources. Should US forces enter the IV CTZ in large numbers, a water-supply problem might exist because of the limited number of fresh water sources in some areas. Water needs thus far have been met with the erdlator, both truck and skid-mounted. This complete but complex water purification system is being used in many areas where filtration and disinfection are the only processes required. The shortage of these units in-country has forced many small facilities to rely on Vietnamese water systems which are not considered potable. Distomite Water Purification Set 2 is being put to good use in many areas, but the supply is limited and repair parts are scarce.

(U) Bacteriological tests on water supplies now can be accomplished by the 9th Medical Laboratory, the 20th Preventive Medicine Unit, the Navy Preventive Medicine Unit, Da Nang, and PA&E facilities in Bien Hoa. Chemical tests are performed by the 20th PMU. Pasteur Institute in Saigon also can perform these tests on a limited scale for civilian facilities.

(U) Waste and refuse disposal, like water treatment, were major problems in Vietnam. Waste disposal is complicated particularly by the high water table, limited real estate for cantonment areas, and lack of sufficient sewage disposal plants. Where systems were not available, burn-out latrines were used. The burn-out latrine is an expensive method of waste disposal, but does help maintain sanitary conditions. Eventually most base camps and cantonment areas will utilize the waterborne system. The most commonly used method of refuse disposal was the sanitary fill, which often was located outside the compound perimeter and was therefore subject to scavenging by the local population. Burning has been the most satisfactory means of refuse disposal. As the year ended it was hoped that sufficient bulldozers would become available so that the burn and cover method could be used.

(U) The dumping of garbage and trash in open dumps raised several objections from local Vietnamese civilians during 1966. Complaints were brought to the attention of MACV thru USAID health workers and corrective action was taken. Guidelines for garbage and trash disposal were set forth in a new MACV directive, and a command-wide message, forbidding the use of open dumps, was dispatched to all commanders.

(U) Waste disposal in the Delta region (IV Corps) presents a special problem. Usual methods of waste disposal such as leaching pits, tile fields, and sanitary fills cannot be utilized effectively

PAGE 794 OF 872 PAGES

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in this area because of the high ground water table. The feasibility of utilizing incinerators for disposal of wet garbage and trash is being studied. Burn-out latrines appear to be the most satisfactory method of human waste disposal.

### Infectious Diseases

(C) Hospital admission statistics for 1966 indicated that the diseases admittance rate was twice that of non-battle injuries and injuries resulting from hostile action combined. The battle against diseases was as important as that against the enemy, for without healthy troops units could not sustain themselves in combat. To prevent deterioration of health standards, troop orientation strongly emphasized all aspects of preventive medicine affecting troop health and living conditions. Many of the major diseases in RVN were the same as those in previous wars—diarrhea, acute respiratory diseases, and skin infections. Significantly, these diseases are most common among recently-arrived troops, with the rate declining after a period of adjustment.

(C) Malaria was the foremost disease affecting US forces in RVN, causing an estimated loss of 275,000 man-days during 1966. Malaria was most commonly contracted on field operations, and had a time lag of approximately two weeks from contraction until the onset of symptoms. Diarrheal diseases were of major importance in terms of total numbers of cases, although the majority resulted in little loss of duty time. With improved mess facilities and better water supplies, the overall incidence of diarrheal diseases was expected to decrease. Other diseases that impacted on hospital admission rates and man-days lost were infectious hepatitis, respiratory diseases, and fevers of unknown origins.

### US Forces in RVN

#### 1966 Disease Rates Expressed in Number Per Thousand Per Annum

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>
Malaria	12.7	6.5	11.1	38.1	24.7	35.7	29.2	17.5	42.5	31.8	30.2	36.0
Diarrhea	33.7	44.7	15.2	45.5	79.5	9.7	9.4	8.2	6.0	6.3	3.6	6.1
Other GI Disorders	4.6	12.5	48.6	8.8	7.2	56.1	30.0	38.5	25.0	30.7	30.5	30.1
Fever of Unknown Origin	42.1	44.1	49.4	52.9	38.1	65.5	68.6	69.6	59.8	57.0	62.9	54.6

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<u>Disease</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>
Dengue	1.0	2.0	1.1	1.9	2.2	1.7	1.0	1.1	1.9	2.0	0.8	0.7
Respiratory Disease	43.9	38.0	31.0	26.3	40.7	37.6	31.8	29.4	39.4	27.3	27.8	27.1
Infectious Hepatitis	4.2	4.2	3.9	3.2	3.9	4.5	3.3	2.8	2.6	2.6	3.6	4.3
Non effective Rate	7.3	8.1	8.6	9.4	9.6	9.6	10.2	10.4	11.1	11.1	9.0	10.0

(C) A pilot project using automatic data processing in compiling morbidity data and disease statistics was initiated in late 1966, in conjunction with the MACV Automatic Data Processing Center. Over 1,000 individuals with malaria were interviewed by physicians at several USARV hospitals. Information concerning age, rank, unit, approximate location two weeks prior to becoming ill, date, regularity of taking chloroquine/primaquine, regularity of using bed nets and other personal protective measures, type of malaria, and other clinical data were obtained and placed on punch cards. This information can now be processed to determine relationships among different variables. The pilot study helped pave the way for further use of ADP in US forces in RVN for compiling health statistics. Plans are now underway for converting morbidity reporting to ADP in 1967.

(C) Although most malaria cases were due to P. falciparum, it became apparent during the latter part of the year that more P. vivax and P. malarias infections were occurring. As was the experience in 1965, almost all of the malaria was acquired during field operations against the enemy, there being a time-lag of approximately two weeks from exposure during an operation to the onset of malaria symptoms. Very little malaria was acquired in base camp areas. It now appears that several different strains of P. falciparum are present in RVN, some of which are more refractory to chloroquine than others. Although there were more cases of malaria in 1966, there were considerable fewer deaths attributed to malaria, as well as fewer complications. With the use of daraprim sulfas and Dapsone (DDS) in treatment, the relapse rate was reduced significantly.

(C) The Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Vietnam (WRAIV), early in 1966 conducted field tests with Dapsone (DDS) as chemoprophylaxis against malaria. The results were thought to be encouraging, reducing the incidence of infection by 50 percent. Consequently, units operating in highly endemic malarious areas in II CTZ were placed on daily

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PAGE 296 OF 872 PAGES

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25mg doses of Dapsone (DDS) in addition to the weekly chloroquine/primaquine as chemoprophylaxis. The MACV Surgeon's Office, in coordination with Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Vietnam, and the Preventive Medicine Officer, ROKFV, conducted an evaluation of Dapsone as a malaria chemoprophylactic on two battalions from the cavalry regiment of the ROK Tiger Division. Dapsone or a placebo was administered to each individual on the basis of whether or not the individual's serial number ended in an odd or even digit. In addition, each individual was also taking the weekly chloroquine/primaquine. Individuals on operations in the same area had presumably identical exposure to mosquitoes in known malarious regions, although approximately one-half of the troops received a placebo and the other half received Dapsone. Preliminary results of the study revealed that out of 650 troops taking the placebo plus chloroquine/primaquine, 72 cases of malaria were confirmed. Out of 600 taking Dapsone plus chloroquine primaquine, there were 37 cases.

(C) Malaria rates per thousand per annum by month fluctuated from a low of 6.5 in February to a high of 42.5 in August before tapering off slightly to 36.0 in December. Among the infectious category, diarrheal diseases were of major importance. This group of diseases was of major importance in terms of number of cases; however, the majority of cases were mild, with little time lost. In the more severe febrile illnesses, Shigella organisms were probably the culprits. With improved mess facilities and better water supply, the overall incidence of diarrheal disease is expected to decrease progressively. A Vietnamese food handlers' training program was developed and put into operation in the clubs and messes of the Saigon area.

(U) Infectious hepatitis rates decreased during 1966, even though routine use of gamma globulin prophylaxis was discontinued in May 1966 for US Army troops in RVN. From January through June, the average hepatitis rate in USARV was 4.8 per 1,000 per annum. From July through December the average rate was 3.9. Army population groups deemed at high risk of exposure to infectious hepatitis, such as Special Forces personnel, continue to receive the gamma globulin. Navy, Marine, and Air Force personnel continue to receive routine prophylaxis.

(U) After injuries resulting from hostile action and non-battle injuries, the next leading cause for admission to hospitals in RVN is fever of unknown origin (FUO). It is felt that malaria often may be overlooked since chemoprophylaxis drugs may suppress the parasitemia, thus preventing a diagnosis. A study of FUO's at the 93d Evacuation Hospital (in conjunction with WRAIR, Vietnam) indicated that the diagnostic problem could be divided into five major groups: 1) arbovirus diseases (dengue and chikungunya); 2) scrub typhus;

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PAGE 797 OF 872 PAGES

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3) malaria; 4) specific bacterial diseases (shigellosis, maloidosis); and 5) non-specific febrile illnesses (mild enteritis and 24-48 hour fevers).

(U) The VD rate in US personnel in RVN was 246.8 per 1,000 per annum during 1966 (this included out-patients). Gonorrhea comprised the majority of these cases. Chancroid, lymphogranuloma venereum, and syphilis were occasionally encountered. Rare instances of granuloma inguinale also appeared. Drug resistance was not a problem.

(U) Plague and cholera are the two most serious diseases among the RVN civilian population. Until economic progress brings improved water and waste-disposal systems, better housing, and increased awareness of public health, little can be done in the control of these diseases other than massive immunization programs and associated measures. These two diseases threaten uninfected civilian and military communities. Smallpox, absent from RVN since 1959, could be reintroduced with serious sequelae. Civilian malaria is expected to increase in communities previously protected by GVN malaria control activities because of shifting populations due to wartime conditions. Epidemics of dengue hemorrhagic fever have been documented in the Saigon area and provinces of the Delta region. Encephalitis has occurred in the civilian population and in US military personnel, but the epidemiology of the disease remains undefined. Other diseases possessing significant epidemic potential for one or more population groups are typhoid fever, scrub typhus, diphtheria, hepatitis, leptospirosis, and meningococcal meningitis.

(U) Insect and rodent control in air and water ports caused great concern to the MACMD office during latter 1966. A MACV directive on this subject was staffed through 7th AF, MSTG, and 1st Log/USARV. This directive sets forth general control measures to be used on all vessels and aircraft in addition to those required in ground facilities. It will be distributed to commercial vessels entering military ports and every effort will be made to insure enforcement.

(U) During 1966 new MACV directives on malaria control, venereal disease control, rabies prevention, immunization requirements, and other directives pertaining to preventive medicine were published.

(U) During the year the Corps Epidemiological Reference Office (CERO) became a reality. Through a joint MACV and USAID directive, there was established in each of the four Corps areas a CERO, with primary membership consisting of the Corps MACV Senior Medical Advisor, the Regional USAID Public Health Director, for each of the II, III and IV Corps, a USAEV representative, and for I Corps a III MAF representative. CERO's have been established to facilitate rapid

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communication of epidemic disease data and to coordinate all available resources within the respective Corps areas for epidemic investigation and control activities. It is planned that CERO will serve as the pathway for encouraging and assisting GVN civilian and military authorities in controlling and aborting epidemics. It envisions bringing visible GVN public health services to the people through control activities. CERO is an outgrowth of the Joint Preventive Medicine and Communicable Disease Control Subcommittee, which meets in Saigon on the third Sunday of each month.

(U) Aerial dispersal of insecticides in RVN is coordinated and supervised through the MACV Surgeon's Office, which authorizes all proposed spray missions. Over 400 helicopter aerial-spray missions were conducted by the 20th Preventive Medicine Unit and the Navy Preventive Medicine Unit, Da Nang, during 1966. For 30 days during October and November, a C-123 outfitted for aerial spraying was assigned to the MACV Surgeon's office to be used as an adjunct in combating malaria. C-123 aerial spray missions in RVN, with 57 percent malathion, were conducted at Duc My, Chu Lai, An Khe, Binh Khe, Nha Trang, Lai Nghi, An Loc, Xuan Loc, Gia Ray, Khe Sanh, Lang Vei, and Con Son Island. In conjunction with the 20th Preventive Medicine Unit and the 9th Medical Laboratory, pre- and post-spraying entomological data were obtained on Con Son Island. The data collected points to the conclusion that C-123 application of insecticide is an effective means of reducing the mosquito population. Further studies are planned when another C-123 becomes available in March 1967.

#### Hospitalization and Evacuation

(C) The availability of hospital beds and their occupancy by US military forces in RVN during 1966 was as follows:

Month	Average Strength	Average Beds Available	Average Beds Occupied	Average Percent Occupied
January	174,658	1713	1187	68.9
February	206,685	1703	1307	76.4
March	224,381	1883	1368	72.6
April	244,829	2131	1615	75.8
May	259,278	3750	2095	55.9
June	269,501	3991	2489	62.4
July	280,477	4187	2579	61.5
August	297,347	4413	2690	60.9
September	311,110	4831	3128	64.7
October	333,901	4015	2884	71.8
November	357,510	4352	2992	68.7
December	373,213	4864	3486	71.7

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PAGE 279 OF 272 PAGES

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(U) The percentage distribution of hospital admissions by disease, non-battle injury, and injuries resulting from hostile action for US forces in RVN during 1966 are summarized below:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Disease</u>	<u>NBI</u>	<u>IRHA</u>
Jan	68.5	18.5	13.0
Feb	56.7	16.8	26.5
Mar	62.5	17.4	20.1
Apr	68.4	14.9	16.7
May	62.2	14.7	23.1
Jun	70.0	13.3	16.7
Jul	71.5	14.2	14.3
Aug	71.2	14.1	14.7
Sep	72.4	14.0	13.6
Oct	75.1	14.0	10.9
Nov	73.2	14.0	12.8
Dec	71.4	14.9	13.7

(C) Actual hospital admissions, with a break-out of those admissions due to malaria, are shown in the following table:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Average In-Country Strength (Thousands)</u>	<u>No. Hosp Admissions</u>	<u>Percent of Command</u>	<u>No. of Malaria</u>	<u>Percent of Admissions Due to Malaria</u>
Jan	195	6043	3.1	210	3.5
Feb	207	7572	3.7	103	1.4
Mar	225	8989	4.0	211	2.3
Apr	245	9736	4.0	778	8.0
May	259	9681	3.7	631	6.5
Jun	270	11,799	4.4	816	6.9
Jul	281	10,523	3.7	593	6.6
Aug	297	12,742	4.3	441	3.5
Sep	311	13,079	4.2	1081	8.3
Oct	334	12,954	3.9	900	7.0
Nov	358	13,729	3.8	884	6.4
Dec	378	15,371	4.1	1134	7.4

(U) CY 1966 showed a marked increase in the number of patients evacuated from RVN and Thailand, with significant changes in evacuation capabilities and procedures. During 1966 casualty staging flights were established at Tan Son Nhut, RVN; Da Nang, RVN; and Korat, Thailand.

(U) On 1 July the Military Airlift Command initiated direct medical evacuation flights to Andrews Air Force Base and Travis Air

PAGE 800 OF 872 PAGES

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Force Base. The East Coast C-141 flight departs Tan Son Nhut on four scheduled flights each week. The West Coast flight originates at Clark Air Base. Both flights make an initial stop at Yokota Air Base, Japan, to allow the transfer of East and West Coast bound patients. The 903d Air Evacuation Squadron established a scheduled in-country air evacuation route effective 1 November. Formerly, all in-country evacuations were on an on-call basis, which led to sporadic requirements. Although this route has been in existence only a short time, it has proven successful.

(U) In November the ROKAF began their own aeromedical evacuation flights. Initial flights were limited to a small number of ambulatory patients, flown from Clark Air Base to Taegu, Korea. As more experience is gained in the many varied problems of aeromedical evacuation it is anticipated that the ROKAF eventually will evacuate all ROK patients from Qui Nhon, RVN, and Clark Air Base, PI, to Taegu, Korea.

(U) The number of patients evacuated during 1966, by destination, was as follows:

## PATIENTS EVACUATED

<u>DATE</u>	<u>CONUS</u>	<u>PACOM</u>	<u>ROK</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Jan	339	1284	115	1708
Feb	623	1256	103	1982
Mar	930	1395	95	2420
Apr	693	986	86	1755
May	816	1242	69	2127
Jun	792	1461	274	2527
Jul	920	1290	81	2291
Aug	931	1111	82	2124
Sep	855	1410	272	2537
Oct	333	1918	305	2556
Nov	413	2027	140	2580
Dec	570	1791	140	2501

## RVNAF Medical Services

(U) The dearth of personnel trained in preventive medicine remains one of the foremost problems faced by the RVNAF Chief Surgeon. Further, administrative and logistical obstacles continue to hamper complete realization of sound preventive medicine programs. Nevertheless, slow but steady progress appears in the making. The Chief of Preventive Medicine, RVNAF Chief Surgeon's Office, obtained a Master of Public Health Degree from Tulane University. During 1966 his

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staff was further augmented by the addition of a physician who recently received a Master of Public Health Degree and Master of Science Degree in nutrition from Columbia University. Since 1965 there has not been a Sanitary Engineer on the staff, but one man is scheduled for off-shore training in sanitary engineering in FY 67. Accomplishments and activities for 1966 were as follows:

1) Field trips became routine for members of the RVNAF Preventive Medicine Branch and their MACV counterparts. Epidemiological investigations, hospital visits, Corps Headquarters liaison visits, and sanitation surveys, all resulted in clearer recognition of preventive medicine problems.

2) Technical competence of ARVN Preventive Medicine Teams improved due to efforts of NCO advisors from the MACV Surgeon's Office and instructors from the RVNAF Chief Surgeon's Office. The training program for Preventive Medicine teams, established in 1965, has been continued with at least one session conducted in each corps area. In addition, CJT with US Preventive Medicine units has been accomplished in a few instances in 1966, with more planned for 1967.

3) Twenty ARVN enlisted men received training in basic sanitation and preventive medicine procedures in a four-week course conducted at the RVNAF Military Medicine School, Cholon. All were returned to non-medical units where they will serve as PM technicians. Plans are under way and courses outlined for establishing an advanced preventive medicine course of four to six weeks duration, aimed at improving overall competence of ARVN Preventive Medicine specialists.

4) Presently there are four ARVN Preventive Medicine teams assigned to the first four Area Logistical Commands (ALC's). A fifth Preventive Medicine team will be formed and assigned to V ALC as soon as trained personnel are available.

(U) Immunizations for ARVN and RF/PF troops received new emphasis in 1966, although the program is far from complete. Smallpox is given routinely each year and cholera every six months. New recruits receive a basic series of Typhoid, paratyphoid, tetanus, and diphtheria, which is repeated in one year and again in five years. Typhus is not given, and plague immunizations are administered only to those troops in a known plague endemic area or during epidemics. Formerly a French-made diphtheria vaccine was used which had a high content of toxoid. This allegedly caused a high reaction rate, particularly in those receiving the booster, and commanders were often reluctant to allow its use because of incapacitation of troops for several days. During 1966 schick testing on several hundred new recruits revealed that approximately 95 percent were immune to diphtheria. Consequently, it was recommended that the diphtheria toxoid content be reduced in vaccine given to military personnel.

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(U) The use of the jet injector gun for immunizations was introduced at an ARVN training center. The major advantage is the rapidity with which injections can be given. One disadvantage, however, is the maintenance required to keep the gun in operation, but training of dispensary NCO's should alleviate this problem.

(U) Establishing good water purification practice has been a major problem in many ARVN compounds. Calcium Hypochlorite (35 lb pails) has been a "due out" item in ARVN supply channels for several years because of a breakdown in the requisitioning procedures. The problem was investigated, personnel were instructed as to proper requisitioning procedure, and the chemical should be available for use in water treatment before April 1967.

(U) Efforts by the MACV Sanitary Engineer to persuade ARVN personnel to use chlorine in their water are meeting with some success. Several commanders have consented to its use in recent months. This change in attitude is at least partially a result of chlorine utilization by advisory units. Their apparent good health and lack of intestinal disease has set an example for their counterparts. Even though iodine water purification tablets are a standard item of issue for ARVN, they are seldom used by enlisted personnel in the field because of the lack of command emphasis and lack of knowledge concerning protection provided by this tablet.

(U) During 1966 increases and additions to the RVNAF medical structure were recommended and supported by advisory personnel. The following listed changes were approved by MACJ3 Force Development and the RVNAF Joint General Staff in October 1966, for implementation in CY 67:

1) An increase from two to three Blood Bank detachments. With the Central Blood Bank in Saigon this will provide for blood storage and bleeding capability in each CTZ.

2) An increase of one 500-bed station hospital, to be located in the Bien Hoa area. The only hospital facility in this area is Cong Hoa General Hospital, which normally operates at greater than 100 percent of its rated capacity. The addition of this station hospital will relieve the overcrowded conditions at Cong Hoa Hospital.

3) An increase in the authorized staffing of Convalescent Centers from 25 spaces to 90 spaces. The reduced staff is adequate to operate only a small portion of the 700 beds required. The increased staff will permit each center to operate at full capacity, making more hospital beds available for the seriously sick and injured.

4) An increase for the Central Blood Bank from 40 to 50 personnel spaces to permit establishment of mobile bleeding teams to visit outlying areas.

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5) An increase from three to four type-A dispensaries (50-bed) to provide a dispensary for the Airborne Division. A medical facility for the division is operated by the organic medical company; however, when the division is committed, no medical personnel are available for continuing medical support of base compound personnel and dependents. The authorization of this dispensary will insure continued support of the compound and will free the organic medical company to support the division properly in operations.

6) An increase from three to four Veterinary detachments (Type B) to provide a small-animal treatment capability in each CTZ.

7) An increase from 30 to 38 spaces for the Medical Disposition Center to provide support for RF/PF personnel.

8) Establishment of five Mobile X-Ray teams to provide each ALC with X-ray facilities to conduct physical examinations of inductees and to conduct area surveys for tuberculosis.

9) Establishment of three Dental Prosthetics teams to be located at Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, and Can Tho. With the current teams at Cong Hoa Hospital and Duy Tan Hospital this will provide a Dental Prosthetic capability in each ALC.

10) An increase from 100 to 224 personnel spaces under control of the RVNAF Chief Surgeon to permit establishment of a Dental Section, Research and Development activity, and five Medical Staff Sections for the ALC Headquarters.

11) A recommendation for an increase of Field Hospitals (400-bed) from three to four to provide one Field Hospital for each CTZ was approved in October 1966, but for implementation in CY 68.

(C) For further improvement of medical support, a Territorial Medical Plan was submitted by the RVNAF Chief Surgeon and was approved by JGS in May 1966. The normal evacuation and treatment system of RVNAF is based on a conventional warfare concept under which the sick and wounded are evacuated from the battalion aid station to regimental clearing station, field hospital and general hospital. Current practice, however, is to evacuate from battalion to field, station, or general hospital. In the type warfare being waged in RVN, many small units (i.e., RF/PF and other units in remote areas) are not provided adequate direct medical support. At the same time, some medical units which normally would support conventional operations are not fully committed. In RVN the total medical resources are not adequate to support combat forces and the civilian population at the same time. Mobilization of the necessary medical personnel to support combat operations leaves the civilian population with limited medical assistance, particularly in public health. To alleviate this situation, the military medical

PAGE 804 OF 872 PAGES THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
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resources are to be reorganized to share some of the demands of the population. Specifically, the medical territorial reorganization will provide for adequate and effective medical support of RVNAF, and support of the Medical Civic Action Program, to assist in winning the support of the people by providing first aid and definitive treatment for sick and injured civilians. Further, the development of Preventive Medicine and Sanitation programs will improve the general health status in rural areas.

(U) To implement the plan, existing medical units which are not fully employed or are in reserve will be used to establish a 100-bed military hospital in each sector (province) which does not have an existing military hospital. Twenty-bed infirmaries will be established in sub-sectors (districts) remote from the sector hospital. These infirmaries initially will be staffed by RF medical personnel. Implementation of the plan to utilize fully medical support units and provide the greatest care to the greatest number was underway by the end of 1966. This program will require increased emphasis and support during 1967.

(U) Cong Hoa General Hospital is located on the edge of Saigon. It is authorized 1,800 beds, but consists of permanent masonry structures which were built to house 1,000 patients, and temporary wooden structures which were built to house 200 patients, for a total constructed capacity of 1,200 patients. It is the primary teaching hospital of the RVNAF Medical Service. It provides on-the-job training for students of the Military Medical School, Cholon, to include Surgeons, Nurses, Medical Aidmen, Anesthetists, X-Ray Technicians, and Laboratory Technicians. Construction programs were funded in 1966 to provide 800 additional beds to this facility. Construction has commenced on a 700-man dining room. MAP funding has been requested in order to provide a surgical suite of ten operating rooms and supporting services. The Duy Tan General Hospital is located in Da Nang. It provides specialized medical and surgical care to the I and II CTZ's. Construction has begun on wards to provide permanent type facilities for 400 additional beds. Additional latrine facilities, as well as an improved water supply, are also being built. The Phan Thanh Gian Station Hospital at Can Tho was dedicated and placed into operation on 1 September. It is of semi-permanent construction, has a bed capacity of 600 patients, and is the model which will be followed in construction of future station hospitals. Station hospitals at Phan Thiet and Tuy Hoa (of temporary construction) were partially completed in 1966. They need only electricity and water to become operational. A new station hospital programmed for construction at Ban Me Thuot was delayed by lack of funds. In the interim, a portion of the hospital's patients are cared for in the province hospital and a portion are provided for in a make-shift annex located approximately three km from the town. One additional 500-bed station hospital has

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been authorized. MAP funding was requested to provide this facility, to be constructed at Bien Hoa. Numerous other construction and rehabilitation projects were programmed during 1966, but lack of funds or contractors and other problems caused such projects to be deferred. Three field hospitals are authorized RVNAF with a total of 1,200 beds. Of the beds authorized, only 600 actually were operational during 1966. The additional beds will become operational upon implementation of the Territorial Medical Plan.

#### Military Provincial Health Program

(U) There were 16 additional Military Provincial Health Program (MILPHAP) teams deployed in-country during 1966, bringing the total number of teams to 21. Location of MILPHAP teams of 31 December were as follows: 1) Navy teams at Quang Tri, Hoi An, Tam Ky, Bao Loc, Chau Doc, and Soc Trang; 2) Air Force teams at Hon Quan, Tra Vinh, Tran An, Long Xuyen, Phan Rang, Vinh Long, and Quan Long; 3) Army teams at Quang Ngai, Bac Lieu, Pleiku, Song Be, Saigon, Ban Me Thuot, Bong Son, and Moc Hoa.

(U) The initial MILPHAP Concept of concentration on strengthening the clinical services of the province hospital was expanded by USAID 1 November 1966 to include the entire spectrum of the provincial health program. This deletion of emphasis on any one area of the provincial health service was brought about by several factors, the first and foremost being that of demand. Not only were the provincial hospitals in need of augmentation, but the district health centers (where by far the larger number of outpatients are seen) were desperately in need of help. Because the objective of the program is to augment and strengthen the Vietnamese medical capabilities, sections of the MILPHAP teams have been separated from the provincial hospital and sent in teams (usually one medical officer and three enlisted men) to the district health facility. This program is beginning to bear fruit in that now, by early identification of disease and injury, only those cases which need inpatient medical care are being referred to the province hospitals.

(U) As a joint MACV/USAID program, the Military Provincial Health Assistance Program received logistic support from both, with MACV's responsibilities being limited to supply and maintenance support of TOE. The MILPHAP teams were hampered throughout 1966 by low rates of fill on medical supplies required for mission performance. USAID initiated a broad program to improve the GVN Ministry of Health's capability of providing medical supply support to RVN health services. The USAID Logistical Advisory Branch to the GVN Ministry of Health was expanded; a program was initiated for regional depots to improve distribution; a program was initiated to streamline GVN/MCH depot

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procedures; and the pipeline was shortened on 1 October by the requisitioning of medical supplies from the US Army Medical Depot, Ryukyus Islands. First fruits of this broad attack were realized during the closing months of 1966, with initial rate of fill rising from 30 percent in September to over 50 percent in December. It is anticipated that the initial fill rate will continue to improve to approximately 80 percent by March or April 1967.

### Medical Civic Action Program

(U) The Medical Civic Action (MEDCAP) effort continued to have a favorable impact on the Vietnamese people and provided considerable support to the overall GVN program during CY 1966. The biggest drawback to the program during 1966 had been the problems encountered in medical supplies. The RVNAF logistics system provided medical supply support to all MEDCAP activities during 1966. The rate of fill for MEDCAP requisitions averaged only 50 percent through the year. Despite the low rate of fill, medical supply support continued to increase throughout the year. Actually, the dollar value of medical supplies issued in support of MEDCAP has approximately doubled each calendar year since 1963, when it totaled \$248,552, rising to a total of \$1,838,037 in 1966.

(U) A study was made by the MACMD office in 1966 of the medical supply support to MEDCAP. This study determined that medical supply support could be improved, duplication eliminated, and management of supply requirements simplified if MEDCAP supply support came from the same logistics system providing each military unit with its operational medical supplies. MACV component commands concurred with the study's recommendations whereby the RVNAF logistics system would support all RVNAF MEDCAP requirements through MAP, and USARV, NAVFORV, and 7th AF would support all MEDCAP requirements of their respective US and FWMAF customers. This study will be used as the basis for implementing the transfer of all MEDCAP funding from USAID to DOD, which was directed by the Secretary of Defense in November 1966, to be effective retroactively to 1 July 1966.

(U) Treatments provided by MEDCAP have reflected a major area of growth during 1966. Category totals for 1966 were: 1) MEDCAP I (RVNAF) 7,194,060; 2) MEDCAP IV (US/FWMAF) 2,686,753; and 3) an overall total of 9,880,783. Although the number of MEDCAP supply accounts has remained constant, the number of personnel involved has increased. The current 225 MEDCAP accounts are broken down in the following groups: 1) RVNAF MEDCAP Accounts--176; 2) US MEDCAP Accounts--43; 3) FW Accounts--6; and 4) a total of 225. Another index of increased MEDCAP activity during 1966 is the dollar value of supplies issued

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in support of MEDCAP activity during 1966 is the dollar value of supplies issued in support of MEDCAP. The total of \$1,838,037.41 reflects a 100 percent increase over the total of \$924,549 for 1965.

## Footnote

1. All information contained in this Annex is based upon MACMD Quarterly Historical Reports, 1966, and DF (C) MACMD, 23 Mar 67, Subj: Medical Input (U).

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## ANNEX J--COMMANDERS AND PRINCIPAL STAFF OFFICERS\*

### HQ US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam

COMUSMACV			
William C. Westmoreland	GEN	USA	
DEFCOMUSMACV			
John A. Heintges	LTG	USA	
DEPCOMUSMACV for Air Operations			
Joseph H. Moore	LTG	USAF	
William W. Momyer	LTG	USAF	1 Jul 66
Chief of Staff			
William B. Rosson	MG	USA	
Deputy Chief of Staff			
Richard S. Abbey	BG (MG)	USAF	
Augustus M. Hendry Jr	BG	USAF	1 Oct 66
Special Assistant to COMUSMACV			
James L. Collins Jr	BG	USA	
John F. Freund	BG	USA	28 May 66
AC of S, J1			
Ben Sternberg	MG	USA	
Donald H. McGovern	BG	USA	1 Mar 66
AC of S, J2			
Joseph A. McChristian	BG	USA	
AC of S, J3			
William E. DePuy	BG (MG)	USA	
John C. F. Tillson III	MG	USA	12 Mar 66
Deputy AC of S, J3, for ARVN & RF/FF			
Albert R. Brownfield Jr	BG	USA	12 Dec 66
Director, Combat Operations Center			
William K. Jones	BG (MG)	USMC	
John R. Chaisson	BG	USMC	20 Dec 66
AC of S, J4			
John D. Crowley	BG	USA	
Carroll H. Dunn	MG	USA	1 Jul 66

\* First-named incumbent occupied the position on 1 January 1966, or upon arrival of his unit in-country, or upon creation of the position. Date of successor is indicated. Promotions during tenure are shown in parentheses.

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AC of S, J5 John N. Fwbank Jr	MG	USAF	
AC of S, J6 Walter E. Lotz Jr Sam L. Husy	BG (MG) BG	USA USAF	25 Jul 66
Chief of Information Ben W. Legars Rodger R. Bankson	COL COL	USA USA	4 Mar 66
Director of Construction Carroll H. Dunn Daniel A. Raymond	MG COL (BG)	USA USA	11 Feb 66 1 Jul 66
Director, Training Directorate Sterling R. Johnson Lloyd J. Ptak John F. Freund	COL COL BG	USA USA USA	7 Mar 66 1 Nov 66
Director, Revolutionary Development Support William A. Knowlton	BG	USA	7 Nov 66
Chief, USAF Advisory Group Albert W. Schinta Donavon F. Smith	BG BG	USAF USAF	23 Oct 66
Chief, USN Advisory Group Norvell G. Ward	RADM	USN	
Deputy Senior Advisor, I Corps Howard B. St. Clair Archelaus E. Hamblen Jr	COL COL	USA USA	1 Mar 66
Deputy Senior Advisor, II Corps Theodore C. Metaxis James F. Timothy Richard M. Lee	COL COL COL (BG)	USA USA USA	1 Feb 66 22 Jun 66
Deputy Senior Advisor, III Corps Albert W. Frink Arndt L. Mueller	COL COL	USA USA	10 Jan 66
Deputy Senior Advisor, IV Corps George Barton William R. Desobry	COL COL (BG)	USA USA	3 Jun 66
<u>HQ, US Army, Vietnam</u>			
Commanding General William C. Westmoreland	GEN	USA	

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Deputy Commanding General John Norton Jean E. Engler	MG LTG	USA USA	24 Jan 66
Asst Dep CG and Chief of Staff Richard J. Seitz	BG	USA	
Deputy Chief of Staff, Pers & Admin Earl F. Cole	COL (BG)	USA	4 Jul 66
Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans & Opns Frank D. Miller	BG	USA	25 Mar 66
Signal Officer/CG 1st Signal Brigade Robert D. Terry	COL (BG)	USA	
Engineer/CG 18th Engineer Brigade Robert A. Ploger	BG (MG)	USA	
Aviation Officer/CG 1st Aviation Brigade George P. Seneff Jr	BG	USA	
CG, Headquarters Area Command Robert L. Ashworth	BG	USA	
CG, 1st Logistical Command Charles W. Rifler	MG	USA	
CG, I Field Force/Sr Adv. III Corps Stanley R. Larsen	LTG	USA	
CG, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) Harry W. O. Kinnard John Norton	MG MG	USA USA	6 May 66
CG, 4th Infantry Division Harry S. Collins	MG	USA	Sept 66
CG, 1st Brigade 101st Airborne Division Willard Pearson	BG	USA	17 Jan 66
CG, II Field Force/Sr Adv III Corps Jonathan O. Seaman	LTG	USA	15 Mar 66
CG, 1st Infantry Division Jonathan O. Seaman William E. DePuy	MG (LTG) MG	USA USA	1 15 Mar 66
CG, 9th Infantry Division ((-)) George S. Eckhardt	MG	USA	

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CG, 25th Infantry Division Frederick C. Weyand	MG	USA	
CG, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) Paul F. Smith John R. Deane Jr	BG (MG) BG	USA USA	12 Dec 66
CG, 196th Light Infantry Brigade Francis S. Conaty Jr Edward H. deSaussure Richard T. Knowles	GOL BG BG	USA USA USA	1 Nov 66 16 Nov 66
CG, 199th Light Infantry Brigade Charles W. Ryder Jr	BG	USA	1 Dec 66
COMNAVFORV Norvell G. Ward	RADM	USN	19 Apr 66
Commander Task Force 115 Norvell G. Ward Clifford L. Stewart	RADM CAPT	USN USN	16 Apr 66
Commander Task Force 116 Norvell G. Ward Burton B. Witham Jr	RADM CAPT	USN USN	18 May 66
COM 3rd NCB/DEP DIR, PACNAVFACSEA/GICC Robert R. Wooding Paul E. Seufer	RADM RADM	USN USN	9 Dec 66
COMNAVSUPPACT/NAVFORVREP, Da Nang Thomas R. Weschler	RADM	USN	6 Feb 66
CG, III Marine Amphibious Force Lewis W. Walt	LTC	USMC	
CG, 1st Marine Division Lewis J. Fields Herman Nickerson Jr	MG MG	USMC USMC	9 Mar 66 1 Nov 66
CG, 3rd Marine Division Wood B. Kyle	MG	USMC	18 Mar 66
CG, 1st Marine Air Wing Keith B. McCurcheon Louis B. Robertshaw	MG MG	USMC USMC	16 May 66

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CG, Force Logistic Command  
George C. Axtell  
James E. Herbold Jr

COL USMC 15 Mar 66  
EG USMC 3 Oct 66

Seventh U.S. Air Force

Commander

Joseph H. Moore  
William W. Mayer

LTC USAF  
LTC USAF 1 Jul 66

Vice Commander

Gilbert L. Meyers  
Gordon M. Graham

MG USAF  
MG USAF 15 Aug 66

Chief of Staff

Edwin J. Witzemberger  
Franklin A. Nichols

COL USAF  
EG USAF 2 Jul 66

Commander, 894th Air Division  
William G. Moore Jr

EG USAF 30 Oct 66

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ANNEX K - 1966 CHRONOLOGY

JANUARY

- 1 -- US military strength in SVN approximately 184,000. (U)
  - The 173rd Abn Bde, including the 1st Bn, Royal Australian Regt (1/RAR), and ARVN units launch Operation MARAUDER/AN DAN 564, a seven-day sweep against two VC bns in the Hau Nghia Province Delta Region near the Cambodian border (LOSSES: Frd-15 US/AUS KIA, 72 US/AUS WIA, ARVN 31 KIA, 112 WIA; En-268 KIA, 96 VCC). (C)
  - ARVN and ROK forces launch 17-day Operation JEFFERSON in Phu Yen Province (LOSSES: Frd-45 KIA, 94 WIA; En-391 KIA, 14 VCC). (C)
  - First overseas switch voice circuit operational between Saigon/Tan Son Nhut and Hawaii. (S)
- 2 -- VC device exploded at 5th Special Forces Headquarters in Nha Trang (LOSSES: Frd- US 4 WIA, VN 2 WIA). (C)
- 3 -- MACV J4 Ammunition Div commences operations assuming supervisory responsibility for all RVN ammunition requirements, storage, and distribution. (U)
- 4 -- In first confirmed use of 120-mm mortars in RVN, enemy attacks Khe Sanh Special Forces Camp in Quang Tri Province. About 25 of 75 rounds fired during the attacks are 120-mm -- the heaviest crew-served weapon employed in-country by enemy to date. (LOSSES: Frd-11 KIA, 30 WIA; Equip-two O-1 aircraft destroyed).(C)
- 5 -- First elements of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div arrive in RVN. (U)
- 6 -- Claymore mine exploded outside Tan Son Nhut main gate (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA, VN 1 KIA, 5 WIA). (U)
  - MACV COC communications center operational with 10 secure circuits. (S)
- 8 -- 173rd Abn Bde units, including the 1/RAR, and 1st US Inf Div units launch Operation CRIBF, a seven-day search-and-destroy operation in Hau Nghia and Binh Duong Provinces. Extensive enemy tunnel systems and a secret headquarters are uncovered, and large quantities of weapons and ammunition captured (LOSSES: Frd-US 23 KIA, 122 WIA, AUS 4 KIA, 16 WIA; En-151 KIA, 91 VCC). (C)
  - Senior representatives of US Mission, Saigon, the Vietnam Coordinating Committee, Washington, and other USC agencies meet for four days at Warrenton, Virginia, to determine the course of joint US-GVN Revolutionary Development program. Conference takes measures

PAGE 814 OF 872 PAGES

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- 8 -- to eliminate manpower, material, and transport shortages in Vietnam and designates priorities and machinery for resources control and allocation. (U)
- VC ambush RF convoy in Phuoc Tuy Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 3 KIA; RF 31 KIA, 30 WIA, 10 MIA). (C)
- 9 -- ROK units launch two-day Operation FLYING TIGER VI in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-ROK 11 KIA, 42 WIA; En-192 KIA, 69 VCC). (C)
- 13 -- Estimated VC bn ambushes ARVN regt in Hau Nghia Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA, 2 WIA, ARVN 25 KIA, 17 WIA). (C)
- 15 -- Premier Ky tells the 2nd Armed Forces Congress in Saigon that a national referendum on a constitution will be held in October 1966 and that general elections will be held in 1967. He lists the GVN's 1966 targets as: winning the war, pacifying the countryside, stabilizing the economy and building democracy. (U)
- Cam Ranh Bay seadrome established for anti-infiltration aircraft patrolling the northern coast (Red Track) of RVN. (C)
- 16 -- SECSTATE departs after 26-hour Saigon visit for talks with GVN leaders. (U)
- Month-long logistic and deployment conference on RVN/F operations at CINCPAC HQ. (C)
- 500 MAP-supported television sets issued to ARVN. (U)
- LTC Jean E. Engler, USA, succeeds BG John Norton, USA as Deputy Commanding General, USARV. (U)
- 17 -- Headquarters, Regimental Landing Team, and other USMC elements begin landing at Chu Lai from Okinawa. (U)
- VC overrun CIDG outpost at Bien Hiep in Binh Long Province (CIDG 39 MIA). (C)
- USAID representative Douglas Ramsey captured by VC near Cu Chi in Hau Nghia Province. (U)
- 18 -- United States Operation Mission (USOM) Vietnam redesignated United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission (U)
- 19 -- Elements of 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div, and 2d ROK Marine Bde begin Operation VAN BUREN, a 33-day rice-security operation in Phu Yen Province. More than 30,000 metric tons of harvested rice secured (LOSSES: Frd-US 54 KIA, 194 WIA; ROK 45 KIA, 115 WIA, 2 MIA; En-679 KIA, 49 VCC, 130 ind wps, 18 C/S Wps). (C)

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JANUARY

- 19 -- Several RVNAF junior officers arrested after Premier Ky declares that a "small group of people" are working toward a military coup. (U)
- 20 -- US, Free World and RVN forces undertake an 84-hour cease-fire over the Lunar New Year (TET) holiday. Enemy-initiated incidents of violation of the cease-fire total 106 -- 77 against Free World forces and 29 against RVNAF units. Friendly losses over the period: 13 KIA, 36 WIA, 1 MIA. The holiday sees the climax of an intensive US-GVN psychological warfare campaign to encourage enemy defections under the Chieu Hoi program. (U)
- 21 -- All crewmen rescued by US and RVNAF units after Panamanian merchant ship BRIGHT STAR goes aground near Chu Lai. (U)
- COMUSMACV decided Tuy Hoa expeditionary airfield construction should be postponed indefinitely because of difficulty in building suitable supporting port facility. (S)
- Approximately 400 VC attack ROK Marine platoon outpost 15 km SW of Tuy Hoa in Phu Yen Province. (LOSSES: Frd-ROK 5 KIA, 13 WIA, 8 MIA; En-46 KIA). (C)
- 24 -- 3rd Bde, 1st Cav Div (AM), a ROK battalion and RVNAF units launch 42-day combined Operation MASHER/WHITE WING/THANH PHONG II near Beng Son in Binh Dinh Province which produces the largest number of VC casualties to date in the war. The primary enemy unit is 18th VC Main Force Regt (LOSSES: Frd-US 245 KIA, 876 WIA, 6 MIA; RVNAF 119 KIA, 359 WIA, 6 MIA; ROK 10 KIA, 24 WIA; En-2,389 KIA, 701 VCC, 1,937 VCS, 313 ind wpns, 41 C/S wpns). (C)
- An intensive psychological warfare campaign begins against NVA infiltrators along routes from NVN through Laos to RVN. (C)
- 25 -- CINCPAC advises COMUSMACV of decision to build expeditionary airfield at Qui Nhon instead of Tuy Hoa. (S)
- VC attack Da Nang airfield and nearby I Corps HQ with 120-mm mortar, inflicting minor damage (LOSSES: Frd-5 KIA, 25 WIA).(C)
- All 46 aboard killed when USAF C-123 crashes near An Khe in worst air crash in Vietnam to date involving US troops. (U)
- Curtailment of SNIPE HUNT night helicopter operations reported because of serious shortage of flares in SVN. (S)
- 28 -- VC attack Special Forces outpost in Quang Ngai Province and ambush friendly reaction force (LOSSES: Frd-35 KIA, 14 WIA, 81 MIA, more than 100 ind wpns lost). (C)

PAGE 816 OF 872 PAGES

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- 28 -- VC attack Vc Khia New Life Hamlet in Kien Giang Province (LOSSES: Frd-3 KIA, 6 WIA, 17 MIA). (C)
- In largest amphibious landing of the war to date, USMC units launch 32-day search-and-destroy Operation, DOUBLE EAGLE, in Quang Ngai Province. Operation which enters a second phase on 19 February, is directed against at least two VC Main Force battalions and eventually covers a 500 square-mile area in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin Provinces, complementing the simultaneous MASHER/WHITE WING/THANH PHONG II to the south. (LOSSES: Frd-US 27 KIA, 252 WIA; En-437 KIA, 34 VCC, 434 VCS, 8 VC ralliers). (C)
- 29 -- Two companies attack Thanh Tri Land Development Center in Kien Tuong Province (LOSSES: Frd-25 KIA, 16 WIA, 1 MIA; En-7 KIA). (C)
- 30 -- VC overrun Thuy Lien outpost in Chuong Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-RF/PF 64 MIA). (C)
- 31 -- US aircraft resume bombing in NVN after 37-day lull. (U)
- VC detonate two charges at US HQ in Dalat (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA, 10 WIA, 1 MIA; 1 VN WIA). (C)
- USCG Sqdn 1 HQ established on USS KRISHNA off Phu Quoc Island. (C)
- Estimated 2 VC bns attack ROK Marine bivouac area in Phu Yen Province (LOSSES: Frd-5 KIA, 50 WIA; En-217 KIA). (C)

FEBRUARY

- 1 -- US military strength in RVN reaches 201,000. (U)
- 5 -- VC detonate claymore mine in bar in Vinh Long City (LOSSES: Frd- US 2 KIA, 5 WIA, VN 5 KIA, 10 WIA; En-1 KIA, 2 VCS detained). (C)
- 6 -- ARVN units begin month-long Operation THUA THIEN 177 in Thua Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-17 KIA, 44 WIA; En-183 KIA, 34 VCC). (C)
- 7 -- President Johnson, Premier Ky and Chief of State Thieu meet at Honolulu in a two-day conference with heavy emphasis on the political, social and economic aspects of the war. A "Declaration of Honolulu" outlines the joint US-GVN goals of determined military effort along with attacks on hunger, ignorance and disease in Vietnam. (U)

PAGE 817 OF 872 PAGES

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- 7 -- Television formally begins in SVN. (U)
- VC bn ambushes ARVN bn in Dinh Tuong Province (LOSSES: Frd-74 KIA, 44 WIA, 46 MIA). (C)
- 8 -- VC ambush RF company and RF platoon in Tay Ninh Province (LOSSES: Frd-RF/PF 40 KIA, 47 WIA, 55 wpns lost; En-12 KIA). (C)
- 10 -- Vice President Humphrey arrives in Saigon for three-day visit. (U)
- 1st Inf Div begins a 19-day Operation ROLLING STONE in Binh Duong Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 15 KIA, 101 WIA; En-148 KIA, 16 VCC, 39 VCS). (C)
- 11 -- MACV Directorate of Construction established under BG Carroll H. Dunn to handle all Vietnam construction responsibilities previously under J4. (U)
- 13 -- ARVN forces conduct one-day Operation AN DAN 14/66 in Long An Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 21 KIA, 5 WIA; En-150 KIA, 9 VCC, 4 VCS, 10,000 bushels of paddy rice captured). (C)
- 14 -- USN swift boat sunk by VC mine off Kien Giang Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 4 KIA, 2 WIA). (C)
- 15 -- B-52's strike COSVN HQ in Tay Ninh Province twice within an hour. (S)
- ARVN units launch six-day Operation THANG LONG 234 in E Lao Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 62 KIA, 143 WIA, 12 MIA; En-170 KIA). (C)
- 17 -- Deputy US Ambassador Porter assumes responsibility for all aspects of US support of Revolutionary Development in RVN. (U)
- VC detonate 2 claymore mines near JGS compound in Saigon (LOSSES: Frd-VN 12 killed, 51 wounded). (C)
- 18 -- USAF undertakes laying of RVN coastal communications cable by September 1966. (C)
- 20 -- VC attack 1st Cav Div (AM) base camp at An Kho (LOSSES: Frd-US 7 KIA, 51 WIA, 8 CH-47's damaged; En-7 KIA). (C)
- 21 -- 1st Ede, 101st Abn Div begins Operation HARRISON, a 32-day area security operation in Phu Yen Province, superseding Operation VAN BUREN (LOSSES: Frd-US 42 KIA, 249 WIA, 2 MIA; En-285 KIA 29 VCC, 165 ind wpns, 16 C/S wpns). (C)
- Premier Ky shuffles cabinet, creating Veterans's Affairs and Transport-Communications Ministries and a high court to handle corruption and black marketeering. (U)

PAGE 818 OF 872 PAGES

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- 21 -- VC attack Trieu Phong District Town in Quang Tri Province with mortars and grenades (LOSSES: Frd-PF 22 KIA, 18 WIA, 30 ind wpns lost). (C)
- 22 -- VC attack RF company and PF platoon north of Trieu Phong in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: Frd-20 KIA, 14 WIA, 7 MIA, 20 ind wpns lost). (C)
  - Estimated 2 VC co attack security force at Binh Long bridge in Quang Nam Province; ARVN ranger reaction force engages VC (LOSSES: Frd-18 KIA, 46 WIA, 10 MIA; En-114 KIA). (C)
  - Two regiments of 1st ARVN Div launch Operation LAM SON 235, a nine-day search-and-destroy operation in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 35 KIA, 185 WIA, 3 MIA; En-444 KIA, 12 VCC, 53 ind wpns, 5 C/S wpns). (C)
  - USMC aircraft over Quang Tri Province receives fire from suspected enemy radar-controlled AA gun. (S)
- 25 -- 3rd Bde, 25th Inf Div launches 29-day Operation GARFIELD in Darlac Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 17 KIA, 63 WIA; En-124 KIA, 17 VCS). (C)
- 26 -- Phu Cat US jet airbase site selected northwest of Qui Nhon, to be completed by 31 December 1966. (S)
- 27 -- USMC elements begin six-day Operation NEW YORK (joining ARVN Operation THUA THIEN 177) in Thua Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 15 KIA, 32 WIA; En-122 KIA, 7 VCC, 15 VCS). (C)
  - Philippine freighter SS LORINDA temporarily grounded 15 km SE of Nha Be after receiving VC small arms, machine gun and 57-mm RR fire (3 WIA). (C)
- 28 -- Estimated reinforced VC bn attacks ARVN bn at Vo Xu in Binh Tuy Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 32 KIA, 60 WIA, 17 MIA; En-48 KIA, 3 VCC). (C)

MARCH

- 1 -- US military strength in SVN reaches 213,000. (U)
  - BG Donald H. McGovern, USA, named MACV ACofS, J1, replacing MG Ben Sternberg, USA. (U)
- 3 -- 1st Inf Div launches four-day Operation COCOA BEACH in Binh Duong Province (LOSSES: Frd US 15 KIA, 15 WIA, 3 MIA, 1 F-100 and 1 UH-1D destroyed, 2 UH-1D damaged; En-199 KIA, 10 VCC). (C)

PAGE 819 OF 872 PAGES

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- 3 -- Panamanian vessel SS Paloma receives VC machine gun and 57-mm RR fire 12 km SE of Nha Be (4 WIA). (C)
- 4 -- USMC and ARVN forces begin coordinated Operation UTAH/LIEN KET 26 near Quang Ngai City in Quang Ngai Province. In four days of heavy fighting, VC Main Force and NVA elements defending well fortified positions are decisively defeated (LOSSES: Frd-US 33 KIA, 204 WIA, ARVN 32 KIA, 136 WIA; En-632 KIA, 29 VCC, 29 ind wpns, 11 C/S wpns). (C)
- 7 -- 1st Bde, 1st Inf Div, and 173rd Abn Bde, including 1/RAR, launch Operation SILVER CITY, a 17-day search-and-destroy operation along the Song Be River in the Binh Duong--Long Khanh Provincial border area. Major enemy unit encountered is 271st VC Main Force Regt. Important VC supply, training and hospital installations destroyed. (LOSSES: Frd-US 22 KIA, 232 WIA, AUS 2 KIA, 11 WIA, 1 UH-1D destroyed, 1 APC and 7 UH-1D damaged; En-336 KIA, 1 VCC, 115 ind wpns, 36 C/S wpns, 4 trucks, 531 tons of rice and 800 gallons of fuel). (C)
  - VC chemical grenade used for first time in Phu Yen Province. (S)
- 9 -- Estimated NVA regiment, taking advantage of bad weather which hampers air strikes and friendly reinforcements, attacks A Chau Special Forces Camp in Thua Thien Province. After three days of heavy fighting, friendly forces evacuate the strategically located camp near an enemy infiltration corridor from Laos (LOSSES: Frd-261 KIA or MIA (5 US), 103 WIA (12 US) 375 ind wpns, 43 C/S wpns and more than 30 radios lost. Enemy losses can not be accurately assessed. (C)
  - VC motor junk rammed and sunk by USCGC POINT WHITE near mouth of Van Sat River (LOSSES: En-7 KIA, 4 VCC). (U)
  - Enemy early-warning GCI radars detected in Laos warning convoys of impending US air strikes; new infiltration trail discovered in southern Laotian Panhandle. (TS)
- 10 -- GVN National Leadership Committee votes to remove LTG Nguyen Chanh Thi from his post as I Corps Commander. BG Nguyen Van Chuan named to replace Thi, widely regarded as Premier Ky's major potential political rival. (U)
  - US Naval units begin river mine-sweeping operations in RVN. (U)
- 11 -- About 2,000 persons demonstrate in Da Nang against Thi's removal. (U)
  - B-52's using M-35 fire bomblets conduct inconclusive jungle burning test on Chu Pong Mountain. (S)

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PAGE 820 OF 872 PAGES

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- 12 -- Buddhist leaders at Saigon's Vien Hoa Dao (Institute for the Execution of the Dharma) declare RVN is in "period of crisis" and call for the return of generals who supported the anti-Diem revolution of November 1964. Demonstrations protesting Thi's ouster held in Hue, Da Nang and Hoi An, and other protests and general strikes called signalling the start of prolonged political turbulence. (U)
- MG John C. F. Tillson III, USA, named MACV ACoFS J3 replacing BG William E. Depuy, USA, who takes command of 1st Inf Div. (U)
- 13 -- General strike in Da Nang closes port as I Corps demonstrations protesting Thi's removal spread. (U)
- Agreement reached with Royal Laotian Government to employ B-52's against Mu Gia Pass infiltration route. (TS)
- 14 -- Student demonstrators take over Quang Ngai radio station; Hue and Quang Ngai schools close, anti-GVN protests increase. (U)
- COMUSMACV requests development of suitable B-52 targets along Laotian border with I and II CTZ's. (S)
- Convicted economic criminal Ta Vinh executed by GVN firing squad in Saigon. (U)
- First USAF squadron arrives at newly-activated Phan Rang airbase. (U)
- VC attack ARVN bn at Bung Cao in Binh Duong Province (LOSSES: Ftd-19 KIA, 4 WIA; En-31 KIA, 2 VCC). (C)
- 15 -- II Field Force Vietnam activated at Bien Hoa under MG Jonathan O. Seaman, USA; Field Force Vietnam redesignated I Field Force Vietnam, remains at Nha Trang under MG Stanley R. Larsen, USA. (U)
- Da Nang 90 per cent paralyzed by general strike; about 1,000 ARVN personnel join 3,500-man protest demonstration. (U)
- 16 -- Thi arrives in Da Nang from Saigon, begins series of speeches in I Corps. (U)
- 19 -- USMC and ARVN units launch Operation TEXAS/LIEN KET 28 to recapture An Hoa outpost in Quang Nam Province from VC Main Force elements. In week long engagement (LOSSES: Ftd-58 KIA (51 US), 175 WIA, (141 US); En-386 KIA, estimated 780 additional KIA or WIA. (C)

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Order Sec Army By: 146 per

830624

PAGE 821 OF 872 PAGES

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- 20 -- ARVN units launch four-day Operation CUU LONG 15 in Kien Tuong Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 3 KIA, 30 WIA; En-219 KIA, 17 VCC). (C)
- 21 -- ARVN Special Forces launch one-day Operation LE LOI 21 in Darlac Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 2 WIA, ARVN 10 KIA, 12 WIA; En-134 KIA). (C)
- VC attack ARVN bn at Vo Xu in Binh Tuy Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 12 KIA, 28 WIA; En-107 KIA, 8 VCC). (C)
- First 11 US River Patrol Boats arrive in Vietnam. (U)
- Three VC bns supported by artillery attack the 1/52d ARVN Regt in Binh Tuy Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 12 KIA, 28 WIA; En-107 KIA, 8 VCC). (C)
- 22 -- Struggle forces take over Radio Hue, strike anti-American themes in broadcasts. (U)
- 23 -- ROK Capital Div elements launch Operation MANG HO V a four-day search-and-destroy operation in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-ROK 17 KIA, 48 WIA; En-349 KIA, 281 VCC, 451 VCS). (C)
- VC attack 1st ARVN Armored Cav Sqdn training center in Binh Duong Province (LOSSES: Frd-30 KIA, 60 WIA, 1 tank lost; En-70 KIA, 2 VCC, 15 ind wpns). (C)
- 24 -- ARVN units launch two-day Operation DAN CHI 211/B in Ba Xuyen Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 17 KIA, 20 WIA; En-245 KIA, 5 VCC). (C)
- VC attack Bu Prang RF/PF outpost in Quang Duc Province (LOSSES: Frd-RF/PF 5 KIA, 17 WIA; En-212 KIA). (C)
- 25 -- 1st Cav Div (AM) and elements of 3rd Bde, 25th Inf Div begin a 14-day series of search-and-destroy actions called Operation LINCOLN in Pleiku, Darlac and Phu Bon Provinces (LOSSES: Frd-US 41 KIA, 93 WIA, 3 UH-1D destroyed; En-453 KIA, 12 VCC, 88 ind wpns, 8 C/S wpns). (C)
- Elements of the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div and the ROK Marine Bde begin Operation FILLMORE, a 119-day search-and-destroy/area security operation in Phu Yen Province. The operation, superseding Operation HARRISON, provides extensive rice-harvest protection. US participation terminates on 20 June (LOSSES: Frd-US 10 KIA, 94 WIA; ROK 20 KIA, 50 WIA; En-373 KIA, 73 VCC, 45 VCS, 59 ind wpns, 1 C/S wpn). (C)

PAGE 822 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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- 25 -- President Johnson signs FY 1966 supplemental appropriations bill approving additional SEASIA war budget and transferring MAP funding to the individual services. (S)
- 26 -- Elements of the ROK Capital Inf Div in Binh Dinh Province begin Operation SU BOK which continues six months until 23 September and becomes the longest operation of the war to date (LOSSES: Frd-23 KIA, 84 WIA; En-299 KIA, 33 VCC, 132 VCS, 88 ind wpons). (C)
- Operation JACK STAY, the southernmost large scale employment of US ground troops in Vietnam to date, begins when USMC units supported by USN, VNN and VMFC units penetrate into the Rung Sat Special Zone. During the 12-day operation a large VC complex is destroyed (LOSSES: Frd-6 KIA; En-63 KIA, 6 VCC, 66 wpons). (C)
- 27 -- About 20,000 Buddhists in Hue stage largest anti-GVN demonstration to date. (U)
- 29 -- 25th Inf Div launches eight-day Operation CIRCLE PINES in Hau Nghia Province (LOSSES: Frd-32 KIA, 195 WIA; En-170 KIA, 8 VCC, 7 VCS). (C)
- 1st Marine Div command post established at Chu Lai, relieving 3rd Marine Div of all responsibilities in Chu Lai TACR. (C)
- 31 -- A record number of monthly returnees under the Chieu Hoi Program is set at 2,336. (U)

APRIL

- 1 -- US military strength in SVN reaches 236,000. (U)
- At 0510, VC detonate estimated 450 pounds of explosive at entrance to Victoria BQ in Saigon/Cholon. First three floors extensively damaged; upper floors and surrounding houses moderately damaged. (LOSSES: US 3 KIA, 107 WIA; AUS 3 WIA; VN 3 KIA, 6 WIA). (U)
- 2d Air Div redesignated 7th Air Force, continues as the USAF component of USMACV. (U)
- US Naval Forces, Vietnam (NAVFORV) established to exercise operational control of USN forces in RVN as naval component of USMACV. (U)
- USARV Signal Bds (USASTRATCOM Signal Bds, SEA) activated. (U)
- Headquarters Area Command (HAC) activated under BG R. L. Ashworth, USA, to assume support functions formerly performed by HEDSUPACT. (U)

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- 1 -- Hq, 25th Inf Div closes in RVN. (U)
  - MG Pham Xuan Chieu, National Leadership Secretary General, briefly taken hostage by Hue struggle forces. (U)
  - 1st Flotilla of Alaska Barge and Transport Company closes Nha Trang to provide lighterage and port management at several RVN ports. (C)
- 2 -- ROK elements launch 11-day Operation BUN KAE 66-5 in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-23 KIA, 62 WIA; En-292 KIA, 74 VCC, 107 VCS). (C)
  - Some US vehicles damaged in wave of violent Saigon demonstrations. (U)
- 3 -- Premier Ky declares that Da Nang is in communist hands and indicates GVN troop movement to the city is imminent. Ky and Chief of State Thieu announce a National Political Congress will soon convene to discuss creation of a constitution-drafting body. (U)
  - Enemy fires 10 British 25-pounder artillery shells from Cambodia into the Cau Cau Special Forces camp in Kien Thong Province. (S)
- 4 -- American civilians evacuated from Dalat where demonstrators burn radio station and clash with police. US jeep burned in continuing Saigon demonstrations. Martial law declared in Nha Trang. Hue demonstrators threaten US installations. (U)
  - COMUSMACV authorized to employ napalm along selected infiltration routes in southern Laos, under FAC control, against moving motorized vehicles and AAA/AW positions firing on aircraft. (TS)
  - Converted seaplane tender USS Cornus Christi Bay arrives at Cam Ranh Bay to provide a floating aviation maintenance facility for US Army helicopters. (U)
- 5 -- Premier Ky flies to Da Nang with two VN Marine battalions, beginning a confrontation with the anti-GVN struggle forces. Ky announces that the city has been infiltrated, not taken over by communists. 1st ARVN Div Commander, BG Pham Xuan Nuan, declares solidarity with the struggle movement. All US advisors to the division withdrawn to base camps. Demonstrators clash with riot police and airborne units in Saigon. (U)
- 6 -- All non-essential US civilians evacuated from Hue where thousands of demonstrators demand the end of the GVN and its US backing. (U)

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PAGE 824 OF 822 PAGES

830624

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- 8 -- GVN flies two Ranger battalions to Da Nang in an attempt to break the stalemate with an additional show of force against the struggle movement. 1st ARVN Div troops in Hue pass a resolution denouncing the Ky government but pledging to fight with US and FW troops against the communists. (U)
- COMUSMACV refuses JGS request for aircraft to fly the Rangers to Da Nang. (TS)
- 9 -- At peak of Da Nang crisis, struggle leaders agree to remove two howitzers from range of airbase. More than 200 US and third country civilians evacuated from the city. (TS)
- 10 -- LTG Ton That Dinh assumes command of I Corps. One VN Marine battalion withdrawn from Da Nang airbase. (U)
- In reaction operation to a VC attack in Kien Tuong Province, ARVN units kill 140 VC, suffer 13 KIA and 8 WIA. (C)
- MACV Provost Marshal discontinued as a separate special staff section, becomes J-15 of MACJ1. (U)
- 12 -- The Da Nang confrontation ends as the GVN returns the last of its "Task Force" units to Saigon and rowdy demonstrations cease in Da Nang and Hue. The National Political Congress opens in Saigon. (U)
- B-52's used against NVN for the first time, striking the Hu Gia Pass near the NVN-Laos border to augment tactical efforts to close the main infiltration route via the SE Laotian Panhandle. It is the first use of the massive B-52 bombardment pattern for road interdiction. (U)
- 13 -- VC launch intensive mortar attack on Tan Son Nhut airbase. Approximately 157 rounds of 82-mm mortar and 75-mm recoilless rifle fire kill 7 US personnel and wound 135 US and 14 ARVN. Four aircraft destroyed and 56 damaged. 400,000-gallon fuel storage tank destroyed and some base installations damaged. (C)
- CINCPAC requests reduction in road cratering and radar bombing because of critical air munitions shortages in SEASIA. (TS)
- 7th Air Force institutes continuous nighttime airborne alert with four guncraft aloft at all times. (S)
- Estimated VC company attacks ARVN company in Quang Ngai Province (LOSSES: Fwd-7 KIA, 13 WIA, 24 MIA; En-1 VCC). (C)

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- 14 -- As the National Political Congress closes, Directorate Chairman Thieu promulgates a decree for an elected constituent assembly within five months. The Buddhist Institute "accepts" the decree and agrees that the Ky government should remain in power until the elections. (U)
- ARVN units launch two-day Operation QUYET THANG 184 in Quang Ngai Province (LOSSES: Frd-11 KIA 49 WIA; En-206 KIA, 3 VCC). (C)
- VC battalion attacks RF/PF training center in Kien Hoa Province (LOSSES: Frd-50 KIA, 40 WIA, 90 MIA, 173 weapons lost; En-12 KIA). (C)
- JCS authorizes CINCPAC to commit any appropriate non-nuclear air munitions in PACOM to operations in SEASIA. (TS)
- Reaction time for B-52 strikes reduced as control decentralized to CINCPAC in coordination with 3rd Air Div (SAC) and COMUSMACV. (TS)
- 15 -- Thi publicly associates himself with the struggle movement, calling for an "immediate change in government" and more struggle demonstrations. (U)
- SECDEF orders the Navy to release and move to SEASIA large stores of air munitions held in COMUS for NATO. (S)
- 16 -- ROK 26th RCT begins arriving at Qui Thon to round out ROK division in II Corps (U)
- 17 -- US aircraft hit SAM sites 15 and 17 miles from Hanoi in closest strikes to the capital to date. (U)
- 18 -- USN aircraft strike Uong Bi thermal power plant 14 miles from Haiphong (previously hit during December 1965). (U)
- 19 -- RADM Norvell G. Ward assumes command as COMNAVFOPV and Naval Component Commander. (U)
- 20 -- USMC elements begin 20-day clearing Operation GEORGIA around the industrial complex of An Hoa and Nhung Son in Quang Nam Province (LOSSES: Frd-8 KIA, 94 WIA; En-103 KIA, 10 VCC, 408 VCS, 5 ind wps). (C)
- Royal Australian Army Task Force begins arriving in RVN. (U)
- Estimated 15 VC penetrate An Khe airfield, damage two C-130's with satchel charges. (U)

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PAGE 816 OF 872 PAGES

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- 21 -- USMC and RVNAF units launch three-day Operation HOT SPRINGS/ LIEN KET 36 in the same general area of Quang Ngai Province where Operations TEXAS and UTAH had taken place. (LOSSES: Frd-USMC 5 KIA, 33 WIA; RVNAF 7 KIA, 38 WIA; En-327 KIA, 16 VCC, 23 VCS, 98 ind wps, 14 C/S wps). (C)
- ARVN units launch four-day Operation DAN CHI 219C in Chuong Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-20 KIA, 138 WIA; En-247 KIA, 4 VCC). (C)
- GVN issues decree setting more severe penalties for military desertion. (U)
- Four struggle force demonstrators and three RVNAF personnel killed in continuing violence at Dalat. (U)
- 22 -- VC mortar and infiltrate new Pleiku airfield, causing light damage and casualties. (U)
- 23 -- Enemy MIG-21's engage US aircraft for the first time in the war, unsuccessfully attacking a mission-support aircraft during F-105 strike against Bac Giang railroad bridge 25 miles NE of Hanoi. F-4C escort aircraft counter the two MIG-21's and eight MIG-17's. Two MIG-17's downed. (U)
- 24 -- Elements of the 1st Inf Div launch Operation BIRMINGHAM, a 24-day search-and-destroy operation involving the deepest friendly penetration in five years into War Zone C in Tay Ninh Province. Large quantities of enemy supplies captured or destroyed, numerous logistical installations destroyed, and one southern exit of the Ho Chi Minh Trail interdicted during the period (LOSSES: Frd-US 56 KIA, 324 WIA, 1 MIA, 15 UH-1D, 6 CH-47 and 7 APC's damaged; En-119 KIA, 28 VCC, 30 ralliers, 131 wps). (C)
- VC attack several factories in Gia Dinh Province simultaneously (LOSSES: Frd-PF 4 KIA, 1 WIA, 2 VN KIA). (C)
- 26 -- First MIG-21 of the war is downed by a USAF F-4C firing Sidewinder missiles in a brief engagement involving two F-4C's (undamaged) and two MIG-21's 65 miles NNE of Hanoi; the pilot ejects. (U)
- 27 -- The 1,000th NVN truck damaged/destroyed in TIGER HOUND air operation against southern Laos infiltration routes since program began 6 December 1965. (S)

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PAGE 827 OF 872 PAGES

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- 28 -- Premier Ky authorizes construction of new MACV headquarters at the Tan Son Nhut soccer field. (C)
  - Thousands of laborers reopen Mu Gia Pass in NVN 18 hours after a B-52 strike closes it. (C)
- 29 -- 1st Bde, 25 Inf Div arrives in RVN, completing the division's deployment. (C)
  - Col Nguyen Ngoc Loan, MSS Chief, replaces Col Pham Van Lieu as GVN Director General of National Police. (U)
- 30 -- B-52 strikes on Mu Gia Pass halted by CINCPAC pending JCS decision based on calculated risk of NVN SAM environment. (TS)
  - 1st Inf Div elements engage an enemy unit in Cambodia across the Cai Bac River from Tay Ninh Province. (C)

MAY

- 1 -- US military strength in SVN reaches 252,000. (U)
  - 173rd Abn Bde and 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div launch 18-day Operation JUSTIN VI in Quang Duc and Phuoc Long Provinces (LOSSES: Fwd-9 KIA, 18 WIA; En-101 KIA, 6 VCC). (C)
  - "RADAR WEATHER WATCH," a strategic network for SEASIA, inaugurated at Tan Son Nhut to provide excellent weather observation for a 75-mile radius and moderate resolution to 200 miles. (U)
  - First three USN Patrol Air Cushion Vehicles (PACV) arrive in RVN. (U)
- 3 -- MG K. Mackay, MBE assumes command of Australian Forces, Vietnam. (U)
- 4 -- 1st Cav Div (AM) and RVNAF elements launch Operation DAVY CROCKETT, a 13-day combined search-and-destroy operation in Binh Dinh Province employing reconnaissance in force and saturation patrolling (LOSSES: Fwd-US 27 KIA, 110 WIA, RVNAF 14 KIA, 24 WIA; En-374 KIA, 82 VCC, 40 ind wpns, 12 C/S wpns). (C)
  - VC attack An Lac village in Lam Dong Province (LOSSES: Fwd-PF 1 KIA, 6 MIA; 18 village council members and 1 civilian kidnapped). (C)
- 6 -- MG John Norton, USA, assumes command of 1st Cav Div (AM). (U)

PAGE 828 OF 872 PAGES

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- 7 -- Premier Ky tells the press that his government will remain in power until the election of a national assembly "some time in 1967," since the forthcoming constituent assembly will only draft a constitution and not be transformed into a legislative body. Ky also says he and his military colleagues will oppose any elected government which turns out to be neutralist or communist. (U)
- OICC officially turns over the Binh Tuy airbase in Phong Dinh Province to the GVN. (U)
- 8 -- US and VNAF aircraft extend GATE GUARD program of LOC interdiction into southern NVN from SE Laotian Panhandle. (S)
- COMUSMACV reviews 7th AF inventories, concluding that air munitions should be plentiful by the end of 1966; he declines to reduce the number of B-52 strikes in order to increase bombs available for tactical air support. (TS)
- 10 -- A 120-foot steel-hulled enemy trawler is detected, attacked and heavily damaged by USCGC Point Grey and US and VNAF planes along the east coast of the Cau Mau Peninsula. Salvage operations yield about 15 tons of weapons and ammunition manufactured in Communist China in 1965, movie projectors, film, and other propaganda material. (C)
- Elements of the 3rd Bde, 25th US Inf Div and ARVN Launch Operation PAUL REVERE/THAN PHONG 14, an 82-day border screening, area-control operation in Pleiku Province which thwarts a VC monsoon season offensive in II CTZ (LOSSES: Frd-US 63 KIA, 301 WIA, 2 MIA; ARVN 16 KIA, 41 WIA, 10 MIA; En-546 KIA, 68 VCC, 39 VCS, 224 ind wps, 17 C/S wps). (C)
- In confused firing after a VC mine explodes near the Brink BOQ in Saigon, 5 VN civilians are killed, 21 VN wounded and 8 US wounded. (U)
- CINCPAC recommends JCS approval of air strikes to destroy NVN POL system beginning with Haiphong POL sites. (TS)
- 11 -- USN jets strike SAM site 10 miles from Haiphong, the closest strike to date. (U)
- 14 -- ARVN units launch two-day Operation DAN CHI 227 in An Xuyen Province (LOSSES: Frd-1 KIA, 44 WIA; En-247 KIA, 19 VCC). (C)

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PAGE 229 OF 872 PAGES

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- 14 -- First RC-47 (PHYLLIS ANN) aircraft deployed to Tan Son Nhut to begin USAF program of pinpointing enemy lower-power HF radio transmitters. (S)
- 15 -- GVN marines and paratroopers airlifted to Da Nang from Saigon and Quang Ngai take control of I Corps HQ, the Da Nang garrison, city hall, the National Police garrison, and the radio station, encountering only isolated small arms and grenade fire as the struggle forces retreat into pagodas. I Corps Commander Dinh takes asylum in III MAF HQ; GVN names MG Huynh Van Cao to replace him. (U)
- 16 -- Elements of the 1st Cav Div (AM), the Capital ROK Div and ARVN launch 22-day Operation CRAZY HORSE/BUN KHE 66-7 in Binh Dinh Province against elements of one VC and two NVA regiments (LOSSES: Frd-78 KIA, 213 WIA, 1 MIA, 18 ind wpns, 1 C/S wpn; En-478 KIA, 27 VCC, 114 VCS, 88 ind wpns, 15 C/S wpns). (C)
- 25th Inf Div launches 12-day Operation WAHIAWA in Hau Nghia Province (LOSSES: Frd-30 KIA, 240 WIA, 1 MIA; En-157 KIA, 10 VCC). (C)
- AC-47 aircraft authorized to fly night armed reconnaissance missions over Laotian section of the Sihanouk Trail. (TS)
- Estimated VC company attacks RF company in Phu Yen Province (LOSSES: Frd-23 KIA, 20 WIA, 1 MIA, 33 ind wpns, 1 C/S wpn lost; En-3 KIA, 1 ind wpn). (C)
- 17 -- ARVN forces launch one-day Operation DAN CHI 228B in Bac Lieu Province (LOSSES: Frd-6 KIA, 35 WIA; En-265 KIA, 5 VCC).(C)
- ARVN officer fires on helicopter leaving Hue with Gen Cao, C/S III MAF, and DSA I Corps aboard; helicopter gunner kills officer. (U)
- USAS officially disestablished and the Naval Support Activity, Saigon, simultaneously established under CAPT H. T. King, USN, to provide support to US Naval Forces in II, III, IV CTZ's and coastal waters. (U)
- 18 -- VC attack Soc Trang airfield in Ba Xuyen Province (LOSSES: Frd- US 1 WIA, 1 a/c severely damaged, 9 a/c lightly damaged. ARVN reaction operation results (LOSSES: En-41 KIA, 5 VCC, 5 VCS). (C)
- CINCPAC directs COMUSMACV to undertake surveillance of Cambodia, taking maximum advantage of oblique photography in areas contiguous to RVN. (TS)

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PAGE 830 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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- 18 -- VC attack ARVN bn in Binh Long Province (LOSSES: Frd-17 KIA, 20 WIA, 6 ind wpons, 1 C/S wpn lost; En-15 KIA, 1 VCC, 3 ind wpons). (C)
- CAPT Burton B. Witham, Jr. relieves RADM N. G. Ward as River Patrol Force (GAME WARDEN) Commander at Nha Be. (U)
- After his formal installation as new I Corps Commander, Gen Cao asks for asylum at III MAF HQ, claiming his life is in danger. (S)
- 19 -- Enemy attacks Gia Linh post in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA; ARVN 42 KIA, 54 WIA, 4 ind wpons, 1 C/S wpn; En-8 KIA, 9 ind wpons). (C)
- 20 -- Vehicular traffic along Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos reaches virtual stand still due to air interdiction, road wash-outs and landslides. TIGER HOUND air strikes concentrate on heavy activity along Sihanouk Trail. (S)
- VC attack Tan Phu RF post in An Xuyen Province (LOSSES: Frd-11 KIA, 7 WIA, 32 MIA, 49 ind wpons). (C)
- 21 -- US aircraft evacuated from Da Nang airbase after 11 dissident mortar rounds hit base, wounding 4 USAF personnel. VNAF fire strikes new III MAF CP in Da Nang, wounding 11 USMC personnel. (C)
- First class of Revolutionary Development cadre teams trained under revised program graduates from the Vung Tau National Training Center and is deployed in 59-man teams to secure 80 hamlets. (C)
- ARVN units launch two-day Operation LONG PHU 971 in Kien Giang Province (LOSSES: Frd-6 KIA, 47 WIA; En-224 KIA, 22 VCC). (C)
- 23 -- Da Nang restored to GVN control as the main struggle-force pagoda surrenders without opposition, followed by the final pockets of resistance. Struggle forces in Hue vow to defend that city against a GVN takeover. (U)
- 26 -- USIS library in Hue burned by student demonstrators as National Police and 1st ARVN Div troops stand aside. (U)
- Panamanian merchant ship Eastern Mariner damaged by mine at Nha Be; French vessel Milos Del Mar undamaged by another mine. No casualties. (U)

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PAGE 831 OF 872 PAGES

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- 26 -- Estimated 2 VC bns attack ARVN/PF position in Kien Phong Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN/PF 51 KIA, 63 WIA, 5 ARVN MIA, 39 ind wpns, 3 C/S wpns lost; En-20 KIA, 9 ind wpns). (C)
- 27 -- All non-essential US civilians evacuated from Hue. Premier Ky, Gen Thi meet at USMC installation in Chu Lai. (U)
- Estimated 2 VC bns attack Duc Hue district town in Hau Nghia Province (LOSSES: Frd-20 KIA, 30 WIA, 7 MIA; En-20 KIA). (C)
- RF company captures a new CHICOM B-50 anti-tank rocket launcher believed to have been used in the sinking of a SWIFT boat in Gia Dinh Province. (C)
- VC ambush 2 PF platoons in Binh Thuan Province (LOSSES: Frd-7 KIA, 3 WIA, 21 MIA, 29 ind wpns lost). (C)
- 28 -- BG John F. Freund, USA, appointed Special Assistant to COMUSMACV. (U)
- 29 -- Buddhist nun commits self-immolation in Hue in first of a series of protests against US and GVN actions. (U)
- 30 -- ARVN units conduct one-day Operation QUYET THANG 296 in Quang Tin Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 2 MIA; En-100 KIA). (C)
- 31 -- USAF aircraft heavily damage Yen Bay military storage complex in largest strike against a single target in NVN to date; two US planes lost to ground fire. (U)
- GVN and Buddhist Institute leaders reach apparent agreement to ease crisis, with Directorate to be expanded by 10 civilians. (U)
- JCS confirms decision to drop planned construction of Hue/Phu Bai airbase because of political situation, instead construct airfield at Tuy Hoa and a third runway at Chu Lao. (S)
- 2d ARVN Div Commander NG Hoang Xuan Lam becomes acting I Corps Commander. (U)

JUNE

- 1 -- US military strength in SVN reaches 261,000. (U)
- Struggle-force mobs in Hue sack and burn US Consulate and several residences and seize a large number of weapons; US Army aircraft evacuated to Phu Bai and US personnel confined to Hue MACV compound. (U)

PAGE 82 OF 872 PAGES  
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- 2 -- Elements of 1st US Inf Div and 5th ARVN Div begin Operation EL PASO II, a 41-day search-and-destroy operation in Binh Long Province which deprives the VC of key monsoon season victory in III CTZ. All three regiments of 9th VC Div engaged and defeated; VC base camps and logistical complexes destroyed (LOSSES: Frd-US 125 KIA, 420 WIA; ARVN 22 KIA, 71 WIA, 16 MIA; En-855 KIA, 37 VCC, 79 VCS, 154 ind wpns, 52 C/S wpns). (C)
- 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div and ARVN units launch Operation HAWTHORNE/DAN TANG 61, a 19-day search-and-destroy operation in Kontum Province which allows removal of the Toumorong outpost to Dak To (LOSSES: Frd-45 KIA, 241 WIA, 1 MIA, 2 105-mm howitzers damaged; En-531 KIA, 22 VCC, 88 ind wpns, 21 C/S wpns). (C)
- GVN requests United Nations observers for the September elections. (U)
- Ten-day Force Development Conference opens at CINCPAC HQ in Hawaii. (U)
- 5 -- 1st Australian Task Force becomes operational under II FFORCEV. (U)
- 6 -- Armed Forces Council names 10 civilians to National Leadership Committee. (U)
- 7 -- ARVN and CIDG units launch five-day Operation THAN PHONG III in Pleiku Province (LOSSES: Frd-RVNAF 20 KIA, 36 WIA; En-135 KIA, 6 VCC). (C)
- 3rd Bde, 25th Inf Div uncovers first sizeable amount of Soviet small arms ammunition in cache in Pleiku Province. (S)
- 8 -- Attempted VC ambush of ARVN battalion in Binh Long Province results in (LOSSES: Frd-25 KIA, 58 WIA, 19 MIA; En-250 KIA, 1 VCC). (C)
- Tri Quang begins extended anti-GVN and anti-US hunger strike as Buddhists block Hue streets with altars. (U)
- VC attack US quarters in My Tho, Dinh Tuong Province, with 60-mm mortar and 57-mm RR (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA, 33 WIA; VN 2 KIA, 11 WIA). (C)
- COMUSMACV directs 7th AF to target water buffaloes observed by FAC's in TIGER HOUND area. (S)

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PAGE 833 OF 872 PAGES

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- 9 -- BG Le Nguyen Khang, Saigon Military Governor, becomes III Corps Commander, replacing Nguyen Bao Tri who takes over General Political Warfare Directorate. (U)
- Buddhist altars halt US and ARVN troop movement through Hue, causing 24-hour delay in Operation FLORIDA. (C)
- 12 -- Bulk of 1st Australian Task Force arrives in SVN. (U)
- VC attack RF company in Quang Ngai Province (LOSSES: Frd-RF 8 KIA, 17 WIA, 1 MIA, 5 ind wpns, 1 C/S wpn lost; 9 Civilians KIA; En-8 KIA, 3 ind wpns). (C)
- 13 -- Estimated VC/NVA bn attacks 218th RF Company in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-32 KIA, 34 WIA, 40 MIA, 3 C/S wpns, 116 ind wpns). (C)
- 15 -- GVN decree creates predominantly civilian 80-man People-Army Council to advise GVN on political, economic and social matters. (U)
- GVN troops and riot police begin formal operation to clear struggle forces from Hue. (U)
- 16 -- Letter from Tam Chau protesting Tri Quang's actions publicly confirms extremist-moderate split in Buddhist hierarchy. (U)
- Estimated VC bn attacks USMC reconnaissance platoon in Quang Tin Province (LOSSES: USMC 9 KIA, 15 WIA; En-45 KIA). (C)
- 18 -- Col Ngo Quang Truong, ARVN Abn Div Commander, replaces BG Pham Xuan Nhuan as 1st ARVN Div Commander. (U)
- VC attack CIDG and RF companies in Phu Yen Province (LOSSES: Frd-17 KIA, 13 WIA, 6 MIA, 29 ind wpns, 3 C/S wpns lost; En-16 VC wpns). (C)
- 19 -- Hue restored to GVN control as troops and riot police pacify pagodas and other struggle strongholds, remove last Buddhist altars from streets and arrest key dissidents. (U)
- Elements of 1st Cav Div (AM) and the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div launch Operation NATHAN HALE, 12-day action in Phu Yen Province, exploiting contact by 47th ARVN Regt with 18B NVA Regt (LOSSES: Frd-US 62 KIA, 329 WIA, 4 MIA, 1 UH-1D destroyed; En-444 KIA, 29 VCC, 93 VCS, 130 ind wpns, 28 C/S wpns). (C)

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PAGE 834 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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- 20 -- USCGC Point League shadows and drives 100-foot enemy trawler aground near mouth of Co Chien River in Vinh Binh Province. The trawler is captured intact, with 100 tons of cargo including more than 2,300 weapons, many of 1966 CHICOM manufacture, and new type of 75-mm fin-stabilized HEAT projectile. (C)
- 21 -- RVNAF units launch three-day Operation LAM SON 283 in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: Frd-37 KIA, 104 WIA; En-331 KIA, 40 VCC, 60 VCS). (C)
- Estimated VC bn attacks 345th RF Company in Lam Dong Province (LOSSES: US 2 WIA, RF 31 KIA, 26 WIA, 13 ind wpns, 4 C/S wpns; En-20 KIA 1 VCC). (C)
- 22 -- VC attack US airfield at Soc Trang for sixth time in 9 months, with estimated 20 rounds of 75-mm RR fire (LOSSES: US 3 WIA, 3 O-1E's damaged, 1 UH-1D destroyed, 16 UH-1D's damaged). (C)
- Estimated VC bn attacks 3 ARVN bns in Quang Ngai Province (LOSSES: Frd-20 KIA, 35 WIA, 20 ind wpns, 2 C/S wpns lost; En-43 KIA, 2 VCC, 15 ind wpns). (C)
- 23 -- USMC company helilifted into former A Shau Special Forces camp destroys large enemy ammunition cache. (U)
- GVN troops and police enter Saigon Buddhist Institute, seize arms and arrest suspected murderer of policeman. (U)
- MACV Standard Design Committee established to adopt a common tri-service construction standard. (U)
- Estimated 2 VC companies attack Trung Nhi post in Binh Duong Province (LOSSES: Frd-11 KIA, 20 WIA, 38 ind wpns, 1 C/S wpns; En-2 KIA, 3 ind wpns). (C)
- 25 -- USMC and ARVN units launch four-day Operation JAY/LAM SON 284 in Thua Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 23 KIA, 58 WIA; ARVN 1 WIA; En-102 KIA, 264 probable KIA, 9 VCC, 18 VCS). (C)
- VC ambush two CIDG platoons in Kien Tuong Province (LOSSES: Frd-6 KIA, 5 WIA, 16 MIA, 13 ind wpns lost). (C)
- 26 -- Estimated 2 VC companies attack 884th RF Company in Binh Thuan Province (LOSSES: Frd-23 KIA, 29 WIA). (C)
- VC attack hamlet defended by PF in Quang Duc Province (LOSSES: Frd-27 KIA, 2 WIA, 9 MIA, 9 ind wpns lost). (C)

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PAGE 835 OF 872 PAGES

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- 28 -- VC ambush 745th RF Company in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: Frd-20 KIA, 8 WIA, 12 MIA; En-16 KIA, 1 VCC, 8 ind wpns). (C)
- VC attack two CIDG platoons in Dinh Tuong Province (LOSSES: Frd-PF 6 KIA, 5 WIA, 17 MIA, 13 ind wpns lost). (C)
- 29 -- USAF and USN aircraft bomb POL facilities at Hanoi and Haiphong for first time, inflicting heavy damage. One USAF F-105 downed by ground fire. Four MIG-17's encountered and one probably destroyed during dog-fight. No SAM's sighted. (U)
- Estimated VC bn ambushes 2d VNMC convoy in Thua Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-43 KIA, 83 WIA, 4 trucks destroyed). (C)
- 30 -- First instance of enemy booby-trapping of dead body reported in Pleiku Province. (C)
- Construction completed of 170,000 barrel POL tank storage farm at Cam Ranh Bay. (U)
- VC ambush 4/520 ARVN Regt in Long Khanh Province (LOSSES: Frd-19 KIA, 31 WIA, 35 MIA, 2 C/S wpns lost). (C)

JULY

- 1 -- US military strength in RVN reaches 274,000. (U)
- USN aircraft sink three NVN PT boats in Gulf of Tonkin, capture 19 NVN seamen (U).
- SAC quick reaction force of six B-52's at Guam initiates continuous alert for strikes against urgent targets in SVN. (S)
- LTG William W. Monyer succeeds LTC Joseph H. Moore as Commander, 7th Air Force and DEPCOMUSMACV for Air. (U)
- EG Carroll H. Dunn, USA, replaces EG John D. Crowley, USA, as ACofS, J4, MACV; EG Daniel A. Raymond, USA, succeeds Gen Dunn as Director of Construction, MACV. (U)
- A C-141 aircraft flies from Saigon to Travis AFB, Calif. in the first direct USAF Medevac from RVN to the US. (U)
- 2 -- COMUSMACV approves location of 2d Bde, 4th Inf Div at Pleiku. (U)

PAGE 836 OF 872 PAGES  
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- 2 -- VC ambush ARVN company in Binh Duong Province (LOSSES: Frd-8 KIA, 17 WIA, 8 MIA, 20 wpns). (C)
- Construction of new MACV headquarters at Tan Son Nhut soccer field begins. (U)
- 3 -- 24-hour all-weather bombing authorized against targets in Laos validated by RLA [REDACTED] utilizing MSQ-77 ground director bombing system (SKY SPOT). (TS)
- 4 -- Director USAID and GVN Economy and Finance Minister sign agreement providing for US military operation of Saigon port. BG Pham Dang Dan appointed Director General of Ports and USMACV agrees to provide advisory assistance for port management. (C)
- USMC elements begin 116-day security Operation MACON for An Hoa industrial complex in Quang Nam Province (LOSSES: Frd-USMC 24 KIA, 172 WIA; En-507 KIA, 5 VCC, 53 VCS, 26 ind wpns). (C)
- 5 -- Gens Thi, Dinh, Cao, Nman, and Chuan detained by GVN authorities in Saigon. (U)
- US aircraft successfully elude 26-28 SAM's over NVN -- record number to date launched in one day. (U)
- RVNAF units launch two-day search-and-destroy operation in Vinh Binh Province (LOSSES: Frd-20 KIA, 55 WIA; En-109 KIA, 4 VCC, 40 ind wpns, 3 C/S wpns). (C)
- West Germany pledges 14.6 million piaster aid credit to help improve social welfare facilities in SVN. (U)
- 6 -- B-52's under the QUICK RUN concept utilize new MSQ-77 SKY SPOT bombing system and COMUSMACV rapid-response targeting for first time. (S)
- ARVN units conduct one-day search-and-destroy Operation CUU LONG 32/66 in Kien Hoa Province (LOSSES: Frd-4 KIA, 10 WIA; En-155 KIA, 32 ind wpns). (C)
- ARVN units launch six-day search-and destroy Operation BINH PHU 9/10/11 in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-15 KIA, 19 WIA; En-137 KIA, 3 VCC, 17 VCS). (C)
- 7 -- USMC, ARVN and VMC units launch Operation HASTINGS, a 27-day search-and-destroy operation against 324B NVA Division which had infiltrated into Quang Tri Province

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PAGE 837 OF 872

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- 7 -- through DMZ. 7th Fleet SLF operates in supporting Operation DECKHOUSE II in eastern Quang Tri Province from 16-30 July (LOSSES: Fwd-147 KIA, 488 WIA, 7 ind wpns; En-882 KIA, 15 VCC, 254 ind wpns, 26 C/S wpns). (C)
- MIG-21's attack US jets 25 miles NE of Hanoi, firing air-to-air missiles for first time but with no hits. (U)
- VC attack Binh Thuy airbase in Phong Dinh Province with estimated 40 rounds of mortar fire (LOSSES: US 1 KIA, 4 WIA, 1 H-43 destroyed, 1 H-43 and 1 C-47 damaged, 2 vehicles and various installations damaged). (C)
- 8 -- ARVN units launch four-day search-and-destroy Operation THANG LONG 243 in Darlac Province (LOSSES: Fwd-17 KIA, 39 WIA; En-107 KIA, 4 VCC, 17 ind wpns). (C)
- 9 -- Former I Corps generals Thi, Dinh, Cao, Nhuan, and Chuan sentenced to 60 days confinement and removed from military service by special Armed Forces Disciplinary Council. (U)
- Elements of CRID Cavalry Regt begin 44-day search-and-destroy Operation BUN KAE 66-9 in Pleiku Province in conjunction with Operation PAUL REVERE (LOSSES: Fwd-ROK 7 KIA, 42 WIA; En-106 KIA, 6 VCC, 73 ind wpns, 6 C/S wpns). (C)
- 13 -- Four new civilians named to reshuffled and expanded GVN cabinet. (U)
- 14 -- USAF F-4C's down to MIG-21's over NVN using Sidewinder missiles. (U)
- Philippine President Marcos signs bill providing for dispatch of 2,000-man Philippine Engineer Battalion (PHILCAG) to RVN. (F)
- Terrorist explosive device kills 1 US, wounds 13 US and 5 VN in Vung Tau, Phuoc Tuy Province. (C)
- 15 -- ARVN element ambushed by VC near Ben Cat in Binh Duong Province (LOSSES: Fwd-37 KIA, 22 WIA, 21 MIA, 57 ind wpns, 2 C/S wpns, 15 radios lost). (C)
- 16 -- US units discover 20-mm AA weapons and ammunition in Binh Duong and Quang Tri Provinces, first indication that enemy possesses this caliber weapon. (C)

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PAGE 838 OF 872 PAGES

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- 16 -- VC attack RF company guarding waterworks near Phan Thiet in Binh Thuan Province (LOSSES: Frd-9 KIA, 12 WIA, 6 MIA, 12 indwps, 5 radios). (C)
- Maj Gen Nguyen Bao Tri replaces Dinh Trinh Chinh as GVN Minister of Information. (U)
- 17 -- Ho Chi Minh proclaims partial mobilization of NVN, reiterates intransigent stand on settlement of the war. (U)
- VC attack RF platoon and 2 RD Cadre teams in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: Frd-VN 8 KIA, 15 WIA, 13 MIA, 41 wps). (C)
- 18 -- ARVN elements conduct one-day search-and-destroy Operation LAM SON 290 in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: En-135 KIA, no ARVN casualties). (C)
- 19 -- US pilots sight record 29 SAM's over NVN. (U)
- USN F-8E downed by SAM 20 miles south of Hanoi, first US aircraft lost to a SAM since 24 April despite enemy firing of 140-150 missiles. (S)
- 20 -- TALLY HO program of round-the-clock air interdiction begins in southern NVN Panhandle. (TS)
- USN pilot Ltjg Dieter Dengler airlifted from jungle after escaping from enemy prison camp and evading recapture for 20 days. (U)
- USAF RB-66 downed by SAM over NVN, the second SAM kill in two days. (S)
- 21 -- 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div and ROK units launch 46-day Operation JOHN PAUL JONES in Phu Yen Province (LOSSES: Frd-20 KIA, 118 WIA; En-177 KIA, 35 VCC, 359 VCS, 49 ind wps, 5 C/S wps). (C)
- SECSTATE and SECDEF agree to ARC LIGHT B-52 strikes against selected remote Laos targets, to be executed without knowledge or concurrence of the RLG, with public cover in form of strike in nearby SVN territory. (TS)
- 23 -- VC attack USMC Marble Mountain Air Facility, Da Nang, and adjacent USL hospital with approximately 30 rounds of 81-mm mortar (LOSSES: US 27 WIA, 10 helicopters damaged, 9 O1-E's damaged, 2 U-6A's and 3 U-1A's damaged). (C)

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PAGE 839 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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- 23 -- First civilian Philippine medical team arrives in SVN. (C)
- 24 -- US tactical air strikes commence in DMZ. (U)
  - Royal Thai Air Force squadron arrives in SVN to aid VNAF airlift mission. (U)
- 25 -- Premier Ky declares in magazine interview that invasion of NVN is necessary to win war. (U)
  - USAID Public Safety Advisor Normal L. Clowers killed by VC in ambush in Khanh Hoa Province, 8th USAID employee killed in RVN. (U)
- 26 -- VC twice attack 25th US Inf Div base camp at Cu Chi in Hau Nghia Province with total of 175 rounds of 82-mm mortar and 75-mm RR fire (LOSSES: 23 US WIA). (C)
- 27 -- US pilots fly record 542 combat sorties in RVN. (U)
- 28 -- US pilots fly record 375 combat sorties in NVN. (U)
- 29 -- First British medical team arrives in RVN. (U)
- 30 -- B-52's bomb enemy facilities in DMZ for first time. (U)
- 31 -- Former I Corps Commander Thi flies to the US. (U)

## AUGUST

- 1 -- US military strength in RVN reaches 285,000. (U)
  - 1st Cav Div (AM) and ARVN units launch 25-day search-and-destroy Operation PAUL REVERE II in Pleiku Province (LOSSES: Fwd-94 KIA, 337 WIA, 2 MIA; En-809 KIA, 104 VCC, 78 VCS, 157 ind wpns, 41 C/S wpns). (C)
  - VC ambush ARVN convoy in Phuoc Tuy Province (LOSSES: Fwd-32 KIA, 14 WIA, 5 MIA, 21 ind wpns, 2 C/S wpns lost; En-1 KIA, 1 ind wpn). (C)
  - VC launch simultaneous attacks on ARVN position and RF convoy near Long Thanh District Town in Bien Hoa Province (LOSSES: Fwd-9 KIA, 14 WIA, 5 MIA, 21 ind wpns, 2 C/S wpns lost; En-1 KIA). (C)
- 2 -- Premier Ky reaffirms that he will leave politics after formation of constitutionally elected government. (U)

PAGE 8/10 OF 872 PAGES

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- 2 -- Thi says in Lynchburg, Virginia that he will be a candidate for RVN Premier when elections are held. (U)
- 3 -- USMC launches Operation PRAIRIE, which was carried into the New Year; cumulative results at the end of the year: En-1,316 KIA, 12 VCC; Frd-209 KIA, 998 WIA, 1 MIA. (C)
  - Political Warfare Advisory Directorate (MACPD) redesignated Psychological Operation Directorate (MACPD), remaining under staff supervision of ACoS, J3. (U)
- 5 -- Crop-destruction operations authorized in Laos to deny local food to infiltrating enemy forces. (TS)
- 6 -- USMC and ARVN units launch 15-day search-and-destroy operation COLORADO/LIEN KET 52 in Quang Tin and Quang Nam Provinces against VC/NVA staging areas (LOSSES: Frd-US 23 KIA, 167 WIA; ARVN 51 KIA, 156 WIA; En-674 KIA, 28 VCC, 99 VCS, 51 ind wpns, 5 C/S wpns). (C)
  - Elements of 4th US Inf Div land at Qui Nhon. (U)
- 7 -- Seven US aircraft downed over NVN (five USAF F-105's, 1 USAF F-101, 1 USN A-1H)--record loss to date for one day. (U)
- 9 -- In case of mistaken targeting, USAF aircraft bomb hamlet near Can Tho in Phong Dinh Province (LOSSES: VN 15 KIA, 102 WIA). (U)
  - VC mine truck carrying ARVN recruits near Sadeo in Dinh Tuong Province (LOSSES: 19 KIA, 5 WIA, 5 MIA). (C)
- 10 -- Premier Ky flies to Manila for three-day official visit. (U)
- 11 -- VC attack VN Special Forces base in Phu Yen Province (LOSSES: Frd-CIDG 10 KIA, 12 WIA, 17 MIA, 2 C/S wpns, 2 ind wpns lost). (C)
  - VC attack ARVN training center in Vinh Long Province (LOSSES: Frd-RF 14 KIA, 9 WIA, 3 MIA, 10 ind wpns lost; En-5 KIA). (C)
  - USAF aircraft mistakenly attack USCGC Point Welcome at night off DMZ (LOSSES: USCG 2 KIA, 5 WIA). (U)
  - VC detonate explosive device at Binh Tri Dong US MP firing range outside Saigon (LOSSES: US 2 KIA, 17 WIA). (C)

PAGE 841 OF 872 PAGES

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- 14 -- VC bn attacks two ARVN co's near Mo Duc District Town in Quang Ngai Province (LOSSES: Frd-5 KIA, 11 WIA, 8 MIA; En-50 KIA). (C)
- 196th US Light Inf Bde Lands at Vung-Tau. (U)
- President Johnson and COMUSMACV confer at LBJ Ranch in Texas. (U)
- 15 -- VC attack 1st US Inf Div position near Ben Cat District Town in Binh Duong Province (LOSSES: 5 KIA, 33 WIA). (C)
- Vietnam Support Expediting Task Force disbanded and FLAG POLE supply-shortage reporting system discontinued. (U)
- 17 -- VC terrorist device set off at fair in Hue (LOSSES: Frd-VN 26 KIA, 151 WIA). (C)
- VC burn refugee hamlets of Pho An and Tan My in Quang Ngai Province, destroying estimated 4,600 homes. (U)
- VC ambush PF platoon 7 KM south of Saigon (LOSSES: Frd-14 KIA, 12 WIA, 34 ind wps lost). (C)
- VC attack 1st Australian Task Force CP in Phuoc Tuy Province with 67 rounds of 82-mm mortar fire (LOSSES: 24 WIA). (C)
- VC place heavy weapons fire on 1st US LOG Com motorpool at Tan Son Nhut (LOSSES: Frd-US 3 WIA; ARVN 3 KIA, 9 WIA, 3 trucks destroyed). (C)
- Advance elements of the 2,000-man Philippine Civic Action Group (PHILCAGV) arrive in SVN. (U)
- 18 -- 1st Australian Task Force launches four-day search-and-destroy Operation SMITHFIELD in Phuoc Tuy Province during which VC battalion is annihilated after attempting ambush in most significant Australian victory of war to date (LOSSES: Frd-17 KIA, 22 WIA; En-245 KIA, 37 ind wps, 16 C/S wps). (C)
- RVNAF units launch two-day search-and-clear Operation QUANG DIEN in Thua Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-21 KIA, 16 WIA; En-100 KIA, 9 VCC, 18 ind wps, 1 C/S wpn). (C)
- Two VC co's ambush RF company in Thua Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-28 KIA, 2 WIA, 3 MIA, 40 ind wps lost). (C)

PAGE 842 OF 872 PAGES

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- 18 -- In three separate attacks on US vehicles in NE environs of Saigon, 4 US are KIA and 5 WIA. (C)
- 19 -- VC overrun two outposts in Vinh Long Province (LOSSES: Frd-12 KIA, 10 WIA, 3 Civilians KIA, 11 ind wpns lost). (C)
- 20 -- USMC units launch nine-day search-and-destroy Operation ALLEGHENY in Quang Nam Province (LOSSES: Frd-7 KIA, 59 WIA; En-113 KIA, 3 VCC, 25 VCS). (C)
  - VC throw 5 grenades into Da Nang US NCO club (LOSSES: Frd-US 8 WIA, 2 Civs WIA; VN 2 WIA; En-1 KIA, 4 VCC). (C)
- 21 -- VC attack Dong Thai RF post in Kien Giang Province (LOSSES: Frd-38 MIA, 28 ind wpns, 2 C/S wpns lost). (C)
- 23 -- MSTs freighter Baton Rouge Victory carrying military equipment to Saigon damaged by command-detonated mine and grounded on bank of Long Tau River, temporarily closing this main shipping channel (US 7 KIA, 3 WIA). (U)
  - 1st Bde, 1st US Inf Div begins nine-day road-clearing Operation AMARILLO in Binh Duong Province (LOSSES: Frd-43 KIA, 248 WIA; En-102 KIA, 6 VCC, 4 ind wpns, 4 C/S wpns). (C)
- 24 -- Estimated VC bn attacks Phu Hoi outpost in Binh Thuan Province (LOSSES: Frd-RF 59 KIA, 22 WIA, 1 MIA, 58 ind wpns, 1 C/S wpn lost; 10 Civs KIA; En-11 KIA, 3 ind wpns). (C)
- 25 -- Hq I FFORCEV begins Operation BYRD in Binh Thuan and Lam Dong Provinces, which was carried into the new year. Cumulative results at end of year: En-282 KIA, 130 PW, 1,562 Det, 218 ind wpns, 27 C/S wpns; Frd-149 KIA, 522 WIA, 6 MIA. (C)
  - ARVN elements launch two-day search-and-destroy Operation LONG PHI 984 in Kien Giang Province (LOSSES: Frd-30 KIA, 54 WIA, 1 MIA; En-132 KIA, 7 VCC, 16 VCS). (C)
- 26 -- VC detonate mine in bus in Vinh Long Province (LOSSES: Frd-VN 16 KIA, 1 WIA). (C)
- 27 -- 2d ROK Marine Bde (-) after deploying to Chu Lai comes under operational control of III MAF. (C)
- 28 -- VC fire 7 rounds of 75-mm RR fire on Vinh Long airfield in Vinh Long Province (7 helicopters damaged, 3 heavily). (C)

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PAGE 843 OF 872 PAGES

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- 28 -- VC ambush CIDG company in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Ftd-6 KIA, 13 WIA, 11 MIA; En-1 KIA).
- 29 -- CAPT Tran Van Phan removed as VNN Commander; LTC Col. Van Vien, Chief JGS, assumes interim command of VNN.

SEPTEMBER

- 1 -- US military strength in RVN reaches 305,000. (U)
- USMACV logistics advisory effort transferred to USARPAC as result of transfer of RVNAF support responsibilities from MAP to the individual services.
- 2 -- RVNAF elements launch Operation DAN CHI 261, a 21-day four-phase search-and-destroy action in An Xuyen and Ba Lieu Provinces (LOSSES: Ftd-21 KIA, 91 WIA; En-1 KIA, 104 VCC, 50 VCS, 244 ind wps, 11 C/S wps). (C)
- VC platoon ambushes bus in Binh Hoa Province (LOSSES: Ftd-VN 10 KIA, 18 WIA). (C)
- 3 -- VC attack US Camp Radcliff support area in Binh Dinh Province with approximately 40 rounds of 82-mm mortar (LOSSES: Ftd-4 KIA, 61 WIA, 19 H-13, 11 CH-47, 47 UH-1 damaged or destroyed). (C)
- VC claymore mine detonated in CIDG forward operating base in Hau Nghia Province (LOSSES: Ftd-US 5 WIA; CIDG 5 KIA, 11 WIA; 1 civilian WIA). (C)
- 5 -- 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div launches 21-day Operation SEWANG in Phu Yen Province (LOSSES: Ftd-27 KIA, 171 WIA; En-1 KIA, 34 VCC, 880 VCS, 79 ind wps, 1 C/S wps). (C)
- VC attack ARVN co and two USMC co's in Quang Nam Province (LOSSES: Ftd-US 3 KIA, 37 WIA; ARVN 8 KIA, 27 WIA; 20 KIA). (C)
- First elements of 9th ROK Inf (1st Bn) arrive at Nha Trang. (U)
- 6 -- ARVN units begin three-day guard-and-search Operation MANH HO 3, 4, 5, 6, in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Ftd-1 KIA, 23 WIA, 17 MIA; En-147 KIA, 8 ind wps, 1 AA M2, 10,000 rounds of ammo captured). (C)
- VC throw explosive devices into crowd gathered for festival in Hue (26 civilians wounded). (C)

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PAGE 844 OF 822 PAGES

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- 7 -- 11th USA Armored Cavalry Regt arrives at Vung Tau. (U)
- 8 -- VC attack ARVN 40th Regt in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 17 KIA, 19 WIA, 8 MIA, 1 Civ KIA, 35 ind wpns, 1 C/S wpn lost). (C)
  - Spanish medical team arrives in Saigon. (U)
- 9 -- First deep-water pier in Da Nang harbor opens with arrival of USS Aludra (AF-55). (U)
- 10 -- The first US aircraft, USAF A1-E, shot down in DMZ by NVA AA fire. (U)
- 11 -- Elections held throughout RVN for Constituent Assembly. (U)
  - VC fire 12 rounds of 81-mm mortar on Que Son District Town in Quang Nam Province (LOSSES: Frd-Civ 15 KIA, 10 WIA). (C)
  - VC attack Phan Thiet airfield in Binh Thuan Province with mortar and SA fire (LOSSES: 2 MEDEVAC UH-1B's, 13,000 gal JP-4 and 3,000 gal AV gas destroyed). (C)
- 12 -- One bn of 25th US Inf Div deployed to Long An Province in pilot project to determine feasibility of employing US forces in Mekong Delta. (U)
  - First Brazilian contribution, medical supplies, arrives in RVN. (U)
- 13 -- 1st Cav Div (AM) launches 40-day search-and-destroy Operation THAYER I in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-32 KIA, 243 WIA; En-230 KIA, 66 VCC, 681 VCS, 104 ind wpns, 20 C/S wpns). (C)
  - VC attack Nui Vang outpost in Quang Ngai Province (LOSSES: Frd-ARVN 31 KIA, 32 WIA, 16 MIA, 64 ind wpns, 4 C/S wpns, 2 105-mm howitzers seized, fired at another outpost and then destroyed; 4 VC KIA, 5 ind wpns). (C)
- 14 -- 196th Lt Inf Bde begins 72-day search-and-destroy Operation ATTLEBORO, in Tay Ninh Province, which grows into largest US operation of war to date. Other US units: 1st, 2d, 3rd Edes of 1st Inf Div; 2d Ede, 25th Inf Div; 3rd Ede, 4th Inf Div; and one bn of the 173rd Abn Bde. This operation credited with largest enemy rice haul to date: 1,121 tons captured, 1,263 tons destroyed. 9th VC Div suffered heavy casualties (LOSSES: Frd-115 KIA, 447 WIA; En-1,106 KIA, 42 VCC, 60 VCS, 128 ind wpns, 19 C/S wpns). (C)

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PAGE 2/5 OF 22 PAGES

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- 14 -- VC demolition squad attacks beachhead compound four miles NE of Saigon (LOSSES: 1 KIA, 19 WIA; VN 2 KIA, 38 trucks destroyed, 27 trucks damaged). (U)
- West German hospital ship Helgolana arrives in Saigon to treat VN civilians. (U)
- 16 -- Tri Quang announces end of his hunger strike after 100 days, declares his continuing opposition to US-supported Thieu-Ky government. (U)
- 17 -- USMC elements begin 11-day rice-security Operation COMBAT FLEECE 1-7 in Quang Ngai Province (LOSSES: Fri-1 KIA, 19 WIA; En-244 KIA, 1 VCC, 30 VCS, 6 ind wps). (C)
- VC attack base camp of 1/151st ARVN Regt in Quang Nam Province (LOSSES: Fri-9 KIA, 24 WIA, 21 ind wps lost). (C)
- 19 -- Second class of Revolutionary Development course begins graduated from Vung Tau school. (U)
- Advance party of 3rd Bde, 4th Inf Div arrives at Bien Hoa. (U)
- 21 -- MIG-21's engage US aircraft over NVN for first time in two months as US and NVN jets clash nine times. Two MIG-21's shot down, at least two others damaged, one MIG-21 damaged, no US losses. (U)
- VC mortar Chu Lai airstrip in Quang Tr Province (LOSSES: Fri-US 16 WIA, 5 aircraft damaged). (U)
- 22 -- VC 57-mm RR fire damages USN mine sweeper in Long An Province 27 KM SE of Saigon (LOSSES: Fri-US 1 KIA, 3 WIA). (U)
- ARVN units begin six-day search-and-destroy Operation MAENG PHU 27 in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Fri-8 KIA, 38 WIA; En-229 KIA, 7 VCC, 37 ind wps, 3 C/S wps). (C)
- 23 -- ROK Capital Inf Div launches 48-day search-and-destroy Operation MAENG HO 6 in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Fri-30 KIA, 115 WIA; En-1,161 KIA, 518 VCC, 693 VCS, 494 ind wps, 43 C/S wps). (C)
- VC attack Hammond airfield in Binh Dinh Province with 60mm mortar, AW and SA (LOSSES: Fri-US 1 KIA, 25 WIA, 2 OH-1A, 4 UH-1B, 4 UH-1D damaged). (C)
- 24 -- 101st Abn Div unit liberates 11 VN from a VC PW camp in Phu Yen Province. (U)
- 27 -- RVN's 117-member constituent assembly inaugurated. (U)

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OCTOBER

- 1 -- US military strength in RVN reaches 321,000. (U)
- 2 -- Multi-brigade force of the 1st Cav Div (AM) in coordination with RVNAF and ROK units launch 22-day search-and-destroy Operation IRVING in longtime enemy area of Binh Dinh Province. NVA 610th Div decisively defeated (LOSSES: Frd-29 KIA, 135 WIA, 2 MIA; En-681 KIA, 690 VCC, 4,136 VCS, 191 ind wps, 19 C/S wps). (C)
  - ARVN, US and ROK units launch 22-day search-and-destroy Operation DAI BANG 800 in Binh Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-3 KIA, 13 WIA; En-240 KIA, 891 VCC, 1,096 VCS, 107 ind wps, 7 C/S wps). (C)
  - VNN LCM strikes mine and sinks in branch of Long Tau River in Rung Sat Special Zone (LOSSES: Frd-US 3 KIA, 10 WIA; VNN 5 WIA). (C)
- 3 -- GVN Secretary of State for Health Nguyen Ba Kha resigns in dispute between southerners and MSS/National Police Chief BG Loan. (U)
  - ARVN units launch 44-day search-and-destroy Operation LAM SON 318 in conjunction with Operation PRAIRIE in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA, 5 WIA; ARVN 38 KIA, 251 WIA, 1 MIA; En-179 KIA, 5 VCC). (C)
- 4 -- ARVN Ranger truck hits mine near Duc My in Khanh Hoa Province (LOSSES: Frd-10 KIA, 15 WIA). (C)
- 5 -- 1st Bde, 4th Inf Div lands at Nha Trang. (U)
- 6 -- Estimated three NVA bns attack ARVN Abn Task Force 400 meters south of DMZ in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA, 2 WIA; VN 21 KIA, 161 WIA; En-20 KIA). (C)
- 7 -- VC attack and damage USN LCM on Dong Tranh River 23 KM south of Saigon with RR, AW and mortar fire (16 USN WIA). (C)
- 10 -- SECDEF arrives in Saigon for four-day RVN visit. (U)
  - 3rd USMC Div (FWD) assumes control of Operation PRAIRIE in Quang Tri Province, first division-controlled operation in I CTZ. 1st USMC Div, CP at Da Nang, assumes responsibility for Da Nang TAOR. 3rd USMC Div CP located in Phu Bai. (C)

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- 10 -- VC fire on Seaman's commercial truck compound near allied NE of Saigon for second time in month (LOSSES: Frd-US 4 WIA; VN 1 KIA, 3 WIA; ARVN 1 WIA; En-4 KIA). (C)
- 11 -- VC launch six attacks within 1 1/2 hours against outposts and towns in Kien Hoa Province (LOSSES: Frd-27 KIA, 42 WIA, 3 MIA; 1 VC ind wpn captured). (C)
- 12 -- 3rd Bde, 4th Inf Div lands at Vung Tau, completing the Division's deployment to RVN. (U)
- VC overrun PF outpost in Dinh Tuong Province (LOSSES: Frd-PF 5 KIA, 5 WIA, 71 ind wps lost; 15 civilian women and children killed). (C)
- 13 -- For second time in week, NVA attack ARVN Abn Task Force near DMZ in Quang Tri Province, using approximately 20 rounds of 60-mm mortar (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 WIA; VN 4 KIA, 29 WIA). (C)
- 14 -- VC attack 30th ARVN Ranger Bn during RVNAF search-and-destroy operation in Gia Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA, 4 WIA; VN 41 KIA, 29 WIA, 30 MIA, 37 ind wps lost; En-6 KIA, 13 VCC). (C)
- US pilots fly record 175 missions in NVN. (U)
- 15 -- VC launch four attacks within 1 1/2 hours in Quang Tan Province (LOSSES: Frd-RF/PF 25 KIA, 26 WIA; PF 4 KIA; Civs 3 KIA; 8 WIA, 16 ind wps; 1 C/S wpn lost). (C)
- 16 -- RVNAF units launch one-day search-and-destroy Operation CUU LONG 22/KT in Dinh Tuong Province (LOSSES: En-19 KIA, 17 VCC, 90 ind wps; 1 C/S wpn; no RVNAF casualties). (C)
- Estimated reinforced VC bn attacks district HQ in Binh Thuan Province (LOSSES: Frd-RF/PF 30 KIA, 12 WIA, 4 ind wps, 2 C/S wps lost; En-17 KIA, 4 VCC, 5 ind wps). (C)
- VC attack RF company in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: Frd-5 KIA, 20 WIA, 5 MIA, 5 ind wps, 1 C/S wpn lost; En-3 KIA). (C)
- VC attack two outposts and village in Kien Hoa Province (LOSSES: Frd-6 KIA, 17 WIA, 5 MIA, 29 ind wps lost; En-6 KIA). (C)
- 18 -- Elements of 4th Inf Div, 25th Inf Div and 1st Cav Div (AM) launch 74-day Operation PAUL REVERE IV in Pleiku Province (LOSSES: Frd-136 KIA, 466 WIA; En-977 KIA; 90 PW, 351 Det, 280 ind wps, 28 C/S wps). (C)

PAGE 44 OF 72 PAGES

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- 18 -- Two ARVN bns encounter estimated two VC bns during heliborne landing in two-day Operation DAN CHI 263 in Chuong Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA, 10 WIA-- helicopter crewmen; 1 UH-1B destroyed, 23 helicopters damaged; ARVN 29 KIA, 67 WIA; En-138 KIA, 3 VCC, 10 ind wps). (C)
- 19 -- 11th Armored Cav Regt launches 50-day Operation ATLANTA in Long Khanh and Phuoc Tuy Provinces (LOSSES: Frd-8 KIA, 41 WIA, 3 APC, 4 trucks destroyed; En-131 KIA, 51 VCC, 276 VCS, 7 ind wps, 9 C/S wps). (C)
- 20 -- MACV accepts as confirmed the presence in RVN of the Nong Truong 5 NVA Div, bringing in-country confirmed total to 7 enemy divisions. (C)
  - VC ambush VII combat youths and PF near Soc Trang in Ba Xuyen Province (LOSSES: Frd-VN 8 KIA, 15 WIA, 7 civs KIA, 15 ind wps lost). (C)
- 21 -- VC simultaneously attack Kien Thien District Town in Chong Thien Province and three nearby outposts (LOSSES: Frd-PF 10 KIA, 23 MIA; RF/PF 20 WIA; 2 Civs KIA, 51 ind wps lost). (C)
  - VC detonate claymore mine in marketplace in Vinh Binh Province (LOSSES: Frd-VN MIA 4 KIA, 15 WIA; civ 5 KIA, 33 WIA). (C)
  - VC attack ARVN Ranger bn 10 KM NW of Quang Ngai City (LOSSES: Frd-13 KIA, 10 WIA, 5 MIA, 15 ind wps, 1 C/S wpn lost; En-20 KIA, 5 ind wps). (C)
  - VC attack PF post in Bac Lieu Province (LOSSES: Frd-15 KIA, 10 WIA; 19 civs KIA, 30 ind wps lost; En-3 ind wps captured). (C)
- 23 -- BG Donovan F. Smith, USAF, replaces BG Albert W. Schinz, USAF, as Chief, Air Force Advisory Group, Tan Son Nhut AB. (U)
- 24 -- US, RVN, ROK, Australian, New Zealand, Philippine and Thai Chiefs of State meet in Manila for two-day summit conference on war. (U)
  - VN civilian bus hits mine in I Corps (LOSSES: 15 Civ KIA, 19 WIA). (C)
  - ARVN unit discovers VC PW camp containing 13 military and 5 civilian prisoners in Vinh Binh Province. (C)

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830624 PAGE 19 OF 22 PAGES

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- 25 -- 3rd Bde, 1st Cav Div (AM) launches Operation THAYER II in Binh Dinh Province, which was carried into 1967. Cumulative results at end of year: En-980 KIA, 32 VCC, 1,562 VCS, 218 ind wpns, 27 C/S wpns; US 149 KIA, 522 WIA, 6 MIA). (C)
- USN and USAF surface vessels and strike aircraft commence Operation TRAFFIC COP to interdict, investigate and destroy NVN watercraft in waters adjacent to TALLY HO area. (TS)
- 26 -- Fire aboard USS Oriskany in Tonkin Gulf kills 43 US, injures 16. (U)
- Phan Khac Suu elected Speaker of the GVN Constituent Assembly. (U)
- President Johnson visits Cam Ranh Bay. (U)
- 1st Bde, 4th Inf Div launches Operation ADAMS in Phu Yen Province which carried over into 1967. Cumulative results at end of year: En-164 KIA, 101 VCC, 1,055 VCS, 80 ind wpns, 1 C/S wpn; US 13 KIA, 133 WIA). (C)
- 27 -- Au Truong Thanh resigns as GVN Minister of Economy, replaced by Truong Tai Ton in continuing "southerner" dispute in Cabinet. (U)
- 28 -- VC attack USARV ammunition dump in Bien Hoa Province with mortar fire and satchel charges (LOSSES: Frd-2 KIA, 9 WIA, 13,000 artillery rounds, 3,700 propellants destroyed). (S)
- 30 -- 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div launches 34-day search-and-destroy Operation GERONIMO I in Phu Yen Province (LOSSES: Frd-16 KIA, 78 WIA, 1 ind wpn lost; En-150 KIA, 74 VCC, 67 VCS, 111 ind wpns, 31 C/S wpns). (C)
- VN National Police in Saigon capture VC demolition team and cache of 1,746 blocks of TNT and 10 weapons. (C)
- 31 -- CAPT Tran Van Chon designated Commander-in-Chief, VNN. (U)

NOVEMBER

- 1 -- US military strength in RVN reaches 350,000. (U)
- VC attack central Saigon with approximately 24 rounds of 75-mm RR fire as National Day celebrations are beginning (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA, 5 WIA; VN 12 KIA, 32 WIA). (C)

PAGE 850 OF 872 PAGES

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- 1 -- VC detonate mine on Long Tau River, sinking a USN mine-sweeper (LOSSES: 4 WIA, 2 MIA). (C)
- 4 -- Enemy attacks 196th Lt Inf Bde base camp 5 KM W of Tay Ninh City with estimated 111 rounds of 60-mm and 81-mm mortar (LOSSES: US 2 KIA, 54 WIA, PHILCAG 4 WIA). Reaction to this and other enemy attacks near Tay Ninh City developed into major phase of Operation ATTLEBORO. (C)
- 5 -- ARVN units launch 3-day search-and-destroy Operation LIEN KET 68 in Quang Tin Province (LOSSES: Frd-64 KIA, 97 WIA, 3 MIA; En-109 KIA). (C)
- 6 -- VC attack Thuan Thien PF outpost in Phong Dinh Province (LOSSES: Frd-FF 7 KIA, 4 WIA, 18 MIA; civ 12 KIA, 9 WIA, 23 ind wps lost; En-5 mines captured). (C)
- 7 -- VC kidnap entire population (107) of Cai Doi hamlet in Vinh Binh Province. (U)
- Advisory Committee for Psychological Operations, composed of senior representatives of JUSPAO, MACV, USAID, CAS and AMEMB Political Section, established to advise Mission Council. (U)
- Revolutionary Development Division (J33) redesignated Revolutionary Development Support Directorate under BG William A. Knowlton, USA, to control expanded MACV support for RD. (U)
- 9 -- ROK Marine units launch 18-day search-and-destroy Operation DRAGON EYE in Quang Ngai Province (LOSSES: Frd-ROK 38 KIA, 97 WIA; USMC 4 WIA; En-154 KIA, 4 VCC, 21 VCS, 7 ralliers, 23 ind wps, 1 C/S wpn). (C)
- 10 -- 1st Inf Div patrol in Operation ATTLEBORO in Tay Ninh Province encounters first reported enemy tear gas attack of war; gas is CS or CN type, incapacitating men for approximately four minutes. (C)
- 11 -- VC attack Vi Than RF dependent-housing area in Chuong Thien Province with SA, mortar and RR fire (LOSSES: Frd-RF 3 KIA, 11 civs KIA, 32 WIA). (C)
- 12 -- Enemy places an estimated 500-600 mortar rounds, heaviest sustained mortar fire of the war, on 4th Inf Div units in Operation PAUL REVERE IV 17 miles W of Plei Djereng in Kontum Province. (U)

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PAGE 351 OF 872 PAGES

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- 12 -- Estimated 25 VC infiltrate USMC platoon defensive position in Thua Thien Province and attack with small arms, grenades and satchel charges (LOSSES: Fwd-USMC 14 KIA, 28 WIA; ARVN 1 KIA, 4 WIA, 1 MIA, 1 C/S and 4 ind wps lost; En-3 KIA). (C)
- VC overrun PF outpost near Tay Ninh City (LOSSES: Fwd-8 KIA, 18 WIA, 19 MIA, 2 C/S wps and 31 ind wps lost). (C)
- 14 -- VC attack CIDG unit 20 km E of Moc Hoa in Kien Tuong Province (LOSSES: Fwd-US 2 KIA, 4 WIA; CIDG 8 KIA, 17 WIA, 1 MIA, 1 airboat and 6 ind wps lost; En-36 KIA, 7 sampans destroyed, 1 C/S wpm). (C)
- VC attack Can Don PF outpost in Long An Province (LOSSES: Fwd-PF 9 KIA, 12 WIA, 10 MIA; 9 civ KIA, 2 C/S wps and 33 ind wps lost). (C)
- Estimated 2 VC companies attack RF outpost in Tay Ninh Province (LOSSES: Fwd-RF 1 KIA, 13 WIA, 3 MIA; 16 civ KIA, 7 WIA, 1 MIA, 2 C/S wps and 33 ind wps lost). ARVN reaction force approaching outpost strikes mine (LOSSES: Fwd-14 KIA, 9 WIA). (C)
- 15 -- GVN commences armed convoys for all international shipping into and from Cambodia on RVN portions of Mekong/Bassac Rivers. (S)
- Tuy Hoa airbase activated. (U)
- 17 -- Within 9 1/2 hours in Dinh Tuong Province VC block and mine Highway 4 and attack 5 ARVN and RF/PF positions (LOSSES: Fwd-VN 6 KIA, 24 WIA, 1 RF MIA, 16 ind wps lost). (C)
- 18 -- Premier Ky announces cabinet changes involving creation of new Cultural Affairs Ministry under Deputy Premier Nguyen Luu Vien, splitting of Economy Ministry into Ministries of Commerce and Industry, and replacement of Secretaries of State for Education, Social Welfare and Youth. (U)
- VC attack USARV Long Binh ammunition dump in Bien Hoa Province with satchel charges (1,265 105-mm arty rounds destroyed). (C)
- VC attack ARVN 51st Ranger Bn in Long An Province (LOSSES: Fwd-14 KIA, 9 WIA, 2 MIA, 6 ind wps; En-10 KIA). (C)
- 19 -- IV Corps Commander LTG Dang Quang named to newly created post of Minister of Planning and Development; replaced by 23rd ARVN Div Commander BG Nguyen Van Mank. (U)

PAGE 852 OF 872 PAGES

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- 19 -- 2d ARVN Div launches eight-day Operation LIEN KET 70 in Quang Ngai Province (LOSSES: Frd-3 KIA, 33 WIA; En-123 KIA, 30 VCC, 21 ind wpns). (C)
  - Enemy releases 59 VN PW's captured at A Shau in March. (U)
  - VC engage 60 FF and 2 US advisers in Kien Hoa Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA; FF 17 KIA, 10 WIA, 28 ind wpns lost; En-60 KIA, 9 ind wpns). (C)
- 24 -- VC kidnap 109 civilians and burn 15 houses in Din Cu Low Life hamlet in Vinh Binh Province (U).
  - VC ambush US convoy carrying civilian construction workers 10 km SE of Dalat (LOSSES: Frd-1 US military, 1 US civilian, 7 foreign nationals KIA, 11 WIA, 3 trucks destroyed, 5 trucks damaged). (C)
- 25 -- VC attack 1st Inf Div and ARVN CP's in Sinh Duong Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 41 WIA; ARVN 3 WIA). (C)
- 28 -- Advance party of 199th Inf Bde arrives at Bion Hoa. (U)
- 29 -- VC ambush ARVN/RF convoy in Tuyen Due Province (LOSSES: Frd-24 KIA, 27 WIA, 1 vehicle destroyed, 3 trucks damaged, 31 ind wpns, 3 C/S wpns lost). (C)
- 30 -- Allies declare 48-hour cease-fire over Christmas and New Year, four-day cease-fire over TET (8-12 February), following communist declaration of Christmas and New Year cease fires. (U)
  - 410,465 gallons of herbicide expended for defoliation and crop-destruction projects was largest of any month and exceeds average quarterly usage during FY 66. (C)
  - By far the highest monthly total (694.5 hrs) of aerial loudspeaker hours were recorded. A total of 1,803 psyops sorties were flown to accomplish this feat. (C)
  - US planes scattered record high of more than 272 million psyops leaflets over NVN and SVN, exceeding any previous month's total. (U)

DECEMBER

- 1 -- US military strength in RVN reaches 361,000. (U)

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PAGE 555 OF 873 PAGES

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- 1 -- Elements of 1st Inf Div Launch Operation FAIRFAX, which was carried into the New Year. Cumulative results at the end of the year were: En-149 KIA, 40 VCC, 367 VCS, 60 ind wps, 11 C/S wps; Frd-US 11 KIA, 67 WIA; ARVN 23 KIA, 58 WIA, 1 MIA). (C)
- 2 -- Eight US aircraft downed over NVN with 13 pilots dead or captured, both one-day records for war to date. (U)
- VC ambush recon platoon of 11th Armored Cav Regt in Long Khanh Province; break contact in face of reaction force, artillery and air support (LOSSES: Frd-1 KIA, 22 WIA; En-9 KIA, 1 ind wps, 3 C/S wps). (C)
- VC co ambushes RF co in Long An Province (LOSSES: Frd-17 KIA, 6 WIA, 2 MIA; En-1 KIA). (C)
- French merchant ship Sindh receives 10 rounds of VC 75-mm RR fire on Long Tau River 23 km SE of Saigon, reaches Saigon with superstructure considerably damaged (LOSSES: Frd-2 WIA; En-1 KIA). (C)
- 4 -- VC attack Tan Son Nhut airbase with SA and approximately 40 rounds mortar, 30 VC penetrating perimeter and engaging USAF defenders provided close air support by USA aircraft (LOSSES: Frd-US 3 KIA, 30 WIA; VN 2 WIA; 18 aircraft damaged; En-31 KIA, 4 VCC, 11 ind wps, 41 grenades, 6 60-mm mortar rounds, 1 claymore mine captured). (C)
- VC satchel charge explodes at PSYOPS billet in USAID compound in Saigon (11 US WIA). (C)
- US Navy SWIFT boat detains and tows to Nha Trang 80-foot junk carrying 36 males and 7 children identified as Communist Chinese nationals from Tanh Siem, Hainan Island. (C)
- 7 -- Influential Constituent Assembly member Tran Van Van assassinated in Saigon by man identifying himself as VC. (U)
- 8 -- US pilots encounter highly disciplined and professional six-MIG formation over NVN believed by Cmdr 7th AF to have been flown by North Koreans. (S)
- 9 -- Estimated enemy bn attacks two RF co's conducting training exercises in Phuoc Tuy Province (LOSSES: Frd-11 KIA, 16 WIA, 179 MIA, 81 ind wps lost; En-2 VC KIA). (C)

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PAGE 854 OF 822 PAGES

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- 9 -- SECSTATE Rusk arrives in Saigon for two-day visit. (U)
- 10 -- VC launch simultaneous attacks on 3rd ARVN Inf near An Lo bridge in Thua Thien Province (LOSSES: Frd-US 1 KIA 4 WIA; ARVN 23 KIA, 81 WIA, 12 MIA, 103 ind wps, 6 C/S wps lost; En-6 KIA, 4 ind wps). (C)
- VC detonate explosives at USARV ammunition dump in Long Binh, Bien Hoa Province (LOSSES: US 1 KIA, 1.5 tons SA, 80 175-mm propellant charges destroyed). (C)
- US aircraft, acting on erroneous information, strike USMC unit in Quang Tri Province (LOSSES: 17 KIA, 11 WIA). (U)
- 11 -- VC attack 25th ARVN Div base camp 17 KM SW of Cu Chi in Hau Nghia Province with AW and mortar fire (LOSSES: Frd-7 KIA, 14 WIA, 14 MIA, 22 ind wps, 1 C/S wpn lost, 7 civ WIA). (C)
- VC ambush platoon of 1/16th US Inf 5 km N of Phu Khuong District Town in Tay Ninh Province (LOSSES: Frd-18 KIA, 10 WIA; En-26 KIA). (C)
- 12 -- The Dong Nai water supply system inaugurated; when completed will be able to supply 127.5 million gallons of potable water daily to the 2.7 million inhabitants of the Saigon/Cholon/Gia Dinh area. (U)
- The Soviet Union has given 100 new MIG jet fighters to Hanoi, doubling size of NVAF, according to news release. (U)
- 13 -- 1/33rd ARVN Inf discovers 64 prisoners of VC during Operation DAN CHI 270B in Chuong Thien Province. (C)
- 14 -- In Quang Tin Province, 5 km E Tam Ky, 3/6 ARVN Inf attacked by unknown number of enemy (LOSSES: Frd-US 7 WIA; ARVN 34 KIA, 39 WIA; En-35 KIA). (C)
- Seven US planes downed over North Vietnam. (U)
- 15 -- GVN Constituent Assembly approves first three articles of new constitution, providing for popularly-elected President, and a Prime Minister and Cabinet appointed by the President. (U)
- 19 -- First contingent of 9th US Inf Div arrived at Vung Tau. (U)
- Bob Hope arrives to start his annual Christmas show. (U)

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PAGE 855 OF 872 PAGES

830624

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- 19 -- Philippine Speaker Cornelio T. Villareal arrives for a four-day visit with GVN leaders. (U)
- 20 -- Army Chief of Staff Gen. Harold K. Johnson arrives in Vietnam. (U)
- 22 -- About 25-50 North Korean pilots reported to be in NVAF. (U)
- 24 -- A C1-4 aircraft belonging to Flying Tiger Lines crashes into a populated area  $1\frac{1}{2}$  KM from Da Nang runway. 111 persons were killed (107 VN, 4 US crew members). (U)
- 26 -- Saigon dock workers on strike. (U)
- 27 -- ARVN Medical Corps graduates 75 new corpsman. (U)
- VC/NVA troops overrun position of 1st Cav Div artillery and inflict heavy casualties. (U)
- US and ARVN units launch Operation DAN CHI 270D in Chuong Thien Province, a 3-day search-and-destroy operation (LOSSES: Fwd-2 KIA, 24 WIA, 1 APC damaged; En-124 KIA, 12 VCC, 6 VCS, 37 ind wps, 3 C/S wps). (C)
- 30 -- Saigon dock strike ends. (U)
- 31 -- III MAF units observe estimated 1,000 VC/NVA troops well armed, moving into position N of Hue in Thua Thien Province during the New Years' cease-fire. Enemy taken under air attack and arty fire by 3d Mar Div and ARVN units; action continued until 010630Z Jan 67. No friendly casualties; enemy losses unknown.
- Grand total of US/FWMAF forces in RVN is 441,190.

MACV	8,794
Army Units	236,341
Marines Corps Units	70,405
Navy units	19,953
Air Force Units	52,397
Combined Studies	6
DODSFECPREP	137
DEF COM AGCY	40
SOG	595
Total US forces	388,568

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PAGE 856 OF 872 PAGES

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830624

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31 --	Australia	4,533
	Rep of China	30
	Rep of Korea	45,605
	New Zealand	155
	Philippines	2,063
	Spain	12
	Thailand	<u>224</u>
	Total FWMAF	52,622
	Grand Total	441,190

# UNCLASSIFIED

## ANNEX I—GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Antiaircraft
AAA	Antiaircraft Artillery
A&AFES	Army & Air Force Exchange Service
AAFPS	Army/Air Force Postal Service
AATT	Australian Army Training Team
ABCC	Airborne Communications Center
ABFC	Advance Base Functional Component
ACC	Army Component Command
ACR	Armored Cavalry Regiment
ACS	Air Commando Squadron
ACTIV	Army Concept Team in Vietnam
AC&W	Aircraft Control and Warning
ACY	Armed Combat Youth
AD	Air Defense
ADA	Air Defense Artillery
ADLMS	Air Delivered Land Mine System
ADP	Automatic Data Processing
AEW	Airborne Early Warning
AFAT	Air Force Advisory Team
AFC	Armed Forces Council
AFC	Automatic Frequency Control
AFGP	Air Force Advisory Group
AFRS	Armed Forces Radio Service
AFRTS	Armed Forces Radio and Television Service
AFTU-V	Air Force Test Unit, Vietnam
AFV	Australian Force, Vietnam
AGIL	Airborne General Illumination Light Set
AHB	Assault Helicopter Battalion
AID	Agency for International Development
AIK	Aid-in-Kind
AIRA	Air Attache
AKL	Auxillary Light Cargo Ship
ALC	Area Logistical Command
ALO	Air Liaison Officer
AM	Aluminum Matting
AM	Airmobile
AM	Amplitude Modulated
AMA	Air Material Area
AMC	Army Materiel Command
AMEMB	American Embassy
AMMC	Aviation Materiel Management Center
ANFE	Aircraft Not Fully Equipped
ANGLICO	Air & Naval Gunfire Liaison Company
ANZAC	Australian & New Zealand Army Corps
AOA	Amphibious Objective Area

UNCLASSIFIED

AP Air Police  
AOCF Aircraft Out of Commission for Parts  
APA Amphibious Assault Transport Ship  
APB Barrack Ship  
APC Armored Personnel Carrier  
API Armor-Piercing Incendiary  
APOE Aerial Port of Embarkation  
ARA Aerial Rocket Artillery  
ARAAV Armored Reconnaissance Airborne Assault Vehicles  
ARC American Red Cross  
ARCOV US Army Combat Operations in Vietnam (Study Group)  
ARDF Airborne Radiation Detection and Fixing  
ARG/SLF Amphibious Ready Group/Special Landing Force  
ARL Repair Ship  
ARPA Advanced Research Projects Agency (OSD)  
ARPA/RDFU-V Advanced Research Project Agency's Research and  
Development Field Unit, Vietnam  
  
ARVN Army of the Republic of Vietnam  
ASB Amphibious Support Battalion  
ASL Authorized Stockage Idats  
AS&L Administrative Support and Logistic Company  
ASOC Air Support Operations Center  
ASPB Armored Support Patrol Boat  
ASR Available Supply Rate  
ASRT Air Support Radar Teams  
ASTA Aerial Survey and Target Acquisition  
ATC Armored Troop Carrier  
ATCO Air Transport Coordinating Office  
ATF Amphibious Task Force  
ATF Australian Task Force  
AV Seaplane Tender (Large)  
AVLB Armored Vehicle-Launched Bridges  
AVM Air Vice Marshal  
AVP Seaplane Tender (Small)  
AW Automatic Weapons  
AWSP Automatic Weapons (Self-Propelled)  
BDA Bomb Damage Assessment  
Bde Brigade  
BLT Battalion Landing Team  
Bn Battalion  
BOD Beneficial Occupancy Date  
CA Crusier  
CA Civil Affairs  
CA Constituent Assembly (RVN)  
CAD Corps Advisory Detachment  
CAG Civic Action Group  
CAS Controlled American Sources

# UNCLASSIFIED

CAS	Close Air Support
CBU	Cluster Bomb Unit
CCB	Command Communication Boat
CCF	Corps Contingency Force
CCRSFF (D)	Commander, Central Region Seaco Field Forces (Designate)
C&D	Cover and Deception
CD	Combat Development
CDTCV	Combat Development Test Center, Vietnam
CEP	Circular Error Probable
CERS	Corps Epidemiological Reference Office
CES	Chief of the General Staff
C&GS	Command and General Staff Course (RVNAF)
CHAFAG	Chief Air Force Advisory Group
CHECO	Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Combat Operations (USAF)
CHICCM	Chinese Communist
CHINAT	Chinese Nationalist
CHNAVADGP	Chief, Naval Advisory Group
CHNAVADGRU	Chief, Naval Advisory Group
CHNAVGP	Chief, Naval Advisory Group
CHP	Chieu Hoi Program
CICV	Combined Intelligence Center, Vietnam
CIDG	Civilian Irregular Defense Group
CINCPAC	Commander-in-Chief Pacific
CINCPACFLT	Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet
CINCPACREPHIL	Commander-in-Chief Pacific Representative, Philippines
CINCSAC	Commander-in-Chief Strategic Air Command
CINCSTRIKE	Commander-in-Chief Strike Command
CINCUSARPAC	Commander-in-Chief United States Army Pacific
CINCVNN	Commander-in-Chief Vietnamese Navy
CIP	Commodities Import Program
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
CJGS	Chief of the Joint General Staff (RVNAF)
CLASSES OF SUPPLY	
CLASS I	Rations
CLASS II	Clothing and Equipment
CLASS III	POL
CLASS IV	Organizational Equipment and Fortifications Material
CLASS V	Ammunition
CMA	Commissariat for Montagnard Affairs
CMD	Capital Military District
CMEC	Combined Military Exploitation Center
CMIC	Combined Military Interrogation Center
CMR	Capital Military Region
COC	Combat Operations Center
Cofs	Chief of Staff

# UNCLASSIFIED

COIN Counterinsurgency  
COLA Cost of Living Allowance  
COMAFV Commander, Australian Forces, Vietnam  
COMAAAFV Commander, Australian Army Forces, Vietnam  
COMCARDIV Commander Carrier Division  
COMDESDIV Commander Destroyer Division  
COMMAGROCV Commander, Military Assistance Group, Republic of  
China Vietnam  
COMNAVFORV Commander, Naval Forces, Vietnam  
COMNZWZEDV Commander, New Zealand Assistance Detachment, Vietnam  
COMNZAFFE Commander, New Zealand Army Forces Far East  
COMPHIBPAC Commander, Amphibious Force Pacific Fleet  
COMPHIIMAGV Commander, Philippine Military Assistance Group,  
Vietnam  
COMRIVFLOTONE Commander, River Flotilla One  
COMROKRV Commander, Republic of Korea Forces, Vietnam  
COMROKMAGV Commander, Republic of Korea Military Assistance  
Group, Vietnam  
COMRTMAGV Commander Royal Thai Military Assistance Group,  
Vietnam  
COMSEC Communications Security  
COMSERVPAC Commander, Service Force Pacific Fleet  
COMSEVENTHFLT Commander, Seventh Fleet  
COMSTSFE Commander, Military Sea Transport Service Far East  
COMUSKOREA Commander, United States Forces, Korea  
COMUSJAPAN Commander, US Forces Japan  
COMUSMACTHAI Commander, United States Military Assistance Command,  
Thailand  
COMUSMACV Commander, United States Military Assistance Command,  
Vietnam  
COMUSSEASIA Commander, US Forces, Southeast Asia  
COMUSTDC Commander, United States Taiwan Defense Command  
COMUS Continental United States  
COSVN Central Office for South Vietnam (VC)  
CPA Central Purchasing Authority  
CPTF Cost Plus Fixed Fee  
CPSU Communist Party of the Soviet Union  
CRID Capital ROK Infantry Division  
CSAF Chief of Staff US Air Force  
CSC Coastal Surveillance Center  
CSC Communications Satellite Corporation  
CSG Combat Support Group  
CSU Casualty Staging Unit  
CTF Commander Task Force  
CTG Commander Task Group  
CTOC Corps Tactical Operations Center  
CTU Commander Task Unit  
CTZ Corps Tactical Zone

# UNCLASSIFIED

CVA	Attack Carrier
CVS	Anti-Submarine Aircraft Carrier
CVT	Saigon Workers' Union
CW	Continuous Wave
DA	Department of the Army
DAML	Directorate, Army MAP Logistics
DASC	Direct Air Support Center
DCA	Defense Communications Agency
DCG	Deputy Commanding General
DCS	Defense Communications System
DD	Destroyer
DDR&E	Director, Defense Research and Engineering (OSD)
DEFCOMUSMACTHAI	Deputy Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Thailand
DEFCOMUSMACV	Deputy Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
DER	Radar Fleet Destroyer Escort
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam (NVN)
DSA	Deputy Senior Advisor
DST	Destructor
DTA	Division Tactical Area
E&E	Escape and Evasion
ECAD	Engineer Control Advisory Detachment
ECM	Electronic Countermeasures
EEL	Electronic Emission Intelligence
ELINT	Electronic Intelligence
EMBTTEL	Embassy Telegram
EOB	Explosion Ordnance Demolition
FAC	Forward Air Controller
FAR	Forces Armees du Royaume (Laos)
FARELF	Far East Land Forces
FATOC	Field Army Tactical Operations Center
FEAAES	Far East Army & Air Force Exchange Service
FFORCEV	Field Force, Vietnam
FFV	Field Force, Vietnam
FIS	Fighter Interceptor Squadron
FLC	Force Logistical Command (USMC)
FLSG	Force Logistical Support Group
FLSU	Force Logistical Support Unit
FMFPAC	Fleet Marine Force, Pacific
FRAG	Order Dispatching Single or Multiple Aircraft Sortie
FSCC	Fire Support Coordination Center
FSR	Force Service Regiment
FUIRO	United Front for the Struggle of Oppressed Races (Front Unifie de la Lutte des Races Opprimees)

# UNCLASSIFIED

FUO	Fever of Unknown Origin
FW(F)	Free World (Forces)
FWMA(F)	Free World Military Assistance (Forces)
FWMAC	Free World Military Assistance Council
FWMAO	Free World Military Assistance Office
GFR	German Federal Republic
GLO	GVN Liaison Officer
GHVN	Government of North Vietnam
GNZ	Government of New Zealand
GOA	Government of Australia
GOK	Government of Korea
GOP	Government of the Philippines
GOS	Government of Spain
GP	General Purpose
GPW	Provisions of the Geneva Convention relating to Prisoners of War
GPWD	General Political Warfare Department (GVN)
GRC	Government of the Republic of China
GVN	Government of Vietnam
HAC	Headquarters Area Command
H&I	Harassing and Interdiction Fires
HEDSUPFACT or HSAS	Headquarters, Support Activity, Saigon (Now USAHAC)
HIS	Heliborne Illumination System
HMM	Medium Helicopter Squadron
HT	Hop Tac
ICC	International Control Commission
ICP	Inventory Control Point
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDCSS	Initial Defense Communications Satellite System
I&E	Information and Education
IFS	Inshore Fire Support Ship
ILA	International Longshoremen's Union
IMAO	International Military Assistance Office
INTC	Intelligence Corps
INTSUM	Intelligence Summary
IR	Infrared
IRHA	Injuries Resulting from Hostile Action
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
ISUM	Intelligence Summary
ITACS	Integrated Tactical Air Control System
IWCS	Integrated Wideband Communications System
JCOCG	Joint Cadre Operation Control Group
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JGS	Joint General Staff (RVNAF)
JPG	Joint US Planning Group
JPRC	Joint Personnel Recovery Center
JRATA	Joint Research and Test Agency (Dissolved Nov 66)
JSOP	Joint Strategic Objectives Plan

# UNCLASSIFIED

JTAGC	Joint Tactical Air Control Center
JTD	Joint Table of Distribution
JTOC	Joint Tactical Operations Center
JUSMAAG	Joint US Military Assistance Advisory Group
JUSMAGPHIL	Joint US Military Assistance Advisory Group, Philippines
JUSMAGTHAI	Joint US Military Assistance Group, Thailand
JUSPAO	Joint US Public Affairs Office
JUWTF	Joint Unconventional Warfare Task Force
KBA	Killed by Air
KCAG	Korean Civic Action Group
KIA	Killed in Action
KLSC	Korean Logistic Service Corps
KMAG	Korean Military Advisory Group (US)
LAAM	Light Antiaircraft Missile
LAPES	Low Altitude Parachute Extraction System
LCM	Landing Craft Medium
LCOP	Logistical Control Office, Pacific
LCU	Landing Craft Utility
LCVP	Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel
LDNN	Underwater Demolition Team (RVNAF)
LLDB	Special Forces (RVNAF)
LNO	Liaison Officer
LOC	Line(s) of Communication
LOI	Letter of Instruction
LOUO	Limited Official Use Only
LPD	Dock Landing Platform
LFH	Landing Platform Helicopter
LSD	Dock Landing Ship
LSIL	Infantry Landing Ship, Large
LSM	Medium Landing Ship
LSMR	Landing Ship Medium Rocket
LSSL	Support Landing Ship, Large
LST	Landing Ship Tank
L/T	Long Tons (2,240 lbs)
LWL	Limited Warfare Laboratory
LZ	Landing Zone
MAAG	Military Assistance Advisory Group
MAC	Military Airlift Command
MACCOC	Combat Operations Center, HQ USMACV
MACFWMAO	Free World Military Assistance Office, HQ USMACV
MACJOO	COMUSMACV
MACMD	Surgeon, HQ USMACV
MACPD	Psychological Operation Directorate, HQ USMACV
MACSOG	Studies and Observation Group, HQ USMACV
MACV	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
MACVCC	Command Center, HQ USMACV

# UNCLASSIFIED

MAP Marine Amphibious Force  
MAG Marine Air Group  
MAGROCV Military Advisory Group, Government of the Republic  
of China, Vietnam  
MAP Military Assistance Program  
MARADVU Marine Advisory Unit  
MARS Military Affiliate Radio Station  
MAW Marine Air Wing  
MCID Multipurpose Concealed Intrusion Detector  
MCS Mine Countermeasure Support Ship  
MDMAF Mekong Delta Mobile Afloat Force  
MEDCAP Medical Civic Action Program  
MEF Marine Expeditionary Force (Now Marine Amphibious  
Force)  
MF Main force  
MFR Memorandum for Record  
MHB Military History Branch, HQ USMACV  
MHE Materials Handling Equipment  
MIA Missing in Action  
MICH Minister of Information and Chieu Hoi  
MILCAP Military Civic Action Program  
MILCON Military Construction  
MILPHAP Military Provincial Hospital Augmentation Program  
(Changed Oct 66 to Military Provincial Health  
Assistance Program)  
MILSTRIP Military Standard Requisition and Issue Procedures  
MTP Motivation Indoctrination Program  
MIUWSU Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Surveillance Units  
MLG Mission Liaison Group  
MOD Ministry of Defense  
MOH Ministry of Health  
MONEVAL Monthly Evaluation Report (HQ USMACV)  
MOOSE Move out of Saigon Expeditiously (Project)  
MPC Military Payment Certificate  
MR Military Region  
MRB Mobile Riverine Base  
MSB Minesweeping Boat  
MSC Coastal Minesweeper  
MSML Minesweeping Motorlaunch  
MSO Ocean Minesweeper  
MSS Military Security Service (RVNAF)  
MSTS Military Sea Transport Service  
MSTSFE Military Sea Transport Service, Far East  
M/T Metric Tons (2,205 lbs)  
MTMTS Military Transport Management Terminal Service  
MTT Mobile Training Teams  
MW Microwave  
MUF Maximum Useable Frequency  
NAVADGP Naval Advisory Group

# UNCLASSIFIED

NAVGP	Naval Advisory Group
NAVSUPFACT	Naval Support Activity
NBI	Non-Battle Injuries
NFA	Not for Attribution
NGF	Naval Gunfire
NGFS	Naval Gunfire Support
NIA	National Institute of Administration (GVN)
NIC	National Interrogation Center
NICP	National Inventory Control Point
NLC	National Leadership Committee
NLC	National Legislative Council
NLF	National Liberation Front
NLFVS	National Liberation Front of South Vietnam
NMCB	Naval Mobile Construction Battalion
NMCC	National Military Command Center (DOD)
NOR	Not Operationally Ready
NORM	Not Operationally Ready for Maintenance
NORS	Not Operationally Ready for Reason of Supply
NP	National Police
NPA	National Priority Area
NPFF	National Police Field Force
NRDU-V	US Navy Research and Development Unit, Vietnam
NSA	Naval Support Activity
NSAM	National Security Action Memorandum
NSD	Naval Supply Depot
NTC	National Training Center
NVA	North Vietnamese Army
NVN	North Vietnam or North Vietnamese
NVNAF	North Vietnamese Air Force
NVNN	North Vietnamese Navy
NWP	Naval Warfare Publication
OA	Objective Area
OASD(ISA)	Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs
OCO	Office of Civil Operation
OCS	Officer Candidate School
OICC	Officer in Charge of Construction (USA)
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OSM	Operation and Maintenance
OPLAN	Operations Plan
OSA	Office of the Special Assistant (US Embassy)
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OSD/ARPA/DFUV	Advanced Research Projects Agency's Research and Development Field Unit, Vietnam
OSI	Office of Special Investigations (USAF)
OSS	Overseas Switch
O&T	Organization and Training
PACAF	Pacific Air Force
PACFLT	Pacific Fleet
PACOM	Pacific Command

# UNCLASSIFIED

PACV	Patrol Air Cushion Boat
PAMPA	PACOM Movements Priority Agency
PAT	People's Action Team
PAVN	Peoples' Army of Vietnam (NVA)
PBR	River Patrol Boat
PC	Patrol Craft
PCE	Escort Patrol Craft
PCF	Patrol Craft, Fast
PECWG	Plaster Expenditure Control Working Group
PF	Popular Forces (RVNAF)
PFV	Philippine Forces, Vietnam
PGM	Patrol Gunboat, Medium
PHD	Public Health Director (Department)
PHILCAG	Philippine Civic Action Group
PHILCON	Philippine Contingent
PL	Pathlet Lao (Laos)
PLL	Prescribed Load or Prescribed Load List
PMCL	Provisional Military Demarcation Line
PMO	Postal Money Order
PM(U)	Preventive Medicine (Unit)
POL	Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants
POLWAR	Political Warfare
POLWARADDER	Political Warfare Advisory Directorate
PRC	Personnel Recovery Center
PROVN	Pacification and Long Term Development of Vietnam (DA Study)
PSP	Pierced Steel Flanking
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
PSYWAR	Psychological Warfare
P&T	Postes et Telecommunication (GVN)
PTT	Postes, Telegraphs et Telephones (GVN)
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAG	River Assault Group
RAR	Royal Australian Regiment
RAS	River Assault Squadron
RBE	Red Ball Express
RC	Rural Construction
RCC	Rural Construction Cadre
RCDC	Radar Course Directory Central
RCT	Regimental Combat Team
R&D	Research and Development
RD	Revolutionary Development
RDFU	Research and Development Field Unit
RDSO	Revolutionary Development Support Directorate, HQ USMACV
RDT&E	US Research, Development, Test and Evaluation
RF	Regional Force (RVNAF)
RFI	Radio Frequency Interference

# UNCLASSIFIED

RIVDIV	River Assault Division
RIVFLOTONE	River Flotilla One
RKG	Royal Khmer Government (Cambodia)
RLAF	Royal Laotian Air Force
RLF	Royal Laotian Forces
RLG	Royal Laotian Government
RLT	Regimental Landing Team
RMK-BRJ	Raymond-Morrison-Knudsen/Brown-Root-Jones (Civilian Construction Firm)
RNZ	Royal New Zealand
ROC	Republic of China
ROCMAGV	Republic of China, Military Assistance Group, Vietnam
ROE	Rules of Engagement
ROK	Republic of Korea
ROKA	Republic of Korea Army
ROKAF	Republic of Korea Air Force
ROKPV	Republic of Korea Forces, Vietnam
ROKG	Republic of Korea Government
ROKMC	Republic of Korea Marine Corps
ROP	Republic of the Philippines
RP	Route Package
RPC	River Patrol Craft
RRU	Radio Research Unit
RSSZ	Rung Sat Special Zone
RT	ROLLING THUNDER
ETA	Royal Thai Army
RTAF	Royal Thai Air Force
RTAFCONV	Royal Thai Air Force Contingent, Vietnam
RTF	Reconnaissance Task Force
RTG	Royal Thai Government
RTMAGV	Royal Thai Military Assistance Group, Vietnam
RTN	Royal Thai Navy
RT/TH	ROLLING THUNDER/TALLY HO
RVN	Republic of Vietnam
RVNAP	Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces
SA	Senior Advisor
SA	Surface-to-Air
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SAN	Surface-to-Air Missile
SAPCV	Sub-Area Petroleum Office, Vietnam
SAR	Sea-Air-Rescue
SAS	Special Air Service
SATS	Short Airfield Tactical Strip
S&D	Search and Destroy
SDS	Supplemental Data Sheet
SEACORD	Southeast Asia Coordination Council
SEAITACS	Southeast Asia Integrated Tactical Air Control System

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SEAL	Sea, Air, and Land
SEASIA	Southeast Asia
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SEAWBS	Southeast Asia Wideband System
SEVENTHFLT	Seventh Fleet
SF	Special Forces
SFCP	Shore Fire Control Party
SFG	Special Forces Group
SIGINT	Signal Intelligence
SJA	Staff Judge Advocate
SLAR	Side-Looking Airborne Radar
SLF	Special Landing Force
SMA	Senior Marine Advisor
SMIAT	Special Military Intelligence Activities Team
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
SOG	Studies and Observation Group
SP	Self-Propelled
SP&O	Special Plans and Operation
Sq	Squadron
SSB	Single Sideband
SSZ	Saigon Special Zone
s/T	Short Tons (2,000 lbs)
STAR	Speed Thru Air Supply
STOL	Short Take-Off and Landing
SVN	South Vietnam (preferably RVN)
SWIFT	A 50-foot, 32-knot, Radar-Equipped Aluminum Boat
SYNCOM	Synchronous Communications Satellite
TAC/AFSC	Tactical Air Command/Air Force Systems Command
TACAN	Tactical Air Navigation
TACC	Tactical Air Control Center
TACS	Tactical Air Control System
TADC	Tactical Air Direction Center
TAOR	Tactical Area of Responsibility
TASS	Tactical Air Support Squadron
TD	Table of Distribution
TET	Lunar New Year Holiday
TF	Task Force
TFS	Tactical Fighter Squadron
TFW	Tactical Fighter Wing
TG	Task Group
TMA	Traffic Management Agency
TOC	Tactical Operations Center
TOT	Time over (on) Target
TPO	Telecommunications Program Objectives
TRAC	Target Research and Analysis Center
TRS	Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron
TSA	Technical Supplemental Allowance
TSN	Tan Son Nhut (Air Base)
TTY	Teletype

PAGE 869 OF 872 PAGES

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TU	Task Unit
TUCR	Troop Unit Change Request
UAR	United Arab Republic
UBA	United Buddhist Association
UBI	United Buddhist Institute
UCMJ	Uniform Code of Military Justice
UDT	Underwater Demolition Team
UE	Unit Equipment
USA	United States Army
USACDC	United States Army Combat Development Command
USAF	United States Air Force
USAHAC	United States Army Headquarters Area Command
USAID	United States Agency for International Development (United States Operations Mission, USOM, prior to 1966)
USAIRA	United States Air Attache
USALCJ	United States Army Logistical Command, Japan
USAMC	United States Army Materiel Command
USAREUR	United States Army Europe
USARJ	United States Army Japan
USARPAC	United States Army Pacific
USARV	United States Army Vietnam
USARYIS	United States Army Ryukyus Island
USASC	United States Army Support Command
USASF	United States Army Special Forces
USASFG	United States Army Special Forces Group
USASFGV	United States Army Special Forces Group in Vietnam
USASMC	United States Army Supply and Maintenance Command
USASTRATCOM	United States Army Strategic Communications Command
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USCUC	United States Coast Guard Cutter
USDAO	United States Defense Attache Office
USPJ	United States Forces, Japan
USFP	United States Forces Police
USFV	United States Forces Vietnam
USG	United States Government
USIS	United States Information Service
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USMWR	United States Mission Weekly Report
USN	United States Navy
UW	Unconventional Warfare
VC	Viet Cong
VCC	Viet Cong Captive
VCS	Viet Cong Suspect
VFR	Visual Flight Rules
VIS	Vietnamese Information Service
VM	Viet Minh
VMFA	Marine Fighter Squadron (Attack)

PAGE 870 OF 872 PAGES

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VN	Vietnam or Vietnamese
VNAF	Republic of Vietnam Air Force
VNETF	Vietnam Expediting Task Force
VNMC	Vietnamese Marine Corps
VNN	Republic of Vietnam Navy
VNODD	Vietnamese Nationalist Group
VNRS	Vietnamese National Railway System
VP	Patrol Squadron
VR	Visual Reconnaissance
VTR	Vehicle Track Recovery
WAMTMS	Western Area/Military Transport Management Terminal Service
WESTPAC	Western Pacific (CINCPAC area of responsibility west of 160°E)
WIA	Wounded in Action
WPS	Coast Guard Patrol Boat
WRAIR	Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Vietnam
YFNB	Large Covered Lighter (Repair Barge)
YOG	Yard Oiler
YR	Harbor Repair Craft
YR	Repair Barge
YTB	Large Harbor Tugs

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**ANNEX M - SPECIAL OPERATIONS**

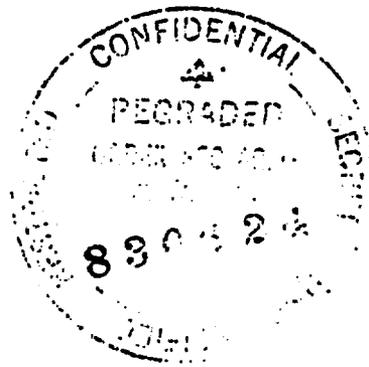
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