

IV.C Evolution of the War (26 Vols.)

Direct Action: The Johnson Commitments, 1964-1968
(16 Vols.)

6. U.S. Ground Strategy and Force Deployments: 1965-1967
(3 Vols.)

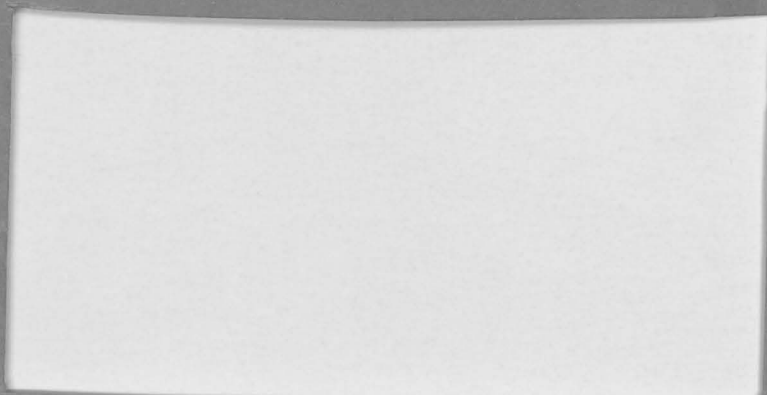
a. Volume I: Phase II, Program 3, Program 4

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UNITED STATES - VIETNAM RELATIONS

1945 - 1967



VIETNAM TASK FORCE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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IV.C.6.(a)

U.S. GROUND STRATEGY
AND FORCE DEPLOYMENTS
1965--1967

VOLUME I

Sec Def Cont Nr. X- 0295

CHRONOLOGY

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IV.C.6

U.S. GROUND STRATEGY AND FORCE DEPLOYMENTS
1965 -- 1967

CHRONOLOGY

18 Jun 65	Memo from McGeorge Bundy to SecDef	Bundy passes on President's desires that "we find more dramatic and effective action in South Vietnam."
1 Jul 65	Draft Memo for the President	SecDef recommends 44 battalions (34 U.S.) to Vietnam in next few months. Says Westmoreland is not sure about requirements for 1966.
2 Jul 65	Memo for General Goodpaster from ASD(ISA) McNaughton	Secy McNaughton suggests questions to be addressed by JCS study on assurance of winning the war.
7 Jul 65	SecDef message to Saigon 072352Z Jul 65	SecDef gives Westmoreland questions he will want answered on his trip - includes probable requirements for additional forces in 1966.
12 Jul 65	Memo for the Record, Subj: 63 Battalion Plan	SecDef memorandum for the record calls for building up the armed forces by 63 battalions.
14 Jul 65	Intensification of the Military Operations in Vietnam - Concept and Appraisal	JCS study on concept and appraisal of assurance of winning goes to SecDef.
16-20 Jul 65		SecDef in Saigon, receives Westmoreland's requirements.
17 Jul 65	Message from Secy Vance to SecDef McNamara 072042Z Jul 65	Vance informs McNamara that President has approved 34 Battalion Plan and will try to push through reserve call-up.
20 Jul 65	Memo for the President, Subj: Recommendations of Additional Deployments to Vietnam	SecDef recommends 34 U.S. battalions to SVN in 1965 (Phase I) with possible need for 100,000 additional troops in 1966 (Phase II).
22 Jul 65	MACV message 220625Z Jul 65	MACV recommends 101,712 personnel and 27 battalions for Phase II.

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13 Dec 65	SecDef Multi-Addressee Memo	SecDef disseminates tables showing Phase IIA deployments, bringing U.S. strength to 75 battalions and 367,800 by December 1966, 393,000 personnel by June 1967.
16 Dec 65	CINCPAC Letter Ser: 000473	CINCPAC sends revised requirements for Phase IIA, desires 75 battalions and 443,000 by December 1966.
1 Jan 66		173rd Airborne Brigade begins Operation MARAUDER in Hau Nghia Province near Cambodia border.
8 Jan 66		173rd Airborne Brigade units and 1st US Infantry Division launch Operation CRIMP in Hau Nghia and Binh Tuong Provinces.
15 Jan 66	Memo for SecDef	Guidelines for assumptions on availability of forces for SE Asia. Case 3 assumes availability of CONUS forces and activations only. Case 2 adds drawdowns from overseas areas. Case 1 further adds callup of selected reserve units and extension of terms of service.
19 Jan 66		1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, begins Operation VAN BUREN, in Phu Yen Province.
24 Jan 66		3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry, launches Operation MASHER/WHITE WING near Bong Son in Binh Dinh Province.
24 Jan 66	Memo for the President	SecDef estimates U.S. strength at end of 1966 at 75 battalions and 367,800 troops.
28 Jan 66		U.S. Marine Corps units launch DOUBLE EAGLE in Quang Ngai Province.
7-9 Feb 66		Honolulu Conference with Ky and President Johnson.
12 Feb 66	CINCPAC 3010 Ser: 00055	CINCPAC forwards revised version of requirements for SE Asia, and deployment plans under the assumptions of Cases, 1, 2, and 3.

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17 Feb 66	SecDef Multi-Addressee Memo, Subj: SE Asia Planning Assumptions	SecDef directs Military Departments and the JCS to study possible ways of meeting Case 1 deployment schedule without calling reserves or extending tours of duty.
21 Feb 66		1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, begins Operation HARRISON, in Phu Yen Province.
1 Mar 66	JCSM 130-66	JCS reply they cannot meet Case I deployment schedule without calling up reserves. Recommend stretch out of deployment into 1967.
7 Mar 66		1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, and 173d Airborne Division launch Operation SILVER CITY, a 17-day search and destroy operation in the Bien Duong and Long Khanh Provincial border area.
9 Mar 66		Estimated NVA regiment overwhelms Ashau Special Forces camp at Thua Thien Province.
10 Mar 66	SecDef Memo to CJCS	SecDef directs planning on the basis of Case I schedule without call-up of reserves or extension of terms of service.
10 Mar 66		GVN National Leadership Committee votes to remove Lt Gen Thi from his post as I Corps Commander. Demonstrations protesting Thi's ouster signalled the start of long political turbulence.
19 Mar 66		USMC units launch Operation TEXAS in Quang Ngai Province.
4 Apr 66	JCSM 218-66	JCS reply to SecDef giving a program reflecting the Services "current estimate of their capabilities to provide forces required...(and meeting) as closely as feasible the program for South Vietnam prescribed" by the SecDef on 10 March.

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11 Apr 66	SecDef Multi-Addressee Memo, Subj: SE Asia Deployment Plan	SecDef approves Deployment Plan recommended by JCS in JCSM 218-66.
12 Apr 66	SecDef Memo for CJCS	SecDef requests an explanation of differences between JCSM 218-66 and the Case I Deployment Plan.
24 Apr 66		Elements of 1st Infantry Division launch Operation BIRMINGHAM. The 24-search and destroy operation involving the deepest friendly penetration in 5 years into War Zone C in Tay Ninh Province.
10 May 66		Elements of 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, launch Operation PAUL REVERE, an 82-day border screening area control operation in Pleiku Province.
16 May 66		Elements of 1st Cavalry Division launch 22-day Operation CRAZY HORSE in Binh Dinh Province.
2 Jun 66		Elements of 1st Infantry Division begin Operation EL PASO II. 41-search and destroy operation in Binh Long Province.
2 Jun 66		1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, launches Operation HAWTHORNE, a 19-search and destroy operation in Kontum Province.
10 Jun 66	ASD(SA) Memo for SecDef, Subj: Report on Deployments to SEA	ASD Enthoven reports that a large number of adjustments to deployment plan have been proposed by the Army.
13 Jun 66	ASD(SA) Memo for SecDef, Subj: Deployments to SE Asia	Enthoven explains major bookkeeping changes in deployment schedules.
18 Jun 66	CINCPAC 3010 Ser: 000255	CINCPAC's CY 66 and CY 67 requirements based upon a concept which now emphasizes restricting access to the land borders of RVN and increased efforts in the highlands and along the western RVN border. CINCPAC envisions a rise to 90 maneuver battalions and 542,588 personnel by end of CY 67.

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28 Jun 66	President's Memo for SecDef	Requests SecDef and JCS to see if any more acceleration of deployment is possible.
30 Jun 66	ASD(SA) Memo for SecDef, Subj: SE Asia Deployment Plan	Revised version of 10 April plan indicates acceleration of deployment of 2 brigades of the 9th Division to December 1966, and deployment of 196th Infantry Brigade in August 1966.
2 Jul 66	SecDef Multi-Addressee Memo, Subj: SE Asia Deployment Plan	Revised 10 April Plan, now named "Program #3," is published.
7 Jul 66		USMC units launch Operation HASTINGS, a 27-day search and destroy operation against the 324B NVA Division south of the DMZ.
8 Jul 66	JCSM 450-66, Subj: CINCPAC Calendar Year Deployments	JCS report that further acceleration is unlikely.
15 Jul 66	SecDef Memo for the President, Subj: Schedule of Deployments to South Vietnam	SecDef reports to the President on the acceleration achieved since the beginning of the year.
16 Jul 66		Operation DECK HOUSE in eastern Quang Tri Province is conducted in support of HASTINGS.
1 Aug 66		1st Cavalry Division units launch 25-day search and destroy operation, PAUL REVERE II in Pleiku.
3 Aug 66	SAIGON 2564	Lodge quotes Westmoreland as agreeing with him on urgent desirability of hitting pacification hard while other things are going well.
5 Aug 66	JCSM 506-66	JCS forwards CINCPAC's requirements for CY 66 and 67. Recommend that almost all of them be accepted.
5 Aug 66	SecDef Memo to CJCS	SecDef directs JCS to evaluate CINCPAC's requirements and also Issue Papers referred for SecDef by Systems Analysis.

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8 Aug 66	SAIGON 2934 to Secy of State	Lodge reports an upsurge of enemy infiltration thru the DMZ and passes on Westmoreland's KANZUS recommendation.
10 Aug 66	MACV 27578	Westmoreland passes on his evaluation of the requirements forwarded by CINCPAC. "I cannot justify a reduction in requirements submitted."
10 Aug 66	SAIGON 3129	Lodge points out the need for making a strong effort now to make sure "the smell of victory" is in the air. He reemphasizes the need for pacification.
17 Aug 66	SAIGON 3670	Porter in Saigon informs Komer of anti-inflationary measures and points out possible problem areas, including US military piaster budget.
23 Aug 66		CINCPAC sends MACV its draft strategy for 1966 and 1967. The proposed strategy emphasizes pacification and nation building.
24 Aug 66	Interagency Roles and Missions Study Group Final Report	Roles and Missions Study Group report points out need for pacification. Makes several recommendations to improve pacification effort.
26 Aug 66	MACV 29797	Westmoreland in cable to CINCPAC describes his concept of operations for the rest of the year. He describes his strategy during the period 1 May to 1 November 1966 that of containing the enemy through offensive tactical operations; describes his strategy for 1 November 1966 to 1 May 1967 as increasing momentum of operations in a general offensive with maximum practical support to area and population security in further support of revolutionary development. He visualizes that significant numbers of US/FW maneuver battalions will be involved in pacification. In addition to emphasizing pacification, Westmoreland emphasizes need to fight against enemy main forces.

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31 Aug 66	SAIGON 4923	Lodge points out efforts being taken in Saigon to emphasize pacification. He begins to express reservations on need for more troops.
2 Sep 66	SecDef Memo for CJCS	SecDef asks CJCS to explore carefully all desirable tradeoffs between piaster funding of GVN and US armed forces in SVN.
7 Sep 66	JCS 1975 to CINCPAC	JCS informs CINCPAC of Jason Plan for aerial supported anti-infiltration barrier.
11 Sep 66		GVN elections.
13 Sep 66	Cite Unknown	CINCPAC comments on anti-infiltration barrier proposed by Jason study. Doubts practicality of scheme.
13 Sep 66	MACV 41191 to CINCPAC	Westmoreland discusses build-up in Quang Tri Province. Requests authority to use B-52 strikes.
13 Sep 66		1st Cavalry Division launches 40-day search and destroy Operation THAYER I in Binh Dinh Province.
14 Sep 66		196th Infantry Brigade begins 72-day search and destroy Operation ATTLEBORO in Tay Ninh Province, which grows into largest operation of war to date. Other US units involved included all three brigades of the 1st Infantry Division, the 2nd Brigade of the 25th Division, the 3rd Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division, and 1 battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.
15 Sep 66	SAIGON 6100	Embassy gives their latest data on inflation in SVN; forecast a 44.1 billion piaster inflationary gap in CY 67.
16 Sep 66	MACV 41676	Westmoreland discusses <u>Slam</u> concept designed to impede enemy infiltration thru Laos.
20 Sep 66	MACV 8212	Westmoreland conveys his concern over enemy forces in sanctuaries to Admiral Sharp.

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22 Sep 66	CM-1774-66	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff tells SecDef that piaster costs per man of US forces are several times those of GVN forces. However, he does not see any piaster advantages from feasible exchanges.
23 Sep 66	State 53541 to Saigon	State calls news of size of inflationary gap in Saigon's 15 September message very disturbing.
24 Sep 66	MACV 8371 to Sharp and Wheeler	Westmoreland reviews VC/NVA's recent campaign and assesses the effectiveness of US campaigns. Does not mention pacification.
24 Sep 66	JCSM 613-66	JCS forward their final evaluation of CINCPAC's 18 June submission and the results of their evaluation of the SecDef's Issue Papers, from 5 August.
29 Sep 66	ASD(SA) Memo for SecDef	Enthoven tells SecDef he is reviewing JCSM-613-66 and forwards some new deployment Issue Papers to Secretary of Defense.
1 Oct 66	SAIGON 7332	Lodge, in a message to Rusk, McNamara and Komer, sets forth his proposal on piaster ceilings. Sets a piaster ceiling of 42 billion on military spending in South Vietnam.
2 Oct 66	MACV 43926	MACV recommends to CINCPAC and JCS deployment of Caltrop for operational tests ASAP.
5 Oct 66	MACV 44378	Westmoreland submits his reclama to Lodge's proposal for a piaster budget ceiling.
5 Oct 66	ASD(SA) Memo for SecDef	Dr. Enthoven analyzes Lodge's message of 1 Oct for SecDef. Points out differences in spending associated with different deployments small relative to other uncertainties. Terms Lodge's estimates on holding inflation down optimistic.
6 Oct 66	SecDef Memo for CJCS	SecDef forwards another set of deployment Issue Papers to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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7 Oct 66	JCSM-646-66	Joint Chiefs of Staff forward their evaluation of world-wide military posture and the effects which deployments to SVN will have upon same.
10 Oct 66		the 3rd US Marine Division assumes control of Operation PRAIRIE in Quang Tri Province. This is the first Division-controlled operation in I CTZ.
14 Oct 66	Draft Presidential Memo, Trip Report, Actions Recommended for Vietnam	SecDef recommends force levels stabilize at 470,000, that US stabilize ROLLING THUNDER, deploy a barrier and gird itself for a long haul.
14 Oct 66	JCSM-672-66	Joint Chiefs of Staff submit their comments on SecDef's memorandum for the President. Do not agree with 470,000-man limitation. Are doubtful on feasibility of the barrier, reserve judgment until they receive detailed programs being prepared by CINCPAC.
18 Oct 66		Elements of 4th Infantry Division, 25th Infantry Division and 1st Cavalry Division, launch 74-day Operation PAUL REVERE IV, in Pleiku Province.
20 Oct 66	CINCPAC 3010 Ser: 000438	CINCPAC forwards results of the Honolulu Planning Conference. Recommend a build-up to 91 maneuver battalions and 493,969 personnel by end of CY 67. Total strength after filling out will be 94 battalions and 555,741 personnel.
23 Oct 66	CINCPAC Ser: 000455	CINCPAC forwards three alternative deployment plans and their associated piaster costs.
23-25 Oct 66		Manila Conference
26 Oct 66	ASD(ISA) Memo for SecDef, Subj: "McNaughton in Manila"	McNaughton gives his report of conversations with Westmoreland on force levels and ROLLING THUNDER. Says Westmoreland is thinking of an end-CY 67 strength of 480,000.

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4 Nov 66	JCSM 702-66, "Deployment of Forces to Meet CY 67 Requirements"	Joint Chiefs of Staff forward report of Honolulu Planning Conference.
7 Nov 66	AB 142, Combined Campaign Plan, 1967	MACV and RVNAF JGS set forth campaign plan for 1967. Plan emphasizes pacification.
9 Nov 66	ASD(SA) Memo for SecDef	Enthoven outlines his "Program 4," bringing strength to 87 battalions and 469,000 troops by June 1968.
11 Nov 66	SecDef Memo for CJCS, "Deployments to SEA"	SecDef responds to JCS recommendations in JCSM 702-66, and sets forth guidelines for Program 4 essentially as recommended by Enthoven.
17 Nov 66	Draft Presidential Memo, "Recommended FY 67 SEA Supplemental Appropriation"	SecDef sets forth in some detail his reasoning behind the deployment plan now called "Program 4."
18 Nov 66	SecDef Memo for Secys of Military Departments, C/JCS, Asst Secys of Def	Transmits tables of deployments which were authorized on 11 November 1966.
2 Dec 66	JCSM 739-66, "Deployments to SEA and other PACOM Areas"	JCS asked direct substitution of units to provide "balanced forces".
9 Dec 66	Memo for CJCS from Sec Def, Subj: "Deployments to SEA and other PACOM Areas"	Approves direct substitution within 470,000 man ceiling.
22 Dec 66	DCPG memo for SecDef, Subj: "Plan for Increased Anti-Infiltration Capability for SEA"	Established intent and guidance for planning barrier concept.
2 Jan 67	COMUSMACV 00610	MACV's year-end assessment of enemy situation and strategy.
8 Jan 67		Operation CEDAR FALLS. Begins longest operation of war to date in terms of forces employed.

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21 Feb 67	Memo from DepSecDef to Under Sec State, Subj: "Military Action Programs for SEA"	Forwarded DOD input to analysis of alternative strategies prepared for the President. Incorporated various separate proposals made by JCS over past two months.
22 Feb 67	JCSM 97-67, Subj: MACV Practice Nine Requirements Plan	JCS forwards and comments on MACV manpower and logistics requirements to implement barrier plan. Recommends plan not be approved.
22 Feb 67	CM-2134-67, "PRACTICE NINE Requirements Plan, dated 26 Jan 1967"	CJCS forwards his dissent to JCSM 97-67. Recommends implementation of plan.
18 Mar 67	COMUSMACV message 09101	MACV analysis of current force requirements submitted to CINCPAC. "Optimum force" of 4-2/3 divisions; "minimum essential force" of 2-1/3 divisions.
20-21 Mar 67		Guam Conference. Bunker, Locke, Komer introduced to Vietnamese leaders.
24 Mar 67	JCS message 59881	Requested CINCPAC/MACV detailed analysis and justification for additional forces.
28 Mar 67	COMUSMACV 10311	Forwarded MACV detailed justification and planning calculations to JCS.
7 Apr 67		Task Force OREGON formed, posted to Quang Ngai Province.
14 Apr 67	JCSM-208-67, Subj: Marine Corps Reinforcement of I Corps Tactical Zone	Proposed 2 brigades from 9th MAB be stationed off Vietnamese coast to be committed when required by COMUSMACV, remainder of MAB placed on 15-day call in Okinawa.
20 Apr 67	JCSM-218-67	Formally reported to SecDef the MACV force requirements.
25-27 Apr 67		General Westmoreland returns to US, consults with President.
1 May 67	OASD(ISA) Memo for SecDef, Subj: Increase of SEA forces	Detailed analysis of MACV force request. Recommended against adding more US combat forces.

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9 May 1967	NSAM 362	All pacification efforts placed under MACV. Komer named Deputy for Pacification to COMUSMACV.
19 May 1967	Draft Memorandum for President, Subject: Future Actions in Vietnam	ASD(ISA) reviews situation in Vietnam, analyzes alternative military courses of action, argues against force level increases, proposes strategy of "slow progress."
20 May 1967	JCSM 286-67, "Operations Against North Vietnam"	JCS seriously concerned at the prospective introduction by the USSR into NVN of new weapons. Proposed neutralization of Hanoi-Haiphong complex by attacking all elements of the import system of NVN, "shouldering out" foreign shipping, mining port.
20 May 1967	JCSM 288-67, "US Worldwide Military Posture"	JCS recommend selective callup of reserves so US could more effectively fulfill worldwide commitments.
23 May 1967	Memo for CJCS, Subject: Combat Service Support Staffing in SVN	SecDef requested JCS to prepare detailed study analyzing in depth CSS staffing levels in SVN.
24 May 1967	CM 2278-67, "Alternative Courses of Action"	JCS reply to 26 April memo by DepSecDef. Concluded that (a) force levels recommended in JCSM 218-67 should be deployed; (b) a more effective air/naval campaign against NVN should be conducted as recommended in JCSM 218-67.
29 May 1967	CM 2381-67, Future Actions in Vietnam	Identifies certain factual corrections and annotations in COMUSMACV 18 March "minimum essential force" request.
1 June 1967	JCSM 306-67, Draft Memorandum for the President on Future Actions in Vietnam	JCS reply to 19 May DPM, expressed strong objections to basic orientation as well as specific recommendations and objectives. Saw "alarming pattern" which suggested a major realignment of US objectives and intentions in SEA, recommended that DPM "not be considered further."
2 June 1967	JCSM-312-67, Air Operations Against NVN	JCS response to SecDef memo of 20 May. Concluded that original recommendation of 20 May represented the most effective way to prosecute air/naval campaign against NVN.

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2 June 1967	Note, Wm. P. Bundy to Mr. McNaughton	Comments on 19 May DPM. Expressed general agreement with basic objectives as stated in DPM, but agreed with JCS that DPM displayed a negative turn to our strategy and commitment in SVN.
8 June 1967	Memorandum for Under SecDef (sic) Vance from UnderSecState Katzenbach, Subject: Preliminary Comments on DOD Draft of 19 May.	Comments on 19 May DPM. Recommended increase of 30,000 men in small increments over 18 months, get GVN more fully involved and effective, concentrate bombing LOCs in the north.
12 June 1967	ASD(ISA) Draft Memorandum for the President, Subject: Alternative Military Actions Against NVN	Revised DPM incorporated views of JCS, CIA, State. Opposed JCS program, recommended concentrating bulk of bombing on infiltration routes south of 20th parallel, skirted question of ground force increase.
13 June 1967	Memo for CJCS from SecDef, Subj: Increased Use of Civilians for US Troop Support (C)	Requested JCS to determine which logistical requirements could be met by increased use of SVN civilians for US troop support.
5 July 1967	Memo for SecDef from ASD(SA), subject: Current Estimate of Additional Deployment Capability	Update of original estimate of what Army could provide. Approx. 3-2/3 DE could be provided to MACV by 31 Dec 68 without calling reserves.
7-8 July 1967		SecDef in SVN receives MACV justification.
13 July 1967	Memo for Record, Subj: Fallout from SecDef Trip to SVN	ASD(ISA) memo for the record indicates decision in Saigon to increase forces to 525,000 limit.
13 July 1967	Memo for SecDef from Richard C. Steadman, DASD, Subject: Additional Third Country Forces for Vietnam	Provided series of letters to Manila countries making clear the need for additional forces.
14 July 1967	Memo for Record, Subj: SEA Deployments	ASD(SA) outlined the decisions made in Saigon and directed work priorities and assignments for OASD(SA) to flesh out the 525,000 troop limit.

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20 July 1967	JCSM 416-67, Subject: US Force Deployments - Vietnam.	JCS provide detailed troop list within 525,000 ceiling. Reaffirmed force requirements as set forth in JCSM 288-67.
26 July 1967	Memo from DepSecDef to CJCS, Subj: Operations Against NVN	Comments on JCSM 286-67.
22 Jul - 5 Aug 1967		General Taylor, Mr. Clifford tour troop contributing countries, seek additional third-country forces.
14 Aug 1967	ASD(SA) Memo for Secys of Mil Depts, CJCS, ASDs, Subject: SEA Deployment Program #5	Formally approved forces for deployment in Program 5. Established civilianization scheduled, approved additional 5 destroyers for gunfire support.
9 Sept 1967	DJCSM 1118-67, Subj: Examination of Speed-Up in Program 5 Deployments	Joint Staff examined possible actions to speed up Program 5 deployments.
12 Sept 1967	CM 2640-67	Joint Staff requested by President to indicate actions which would increase pressure on NVN.
15 Sept 1967	JCSM-505-67	JCS forward refined troop list for Program 5.
16 Sept 1967	SecArmy Memo for Sec-Def, Subject: Deployment Schedule for 101st Airborne Division (-)	Div(-) could be deployed to close in VN prior to Christmas.
22 Sept 1967	SecDef Memo for Sec-Army, Subj: Deployment of 101st Airborne Division (-).	Approves accelerated deployment of 101st Airborne Div(-).
28 Sept 1967	MACV message 31998	MACV plan for reorienting in-country forces.
4 Oct 1967	SecDef Memo for the President	SecDef indicated actions taken on MACV recommendations contained in message 31998.
5 Oct 1967	SecDef memo for Secys of Mil Depts, CJCS, ASDs, Subject: FY 68 U.S. Force Deployments, Vietnam.	SecDef approves force deployments listed in JCSM 505-67.

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16 Oct 1967	SecArmy memo for SecDef, Subj: Deployment of 101st Airborne Division (-)	SecArmy indicates that remainder of 101st Airborne Division can be accelerated to close in Vietnam by 20 December 1967.
17 Oct 1967	JCSM-555-67	JCS forward to President through SecDef their reply to questions raised on 12 September.
21 Oct 1967	SecDef memo for Sec- Army, Subject: Deploy- ment of the 101st Division (-)	SecDef approves accelerated deploy- ment of remainder of 101st Airborne Division.
31 Oct 1967	SecArmy memo for Sec- Def, Subject: Deployment of 11th Infantry Brigade.	SecArmy indicates that Brigade could be deployed on or about 10 December.
6 Nov 1967	SecDef memo for SecArmy, Subject: Deployment of the 11th Infantry Brigade.	SecDef approves early deployment of the 11th Infantry Brigade.
7 Nov 1967	CM-2743-67	CJCS directs Joint Staff to explore what further foreshortening of deploy- ment dates could be accomplished.
10 Nov 1967	CM-2752-67	CJCS directs Joint Staff to recom- mend military operations in SEA for next four months.
21 Nov 1967	DJSM-1409-71	Joint Staff reply to CJCS request of 7 Nov to explore foreshortening of deployment dates.
27 Nov 1967	JCSM-663-67	JCS provide SecDef their recommenda- tions for conduct of military opera- tions in SEA over next four months.
22 Dec 1967	ASD(ISA) memo to CJCS.	Forwards SecDef and SecState comments on JCSM 663-67.
26 Jan 1968	MACV message 61742	COMUSMACV year-end assessment.
31 Jan 1968		TET offensive begins.
12 Feb 1968	JCSM-91-68	JCS examine plans for emergency aug- mentation of MACV, recommended deploy- ment of reinforcements be deferred.

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13 Feb 1968	JCS Message 9926	Directs deployment of brigade task force of 82nd Airborne Division to SVN.
13 Feb 1968	JCS Message 9929	Directs deployment of one Marine regimental landing team to SVN.
13 Feb 1968	JCSM-96-68	JCS forward to SecDef recommendations for actions to be taken relative to callup of reserves.
23-26 Feb 68		CJCS visit to SVN.
27 Feb 1968	Report of CJCS on Situation in SVN and MACV Force Requirements	CJCS reports on his trip to SVN and furnishes MACV Program 6 force requirements.
1 Mar 1968		Clark Clifford sworn in as Secretary of Defense.
4 Mar 1968	Draft Memorandum for the President	Forwards recommendations of SecDef Working Group to the President.
8 Mar 1968	CM-3098-68	JCS forward COMUSMACV comments on DPM.
11-12 Mar 68		SecState testifies before Senate Foreign Relations Committee
14 Mar 1968	DepSecDef memo for CJCS, Subject: SEA Deployments	DepSecDef informs CJCS of Presidential decision to deploy 30,000 additional troops.
14 Mar 1968	SecArmy memo to SecDef	SecArmy indicated requirement for 13,500 additional men to support emergency reinforcement.
16 Mar 1968	ASD(SA) Memo for Record	Summarizes decision to deploy 43,500 additional troops and plans for reserve call-up.
22 Mar 1968		Gen. Westmoreland to be new Chief of Staff of the Army.
23 Mar 1968	OASD(SA) Memo for SecDef, Subj: Program #6 Summary Tables (Tentative)	Forwarded to SecDef for approval Program 6, based on manpower ceiling of 579,000.

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26-27 Mar 68		General Abrams in Washington, confers with President.
30 Mar 1968	Dept of State msg 139431	Announces Presidential decision to US Ambassadors in troop contributing countries.
31 Mar 1968	Remarks of President to the Nation	President announces partial bombing halt, deployment of 13,500 additional troops.
3 Apr 1968	White House Press Release	Hanoi declares readiness to meet. U.S. accepts.
4 Apr 1968	DepSecDef memo for Secys of Mil Depts, CJCS, ASD's, Subj: SEA Deployment Program #6	DepSecDef establishes Program #6, placed new ceiling of 549,500 on U.S. forces in SVN.

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I. PHASE II

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IV.C.6.

U.S. GROUND STRATEGY AND FORCE DEPLOYMENTS
1965 - 1967

I. PHASE II

A. Prelude to Phase II

The story of the Phase II build-up begins near the end of the chain of events which led to the decision, announced on 28 July 1965, on a Phase I build-up to 44 Free World battalions. Sparked by the news that the Viet Cong were building up their strength, that ARVN was doing badly on the battlefield, and that the President desired "that we find more dramatic and effective actions in South Vietnam," 1/ Secretary of Defense McNamara prepared to decide what forces would be necessary to achieve the goals of the United States in Vietnam. The history of the decision on the size and composition of the forces to be deployed during the time remaining in 1965, termed Phase I forces, is the subject of another study in this series. 2/ However, there were some events and decisions taken in this period which were to influence the decisions on Phase II forces. While Secretary McNamara was preparing for his 16-20 July trip to Saigon to discuss the build-up of American forces in Vietnam, he asked General Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for an assessment of "the assurance the U.S. can have of winning in South Vietnam if we do everything we can." The results of the study, which General Wheeler directed to be prepared by an ad hoc study group with representation from the Office of the Chairman, the Chairman's Special Studies Group, DIA, J-3, and the Joint War Games Agency, were given to Secretary McNamara on 14 July. 3/ The study group's assessment was a conditional affirmative. 4/ "Within the bounds of reasonable assumptions...there appears to be no reason we cannot win if such is our will -- and if that will is manifested in strategy and tactical operations."

At the same time, Secretary McNamara asked Assistant Secretary McNaughton to work with the study group to suggest some of the questions that occurred to him. McNaughton's memorandum to General Goodpaster is included in full.

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL GOODPASTER

Assistant to the Chairman, JCS

SUBJECT: Forces Required to Win in South Vietnam

Secretary McNamara this morning suggested that General Wheeler form a small group to address the question, "If we do everything we can, can we have assurance of winning in South Vietnam?" General Wheeler suggested that he would have you head up the group and that the group would be fairly small. Secretary

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McNamara indicated that he wanted your group to work with me and that I should send down a memorandum suggesting some of the questions that occurred to us. Here are our suggestions:

1. I do not think the question is whether the 44-battalion program (including 3d-country forces) is sufficient to do the job, although the answer to that question should fall out of the study. Rather, I think we should think in terms of the 44-battalion build-up by the end of 1965, with added forces -- as required and as our capabilities permit -- in 1966. Furthermore, the study surely should look into the need for forces other than ground forces, such as air to be used one way or another in-country. I would hope that the study could produce a clear articulation of what our strategy is for winning the war in South Vietnam, tough as that articulation will be in view of the nature of the problem.

2. I would assume that the questions of calling up reserves and extending tours of duty are outside the scope of this study.

3. We must make some assumptions with respect to the number of VC. Also, we must make some assumptions with respect to what the infiltration of men and material will be especially if there is a build-up of US forces in South Vietnam. I am quite concerned about the increasing probability that there are regular PAVN forces either in the II Corps area or in Laos directly across the border from II Corps. Furthermore, I am fearful that, especially with the kind of build-up here envisioned, infiltration of even greater numbers of regular forces may occur. As a part of this general problem of enemy build-up, we must of course ask how much assistance the USSR and China can be expected to give to the VC. I suspect that the increased strength levels of the VC and the more "conventional" nature of the operations implied by larger force levels may imply that the often-repeated ratio of "10 to 1" may no longer apply. I sense that this may be the case in the future, but I have no reason to be sure. For example, if the VC, even with larger forces engaged in more "conventional" type actions, are able to overrun towns and disappear into the jungles before we can bring the action troops to bear, we may still be faced with the old "ratio" problem.

4. I think we might avoid some spinning of wheels if we simply assumed that the GVN will not be able to increase its forces in the relevant time period. Indeed, from what Westy has reported about the battalions being chewed up and about their showing some signs of reluctance to engage in offensive operations, we might even have to ask the question whether we can expect them to maintain present levels of men -- or more accurately, present levels of effectiveness.

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5. With respect to 3d-country forces, Westy has equated the 9 ROK battalions with 9 US battalions, saying that, if he did not get the former, he must have the latter. I do not know enough about ROK forces to know whether they are in all respects "equal to" US forces (they may be better in some respects and not as good in others). For purposes of the study, it might save us time if we assumed that we would get no meaningful forces from anyone other than the ROKs during the relative time frame. (If the Australians decide to send another battalion or two, this should not alter the conclusions of the study significantly.)

6. I would hope that we can minimize the amount of the team's creative effort that must go into analyzing the ROLLING THUNDER program or such proposals as the mining of the DRV harbors. Whether we can or not, of course, depends a good deal on the extent to which we believe that the ROLLING THUNDER program makes a critical difference in the level of infiltration (or perhaps the extent to which it puts a "ceiling" on logistical support) and the time lag in the impact of such things as a quarantine of DRV harbors. My suggestion is we posit that the ROLLING THUNDER program will stay at approximately the present level and that there will be no mining of the DRV harbors. My own view is that the study group probably should not invest time in trying to solve the problem by cutting off the flow of supplies and people by either of these methods. I do not know what your thoughts are about the wisdom of investing time in the proposal that ground forces be used to produce some sort of an anti-infiltration barrier.

7. Is it necessary for us to make some assumption with respect to the nature of the Saigon government? History does not encourage us to believe that Ky's government will endure throughout the time period relevant to the study. Ky's behaviour is such that it is hard to predict his impact -- he could, by his "revolutionary" talk and by his repressive measures generate either a genuine nationalist spirit or a violent reaction of some sort. I would think that the study must make some observation, one way or the other, as to things which might happen to the government which would have a significant effect on the conclusions of the study. My own thought is that almost anything within the realm of likelihood can happen in the Saigon government, short of the formation of a government which goes neutral or asks us out, without appreciably affecting the conduct of the war. The key point may be whether the Army rather than the government holds together.

8. One key question, of course, is what we mean by the words "assurance" and "win." My view is that the degree of "assurance" should be fairly high -- better than 75% (whatever that means).

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With respect to the word "win," this I think means that we succeed in demonstrating to the VC that they cannot win; this, of course, is victory for us only if it is, with a high degree of probability, a way station toward a favorable settlement in South Vietnam. I see such a favorable settlement as one in which the VC terrorism is substantially eliminated and, obviously, there are no longer large-scale VC attacks; the central South Vietnamese government (without having taken in the Communists) should be exercising fairly complete sovereignty over most of South Vietnam. I presume that we would rule out the ceding to the VC (either tacitly or explicitly) of large areas of the country. More specifically, the Brigadier Thompson suggestion that we withdraw to enclaves and sit it out for a couple of years is not what we have in mind for purposes of this study.

9. At the moment, I do not see how the study can avoid addressing the question as to how long our forces will have to remain in order to achieve a "win" and the extent to which the presence of those forces over a long period of time might, by itself, nullify the "win." If it turns out that the study cannot go into this matter without first getting heavily into the political side of the question, I think the study at least should note the problem in some meaningful way.

10. I believe that the study should go into specifics -- e.g., the numbers and effectiveness and uses of the South Vietnamese forces, exactly where we would deploy ours and exactly what we would expect their mission to be, how we would go about opening up the roads and providing security for the towns as well as protecting our own assets there, the time frames in which things would be done, command relationships, etc. Also, I think we should find a way to indicate how badly the conclusions might be thrown off if we are wrong with respect to key assumptions or judgments.

As to timing, the Secretary said he would like to have a "quick answer" followed by a "longer-term answer." He set no specific dates; I gather that he expects your team to work as fast as you reasonably can.

General Vogt and General Seignious of ISA are available to work with you on this project, as am I.

Copies to:
General Vogt
General Seignious

Sgd: JOHN T. McNAUGHTON

5/

The McNaughton memorandum is of interest because it demonstrates several important items. First, the fact that the question about assurance of

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winning was asked indicates that at the Secretary of Defense level there was real awareness that the decisions to be made in the next few weeks would commit the U.S. to the possibility of an expanded conflict. The key question then was whether or not we would become involved more deeply in a war which could not be brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Secondly, the definition of "win," i.e., "succeed in demonstrating to the VC that they cannot win," indicates the assumption upon which the conduct of the war was to rest -- that the VC could be convinced in some meaningful sense that they were not going to win and that they would then rationally choose less violent methods of seeking their goals. But the extent to which this definition would set limits of involvement or affect strategy was not clear.

Thirdly, the assumptions on the key variables (the infiltration rates, the strength of GVN forces, the probable usefulness of Third Country Forces, the political situation in South Vietnam) were rightfully pessimistic and cautious. If they were to be taken seriously, the conclusions of the Study Group were bound to be pessimistic. If the Study Group was to take a "positive attitude," they were bound to be ignored. The latter inevitably happened.

The study outlined the strategy as follows:

4. Concept:

a. Presently organized and planned GVN forces, except for present GVN national reserve battalions, possibly augmented by a limited number of ranger and infantry battalions, retain control over areas now held, extend pacification operations and area control where possible, defend critical installations and areas against VC attack and seek out and destroy Viet Cong militia units.

b. US and Allied forces, in conjunction with the GVN national reserve, by offensive land and air action locate and destroy VC/PAVN forces, bases and major war-supporting organizations in South Vietnam.

5. a. Under this concept the RVNAF, now hard-pressed by the Viet Cong summer offensive, would continue to regroup battle-damaged units and build up total strengths. For the most part they would be relieved, except for the national reserve (6 Airborne Battalions, 5 Marine Battalions), of offensive actions against main force units and would concentrate their efforts on maintaining and extending the present GVN area control. They would defend important installations from attack and would conduct offensive operations against local VC militia units. As the situation might allow, selected units

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would participate with the national reserve battalions in operations against VC main force units in order to engender the buildup of an offensive spirit within the RVNAF.

b. US and Allied forces would occupy and secure bases at which their major items of heavy equipment, such as aircraft, would be stationed. Thereafter they would operate in coordination with the RVNAF reserve battalions to seek out and destroy major Viet Cong units, bases and other facilities. Individual units would rotate between security tasks and mobile offensive operations. Secure base areas would be expanded by deep patrolling. 6/

The JCS Study Group estimated that this strategy would have the following results:

Military operations in SVN. Presently organized and planned GVN forces, except for reserve battalions (possibly including a limited number of ranger and infantry battalions), would retain control over areas now held, extend pacification operations and area control where permitted by the progress of major offensive operations, defend critical installations and areas against VC attack and seek out and eliminate VC militia units. US, SVN, and Third-Country forces, by offensive land and air action, would locate and destroy VC/DRV forces, bases and major war-supporting organizations in SVN. The cumulative effect of sustained, aggressive conduct of offensive operations, coupled with the interdiction of DRV efforts to provide the higher level of support required in such a combat environment, should lead to progressive destruction of the VC/DRV main force battalions. 7/

As can be seen, the strategy was essentially that which has governed the conduct of the war ever since. However, it did not take escalatory reactions into account nor did it address the problems of pacification or rural development.

The strategic concept which the JCS developed was predicated on their estimate of what strength was available to the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese, and on their judgment about what the enemy was trying to do with his forces. The estimate of enemy strength given in the Study Group's 14 July 1965 report was that the Viet Cong organized combat units consisted of 10 regimental headquarters, 65 battalions, 188 companies, for a total strength of approximately 48,500. The 101st Regiment, 325th PAVN Division, with its subordinate battalions, is included in this total. In addition, 17,600 personnel were considered to be engaged in combat support type operations. At that time, the Viet Cong were continuing to expand their control in rural areas and had succeeded in isolating several provincial and district towns from the bulk of the rural population. Their

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apparent willingness to accept large casualties in offensive engagements indicated the manpower shortage did not currently exist. Intelligence estimates of PAVN's capability of intervening overtly in South Vietnam across the Demilitarized Zone was that PAVN could do so with approximately three divisions against moderate opposition. If PAVN were to try to introduce units into South Vietnam covertly through the Laotian Corridor, it is estimated he would be able to introduce 1 to 2 additional divisions by the end of 1965. The estimate admitted that the purpose and role of PAVN units were not certain and might well have changed since their initial deployment. Perhaps Hanoi had wanted a PAVN force on the spot in the eventuality that the Saigon government collapsed, and perhaps Hanoi wanted to assure itself the VC would not collapse in the face of the US military commitment, or, more likely, Hanoi may have wanted to assist the VC in increasing the tempo of its campaign and in hastening a victory. At that time, it appeared that there was no intention of employing the PAVN units as a division; rather, they would assist the recurrent VC strategy of widespread harassment and terrorism punctuated with multi-battalion spectacles.

The manner in which the probable requirements for additional forces were derived is of interest. The critical assumption was "that the VC/NVA can mount simultaneous attacks in each GVN corps area not to exceed one reinforced regimental (4 battalions) attack and one single battalion attack at any given time." From this, a simple numerical calculation, based upon the assumption that a 4 to 1 superiority would provide a high probability of victory, resulted in the requirement for Free World offensive maneuver battalions. When added to the number needed for base defense, the result was the total of required Free World battalions. If U.S. forces were to be placed in all four Corps Tactical Zones, a total of 35 additional battalions would be needed to secure bases and gain the 4 to 1 advantage desired. If the U.S. effort were limited to the area north of Saigon, only 7 additional battalions would be needed. It would seem that this requirement was very sensitive to rates of infiltration and recruitment by the VC/NVA, but very little analysis was, in fact, given to the implications of the capabilities of the VC/NVA in this regard.

B. McNamara Goes to Saigon - A Decision on II

1. Westmoreland Proposals

On 7 July 1965, Secretary McNamara cabled Westmoreland to lay out the purpose of his visit to Saigon and some of the questions which he would like to have answered.

The main purpose of our visit will be to receive from you your recommendations for the number of U.S. combat battalions, artillery battalions, engineering battalions, helicopter companies, tactical aircraft, and total military personnel to be

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assigned to South Vietnam between now and the end of this year;.../and/ the probable requirements for additional forces next year. 8/

This request for "probable requirements for additional forces next year" seemed to be an attempt to improve the quality of planning figures for 1966. In his 1 July Draft Memorandum for the President, McNamara quoted Westmoreland as saying that he "cannot now state what additional forces may be required in 1966 to gain and maintain the military initiative... Instinctively, we believe that there may be substantial U.S. Force Requirements." The memorandum went on to comment that "He [COMUSMACV] has a study underway, with a fairly solid estimate due in early August. The number of battalions ultimately required could be double the 44 mentioned above. 9/

According to the MACV Command History of 1965, General Westmoreland answered Secretary McNamara's question about forces required in 1966 during the Secretary's Saigon visit. 10/ General Westmoreland "anticipated that a need would exist for an increase of 24 maneuver battalions, 14 artillery battalions; 3 air defense (Hawk) battalions; 8 engineer battalions; 12 helicopter companies; 6 helicopter battalions, and additional support units." 11/ As reconstructed by the MACV Command History, this requirement was predicated upon a concept of operations in South Vietnam and upon a three phased plan:

COMUSMACV's objective was to end the war in RVN by convincing the enemy that military victory was impossible and to force the enemy to negotiate a solution favorable to the GVN and the US. To secure these objectives, US/FWMA forces would be built up and then employed to wrest the initiative from the enemy, secure vital areas and support the GVN in expanding its control over the country.

The overall concept was based on three assumptions:

- (1) That the VC would fight until convinced that military victory was impossible and then would not be willing to endure further punishment.
- (2) That the CHICOM's would not intervene except to provide aid and advice.
- (3) That friendly forces would maintain control of the air over RVN.

The concept visualized a three-phase operation:

Phase I - The commitment of US/FWMA forces necessary to halt the losing trend by the end of 1965.

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Phase II - The resumption of the offensive by US/FWMA forces during the first half of 1966 in high priority areas necessary to destroy enemy forces, and reinstitution of rural construction activities.

Phase III - If the enemy persisted, a period of a year to a year and a half following Phase II would be required for the defeat and destruction of the remaining enemy forces and base areas.

Specific military tasks were associated with the objective of each phase.

Phase I:

- (1) Secure the major military bases, airfields and communications centers.
- (2) Defend major political and population centers.
- (3) Conduct offensive operations against major VC base areas in order to divert and destroy VC main forces.
- (4) Provide adequate reserve reaction forces to prevent the loss of secure and defended areas.
- (5) Preserve and strengthen the RVNAF.
- (6) Provide adequate air support, both combat and logistic.
- (7) Maintain an anti-infiltration screen along the coast and support forces ashore with naval gunfire and amphibious lift.
- (8) Provide air and sea lifts as necessary to transport the necessary but minimum supplies and services to the civil populace.
- (9) Open up necessary critical lines of communication for essential military and civil purposes.
- (10) Preserve and defend, to the extent possible, areas now under effective governmental control.

Phase II:

- (1) All Phase I measures.

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(2) Resume and/or expand pacification operations. Priority will be given to the Hop Tac area around Saigon, to that part of the Delta along an east-west axis from Go Cong to Chau Doc, and in the provinces of Quang Nam, Quang Tri, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh and Phu Yen.

(3) Participate in clearing, securing, reserve reaction and offensive operations as required to support and sustain the resumption of pacification.

Phase III:

(1) All Phase I and II measures.

(2) Provide those additional forces necessary to extend and expand clearing and securing operations throughout the entire populated area of the country and those forces necessary to destroy VC forces and their base areas. 12/

2. McNamara's Recommendations

Secretary McNamara's 20 July 1965 Memorandum for the President spelled out the troop requirements for Vietnam as follows: The forces for 1965 should be brought up to about 175,000, and "It should be understood that the deployment of more men (perhaps 100,000) may be necessary in early 1966, and that the deployment of additional forces thereafter is possible but will depend on developments." 13/

This 100,000-man possible addition was broken down in a cable from COMUSMACV to CINCPAC as providing 27 maneuver battalions with associated combat and service support elements, bringing the total number of maneuver battalions to 61 sometime in 1966. 14/ The question arises as to how this 100,000-man 27-battalion figure was reached. In the absence of documentary evidence, it seems simplest to assume that Westmoreland was given pretty much what he asked for. However, the 61 battalion figure comes very close to the number of battalions the Secretary of Defense was thinking about earlier in July, when a memorandum for the record dated 12 July shows a proposal to strengthen U.S. forces by 63 battalions through a combination of calling up reserves, extending tours of duty, and increasing the draft. 15/ In fact, the 63 battalion figure appears again in the Secretary's 20 July memorandum to the President, allowing one to speculate that the size of the build-up had already been fixed in early July prior to the trip.

In either case, the result was that Phase II was recommended to the President at a level of roughly 100,000 which when added to the then current estimates for Phase I of 175,000 gave a total estimate of 275,000 by the end of 1966.

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Secretary McNamara envisioned that the employment of U.S. forces would be as follows:

...Use of forces. The forces will be used however they can be brought to bear most effectively. The US/third-country ground forces will operate in coordination with South Vietnamese forces. They will defend their own bases; they will assist in providing security in neighboring areas; they will augment Vietnamese forces, assuring retention of key logistic areas and population centers. Also, in the initial phase they will maintain a small reserve-reaction force, conducting nuisance raids and spoiling attacks, and opening and securing selected lines of communication; as in-country ground strength increases to a level permitting extended US and third-country offensive action, the forces will be available for more active combat missions when the Vietnamese Government and General Westmoreland agree that such active missions are needed. The strategy for winning this stage of the war will be to take the offensive -- to take and hold the initiative. The concept of tactical operations will be to exploit the offensive, with the objects of putting the VC/DRV battalion forces out of operation and of destroying their morale. The South Vietnamese, US and third-country forces, by aggressive exploitation of superior military forces, are to gain and hold the initiative -- keeping the enemy at a disadvantage, maintaining a tempo such as to deny them time to recuperate or regain their balance, and pressing the fight against VC/DRV main force units in South Vietnam to run them to ground and destroy them. The operations should combine to compel the VC/DRV to fight at a higher and more sustained intensity with resulting higher logistical consumption and, at the same time, to limit his capability to resupply forces in combat at that scale by attacking his LOC. The concept assumes vigorous prosecution of the air and sea anti-infiltration campaign and includes increased use of air in-country, including B-52s, night and day to harass VC in their havens. Following destruction of the VC main force units, the South Vietnamese must reinstitute the Program of Rural Reconstruction as an antidote to the continuing VC campaign of terror and subversion. 16/

He evaluated the probable results in the following manner:

...Evaluation. ARVN overall is not capable of successfully resisting the VC initiatives without more active assistance from more US/third-country ground forces than those thus far committed. Without further outside help, the ARVN is faced with successive tactical reverses, loss of key communication and population centers particularly in the highlands, piecemeal destruction of ARVN units, attrition of RVNAF will to fight,

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and loss of civilian confidence. Early commitment of additional US/third-country forces in sufficient quantity, in general reserve and offensive roles, should stave off GVN defeat.

The success of the program from the military point of view turns on whether the Vietnamese hold their own in terms of numbers and fighting spirit, and on whether the US forces can be effective in a quick-reaction reserve role, a role in which they are only now being tested. The number of US troops is too small to make a significant difference in the traditional 10-1 government-guerrilla formula, but it is not too small to make a significant difference in the kind of war which seems to be evolving in Vietnam -- a "Third Stage" or conventional war in which it is easier to identify, locate and attack the enemy.

The plan is such that the risk of escalation into war with China or the Soviet Union can be kept small. US and South Vietnamese casualties will increase -- just how much cannot be predicted with confidence, but the US killed-in-action might be in the vicinity of 500 a month by the end of the year. The South Vietnamese under one government or another will probably see the thing through and the United States public will support the course of action because it is a sensible and courageous military-political program designed and likely to bring about a success in Vietnam.

It should be recognized, however, that success against the larger, more conventional, VC/PAVN forces could merely drive the VC back into the trees and back to their 1960-64 pattern -- a pattern against which US troops and aircraft would be of limited value but with which the GVN, with our help, could cope. The questions here would be whether the VC could maintain morale after such a set-back, and whether the South Vietnamese would have the will to hang on through another cycle. 17/

3. The President's Decision

The President accepted the recommendation of building up to 175,000, but disapproved the call up of reserves, and made no decision (since none was really necessary at the time) on the full Phase II strength. In a backgrounder, following his announcement of the troop increase on 28 July 1965, the President explained that the reserves, if called, would have taken several months before they were equipped to be effective in Vietnam, so he decided to use the Airmobile Division and Battalions on Okinawa which were ready to go. 18/ The disapproval of the reserve call up appears to have been the President's decision and

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was probably based more on considerations of political feasibility. As late as the 17th of July, Deputy Secretary of Defense Vance had cabled McNamara that the President had OK'd the 34 Battalion Phase I Plan and would try to "bull" the reserve call up through Senator Stennis whom he saw as his chief obstacle on this issue. 19/ The President's decision was evidently a difficult one to make. Prior to McNamara's departure for Saigon, both he and the President had hinted at press conferences that a reserve call-up and higher draft calls were a distinct possibility. This, of course, triggered the predictable response from some members of Congress in opposition to a reserve call up. Upon McNamara's return from Saigon, President Johnson waited over a week before he publicly announced his Vietnam decisions. Since Vance's cable to McNamara of the 17th of July indicated that the President had approved the 34 battalion deployment, it is probably reasonable to assume that the President spent much of the week assessing the political variables of the situation. The consensus in the press was that the announced measures were not as great a leap as had been expected and that perhaps the attitude of influential Senate Democrats had restrained Johnson from taking stronger action. The issue was not that pressing as far as Phase I was concerned because, as the President pointed out, there were active Army units already available to cover the short term needs.

C. Development of a Concept

1. Concept for Vietnam

By late August 1965, the JCS had developed and coordinated a Concept for Vietnam which was set out in JCSM 652-65 dated 27 August. The heart of the concept is summarized as follows:

a. The objective in Vietnam, as stated by NSAM 288, dated 17 March 1964, is a stable and independent noncommunist government.

b. The major problems to be dealt with in the conduct of the war are:

(1) The continued direction and support of Viet Cong operations by the DRV, infiltration from the north, and the apparent attendant Viet Cong capability to provide materiel support and to replace heavy personnel losses.

(2) The continued existence of a major Viet Cong infrastructure, both political and military, in the RVN.

(3) The greater growth rate of Viet Cong strength as compared to that of the South Vietnamese ground forces.

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(4) The continued loss of LOCs, food-producing areas, and population to Viet Cong control.

(5) The lack of a viable politico/economic structure in the RVN.

(6) The threat of CHICOM intervention or aggression in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in the Western Pacific.

c. The basic military tasks, of equal priority, are:

(1) To cause the DRV to cease its direction and support of the Viet Cong insurgency.

(2) To defeat the Viet Cong and to extend GVN control over all of the RVN.

(3) To deter Communist China from direct intervention and to defeat such intervention if it occurs.

d. The US basic strategy for accomplishing the above tasks should be: to intensify military pressure on the DRV by air and naval power; to destroy significant DRV military targets, including the base of supplies; to interdict supporting LOCs in the DRV; to interdict the infiltration and supply routes into the RVN; to improve the combat effectiveness of the RVNAF; to build and protect bases; to reduce enemy reinforcements; to defeat the Viet Cong, in concert with RVN and third country forces; and to maintain adequate forces in the Western Pacific and elsewhere in readiness to deter and to deal with CHICOM aggression. By aggressive and sustained exploitation of superior military force, the United States/Government of Vietnam would seize and hold the initiative in both the DRV and RVN, keeping the DRV, the Viet Cong, and the PL/VM at a disadvantage, progressively destroying the DRV war-supporting power and defeating the Viet Cong. The physical capability of the DRV to move men and supplies through the Lao Corridor, down the coastline, across the DMZ, and through Cambodia must be reduced to the maximum practical extent by land, naval, and air actions in these areas and against infiltration-connected targets. Finally, included within the basic US military strategy must be a buildup in Thailand to ensure attainment of the proper US-Thai posture to deter CHICOM aggression and to facilitate placing US forces in an advantageous logistic position if such aggression occurs. 20/

It continued:

...In order to gain the offensive and to seize and hold the initiative in the RVN, a major effort must be made not only

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in terms of direct combat action to expand the areas under US/GVN control but also to support the GVN in its rural reconstruction program and to assist that government in the creation of new military units and the rehabilitation of its depleted units as rapidly as possible. A psychological climate must be created that will foster RVN rural reconstruction progress. 21/

The strategic concept envisioned that during...

...the build-up phase US-Third Country and GVN forces should strengthen military and civilian control in present areas of the RVN...As the force build-up is achieved, a principal offensive effort within the RVN of US-Third Country forces should be to participate with the RVNAF in search and destroy operations while assisting the RVNAF in clearing and securing operations in support of the rural reconstruction effort. 22/

The document went on to explain that:

Friendly control of population and resources is essential to success in countering guerrilla warfare. In this regard, the RVN areas of major military significance are: the Saigon area and the Mekong Delta; the coastal plain; and the central highlands. It is imperative that the US/GVN have the support of the people and the control of resources in those areas. Elimination of the Viet Cong from these areas must be vigorously undertaken in order to provide adequate security for the people. Of particular importance is the need for friendly control of the main food-producing areas in order that the GVN may gain control of rice, feed the people under its control, enable exports of rice to bolster the economy, and cause the Viet Cong to import or to fight for food. A paramount requirement under this concept is the building and maintaining of a series of secure bases and secure supporting LOCs at key localities along the sea coast, and elsewhere as necessary, from which offensive operations can be launched and sustained, with the subsequent enlargement and expansion of the secure areas. 23/

Assistant Secretary McNaughton, in a memorandum for Secretary McNamara, gave the following evaluation of the JCS plan. "The concept includes certain generalized courses of action about which there would be little or no dispute and a number of other courses that are clearly controversial and raise far-reaching policy issues (e.g., blockade and mining of DRV, U.S. build-up in Thailand, intensified RT)." He recommended that since "an overall approval...is not required at this time... the concept proposed not be specifically approved." 24/ Acting along these lines, Secretary McNamara agreed "that recommendations for future operations in SEA should be formulated," but went no further. 25/

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2. Westmoreland's Concept

This concept of operations was interpreted by General Westmoreland in his MACV Directive 525-4 of 20 September 1965, in which he set forth the tactics and techniques for employment of US forces in the Republic of Vietnam. General Westmoreland's strategy consisted of three successive steps:

1. First, to halt the VC offensive -- to stem the tide,
2. Second, to resume the offensive -- to destroy VC and pacify selected high priority areas,
3. Third, to restore progressively the entire country to the control of the GVN. 26/

The tasks which he saw necessary included the defense of military bases, the conduct of offensive operations against VC forces and bases, the conduct of clearing operations as a prelude to pacification, provision of permanent security for areas earmarked for pacification, and the provision for reserve reaction forces. Most of the document is concerned with the conduct of offensive operations against VC base areas and forces. The conduct of clearing operations were given little attention since these were planned to be primarily accomplished by RVN regional forces and popular forces.

3. The JCS on Future Operations and Force Deployments

By early November, the Joint Chiefs had further refined their "Concept for Vietnam" and in JCSM 811-65, dated 10 November, 27/ submitted their recommendations to the Secretary of Defense. Although it was billed as establishing a basis for determining the Phase II force requirements, it achieved little more than explicating in some detail the tasks to be accomplished in Phase II, and evaluating the degree to which the forces already programmed for Phase II would accomplish these goals. However, the figures used were close to those discussed in July. The new figures were 112,430 personnel and 28 battalions, most of which would be in Vietnam by the end of 1966. These figures were still being used as late as 20 November 1965. 28/

The JCS did manage to capture the essence of the Phase II concept by pointing out that "Phase I...was designed to stop losing the war. Phase II...is then the phase needed to start winning it." Their concept still included the three basic military tasks of pressuring North Vietnam, defeating the VC and extending GVN control over South Vietnam, and deterring Communist China. However, the memorandum went on to spell out in which areas of Vietnam the JCS and presumably MACV felt were the "militarily and economically significant areas in Vietnam." These were listed as Saigon, the Mekong Delta, Coastal Plain, and the Central

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Highlands. The role of the US forces was to assist the GVN in expanding its control over these areas. However, primary emphasis was placed upon providing "heavy assault strength against VC forces and bases. The division of effort between RVNAF and US/Third Country forces clarified as follows:

The overall concept...visualizes the employment of US, Third Country and RVNAF forces for the basic mission of search and destroy, and participation in clearing and securing operations and civic actions plus the defense of governmental centers and critical areas.

US/Third Country forces will not ordinarily be employed throughout securing operations except in areas contiguous to their bases. The Vietnamese JGS is in general agreement with this concept and with the concept of weighting the effort wherein the bulk of operations against the VC forces and bases outside the secure areas will be undertaken by US/Third Country and RVNAF general reserve forces, while the bulk of RVN forces will be committed to the defense of GVN installations and securing operations. 29/

Interestingly enough, a note of growing disenchantment with the Vietnamese capabilities appeared in this memorandum, when it was explained that "complex, detailed US conceived programs may not be picked up and executed by the Vietnamese [therefore] COMUSMACV now deals with them in terms of simple tasks and short step by step objectives."

D. Overall Strategy Reviewed as Conflict in SVN Steps Up

Meanwhile in November two other things were taking place which would have a significant effect on Phase II.

1. McNamara's DPM on Increasing the Pressure

In early November a Draft Memorandum for the President was in the works which addressed the problem of how best to conduct the overall effort in Vietnam. 30/ In this memorandum, Mr. McNamara discussed the relative merits of varying combinations of a pause in the air war against North Vietnam, gradual intensification of the ROLLING THUNDER program, and carrying out Phase II deployments. This memorandum seems to mark one of the key decision points in the growing involvement of U.S. in Vietnam. The Phase I deployments appeared to have arrested the deterioration of the situation in Vietnam, and it now became feasible to consider what kind of outcome we might be able to get from the present situation. The analysis in the memorandum was that roughly sticking with the present situation would lead to a "compromise outcome" which would very likely be unstable, difficult to sell domestically, and damaging to "U.S. political effectiveness on the world scene." Therefore, the course of action to follow was

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to step up the pressure both in the North, i.e., increase the tempo of ROLLING THUNDER, and in the South, i.e., move ahead with Phase II deployments. However, a pause in bombing would be inserted prior to the increased pressure. The arguments for the pause were four: (1) It would offer the DRV and VC a chance to move toward a solution if they should be so inclined...(2) It would demonstrate to domestic and international critics that our efforts to settle the war are genuine. (3) It would probably tend to reduce the dangers of escalation after we resumed the bombing...And (4) it would set the stage for another pause perhaps in late 1966, which might produce a settlement. The conclusion to this draft, which was discussed with the President on 7 November, was the warning that "none of these actions assures success...the odds are even that despite our effort, we will be faced in early 1967 with stagnation at a higher level and with a need to decide whether to deploy Phase III forces, probably in Laos as well as in South Vietnam."

While the pros and cons of a pause or a cease-fire were being debated in a series of drafts and memoranda which were prepared and circulated between Defense and State, the situation in Vietnam was undergoing a change.

2. NVA Infiltration Increases

By November 1965, the infiltration of units from North Vietnam had begun to increase. By 17 November, six confirmed, two probable, and one possible, PAVN regiments had been identified in South Vietnam. The Viet Cong regimental-size units had increased from five in July of 1965 to twelve. The total strength of the PAVN/VC army was estimated at 27 PAVN infantry battalions and a total of 110 PAVN/VC battalions. The accepted strength was 63,500 in combat units, and 17,000 in combat support units, with 53,600 in the militia. The VC/PAVN build-up rate was estimated to be 15 battalions per quarter during 1967.

The implications of the build-up were made abundantly clear by the bloody fighting in the Ia Drang Valley in mid-November. 31/

In mid-October, the Viet Cong attack on Plei Me Special Forces Camp in Pleiku Province, had triggered a month-long campaign by both RVN and U.S. forces. Operation SILVER BAYONET, conducted by the 1st Cavalry Division was designed to provide security and artillery support to RVN forces around Plei Me. On 27 October, the 1st Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division, was given a search and destroy mission between Plei Me and the Cambodian border. By 1 November, the brigade, having contacted a large enemy force, began to pursue VC/NVA forces west of the Plei Me camp, moving along the South Vietnamese/Cambodian border. Then, on 14 November, after the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division had relieved the 1st Brigade in the vicinity of Plei Me and Pleiku, the most significant phase of SILVER BAYONET began. Airmobile search and destroy operations were initiated which resulted in very heavy and intense contacts within the

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direction of VC/NVA forces. COMUSMACV requested a series of B-52 strikes to support ground operations in the vicinity of Chu Pong Mountain. These strikes were delivered on 16 November. Three U.S. infantry battalions were closely engaged, supported by tactical air sorties and artillery. The VC/NVA forces, which exceeded division strength, continued active resistance to the U.S. forces from well-entrenched position. The battle of the 3rd Brigade against numerically superior VC/NVA forces continued until 18 November in the vicinity of Chu Pong Mountain and Ia Drang Valley. Fighting was often hand to hand with many small units temporarily cut off from their parent organization.

On 20 November, the 2d Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, flew to Pleiku to relieve the 3d Brigade. The VC/NVA had lost over 1,200 killed in action while the U.S. losses were over 200. 32/

According to the MACV Command History, 1966:

"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 Iao 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.

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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 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.

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.

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

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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. 33/

On 23 November, General Westmoreland analyzed the impact of the increased infiltration upon his Phase II requirements as follows:

* * * * *

2. The VC/PAVN buildup rate is predicated to be double that of U.S. Phase II forces. Whereas we will add an average of seven maneuver battalions per quarter the enemy will add fifteen. This development has already reduced the November battalion equivalent ratio from an anticipated 3.2 to 1, to 2.8 to 1, and it will be further reduced to 2.5 to 1 by the end of the year. If the trend continues, the December 1966 battalion equivalent ratio, even with the addition of Phase II, will be 2.1 to 1.

3. Thus far the PAVN increase has been concentrated in the central highlands and the Viet Cong increases have largely been in the northern part of III Corps. There is little evidence so far that there is any appreciable enemy increase south of the Mekong, and in fact it appears that the local forces in the lower delta may have lost some capability as a result of the movement of guerrillas to Tay Ninh for training and organization into battalions.

4. MACV must, as an absolute minimum, free at least one US division for mobile operations against new PAVN units in the general area of II Corps. In addition, there is a vital need to open Highway 15 from Vung Tau to Saigon to utilize the port capacity there and to project US forces into the delta at least as far as My Thiem, this will strengthen the GVN hand in this critical population and food producing area and interdict the main infiltration route from the delta to War Zone C. The addition of a ROK division (or US division) to II Corps, for location at coastal bases near Duc My, Nha Trang, Cam Ranh and Phan Rang, will permit the entire 4th Infantry Division (with its bases protected by the coastal division) to be used for sustained combat against the new PAVN forces. The opening of Highway 15 to Vung Tau would be facilitated by adding a brigade to the 1st Infantry Division to be located in the Ba Ria area and additional brigade for the 25th Division to be located at Tan Hiep would provide

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protection necessary for the area north of My Tho. Besides the requirement for an additional division and two brigades, operations by the 1st Air Cavalry Division have shown that this unit needs one more infantry battalion (airmobile) and an additional air cavalry squadron so that it can sustain operations over a long period of time. Because of the tactical problems involved in conducting combat reconnaissance over vast areas to find and fix PAVN/VC it would be highly desirable to have one of the brigades of the 4th Infantry Division composed of three Airmobile Infantry Battalions and provide for the division one Air Cavalry Squadron. A ROK RCT to fill out the capital division would permit deployment of the ROK Marine Brigade to I Corps for operations with III MAF.

5. The additional units described above are essential to meet the immediate threat and certain immediate problems. However, even these additional forces will not match the enemy buildup. To reach the level of force required to make significant progress toward accomplishment of Phase II tasks will ultimately require much larger deployments.

6. Unfortunately certain physical restrictions and the time required to establish a suitable logistics base limit the rate of buildup in RVN CY 66. If the deployment of logistics forces can be further accelerated and if construction programs meet the increased requirements we might be able to squeeze two additional brigades into SVN in CY 66 over and above Phase II forces AFD the minimum add-ons which we have described in paragraph 4 above. We should program these additional logistics and combat forces against the maximum build-up rate because we need them to match the PAVN/VC buildup. With two more brigades we would have three US divisions in the area around Saigon and the 4th Division in the II Corps area would have three infantry brigades plus an airmobile brigade and an air cavalry squadron.

7. Because of current problems regarding port and support facilities, no major deployments other than currently requested Phase II deployments can be accepted in the 1st Qtr of CY 66. Thereafter, the buildup should be incremental. If ROK units were made available (with both the RVN and the ROK providing a portion of the support, reinforced by additional US support) a division could be handled in the second quarter, and an additional division equivalent in each quarter thereafter, provided appropriate US logistics forces are available.

8. Tactical air support would amount to three tactical fighter squadrons for the first deployment alternative and four squadrons for the second. Eventually, this might require construction of another airfield, in addition to Tuy Hoa.

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9. One of the most pressing needs is to improve the logistics situation in RVN. Phase I logistic units are stretched out through CY 66 and into CY 67. It was determined at the Honolulu Conference in September that the preferred schedule for deployment of major Phase II combat units could not be met because the essential logistics units would not be available in the time frame required. Nevertheless, we accepted marginal logistic support in order to deploy combat units as rapidly as possible. Therefore the logistics system in SVN cannot accept the even greater burden represented by the required additional combat forces without significant augmentation early in CY 66. We appreciate the fact that this may require extraordinary measures. It has been determined that the ports can accommodate the force buildup if the critical through-put capability can be provided in the form of added logistics units and related facilities. MACV is prepared to specify the quantity, type and time phasing of logistics units required to support the buildup.

10. Undoubtedly the detailed development of these added force requirements and their integration into existing programs and schedules will require another set of conferences. The initial development should take place here with assistance from the PACOM components as required. Subsequently a final conference in Honolulu appears necessary to check requirements against availability, make adjustments and work out the detailed scheduling.

11.

g. We estimate that our minimum course of action (a ROK division and RCT and two US brigades as major units) will require a total add-on strength of approximately 48,000 (23,000 ROK), which includes 35,300 combat and combat support and 12,700 service support. Our preferred course of action (a ROK div and RCT and a US div and brigade as major units) will add approximately 64,500 (23,000 ROK), which includes 47,200 combat and combat support and 17,300 service support.

* * * * *

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This assessment of the VC/PAVN buildup appears to be consistent with the retrospective evaluation found in the intelligence community's National Intelligence Estimate 14.3-66, published on 7 July 1966. According to this later estimate, the infiltration for the months of September and October 1965 totaled approximately 10,000 which was only 1,000 less than the total for the preceding 8 months, from January through August 1965. The estimated rate of the buildup given in NIE 14.3-66 was one or two infantry regiments per month which fits the earlier MACV estimate of 15 battalions per quarter.

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Westmoreland's recommendation for an additional 41,500 U.S. forces would have raised the Phase II deployment to approximately 154,000 bringing total U.S. troop strength in the area to nearly 375,000 by mid-1967.

E. McNamara Goes to Saigon - A Decision on IIA

1. McNamara Visits Saigon

Faced with this changed enemy situation, Secretary of Defense McNamara diverted his return from a NATO meeting in Paris to allow him to visit Saigon on 28-30 November. As outlined in the Secretary of Defense's 23 November cable to Saigon, the purpose of the trip was "further discussion of Phase II requirements." 35/ Specifically, he asked: "Will it not be necessary to add one or two divisions to the 28 battalions proposed in order to provide forces for the Delta; will even more forces be required in 1966 if the number of PAVN regiments continues to increase?"

2. Westmoreland's Recommended Add-Ons

According to the MACV Command History, when Secretary McNamara arrived in Saigon, "COMUSMACV expressed a need for an additional division (which could be ROK) for deployment along the coastal plain in II CTZ, thereby freeing the 4th Infantry Division...for operations further inland. Another USA division was needed for employment in the Upper Delta in the area contiguous to Saigon, for a total of three USA divisions around the capital city. A separate brigade for FFORCEV was necessary to reinforce the 1st Cavalry Division (AM)...Two air cavalry squadrons were needed to support the 4th Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division (AM), as was another airmobile infantry battalion for the 1st Cavalry Division (AM) to give that division a balanced force of three 3-battalion brigades." This revised deployment plan was referred to as Phase IIA (add-on). 36/

Secretary McNamara was told that the Free World battalions requested for the end of CY 1966 and ARVN would be used for the major tasks in the following proportions:

	<u>FWMAF</u>	<u>ARVN</u>	
Defense of Major U.S. Bases	29	1	
Defense of Government Centers and Critical Installations	--	68	
Security for Expansion of Government Control	22	22	
Offensive Operations and Major Reactions	<u>46</u>	<u>71</u>	
Total	97	162	<u>37/</u>

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3. McNamara's Recommendations to the President

Upon his return from Saigon, Secretary McNamara drafted a Memorandum for the President, outlining the changed military situation in Vietnam, and commenting that in view of the communist build-up, "the presently contemplated Phase I forces will not be enough...Nor will the originally contemplated Phase II addition of 28 more U.S. battalions (112,000 men) be enough...Indeed it is estimated that, with the contemplated Phase II addition of 28 U.S. battalions we would be able only to hold our present geographical positions." 39/

In order to "provide what it takes in men and materiel...to stick with our stated objectives and with the war," Secretary McNamara recommended the deployment of one Korean division plus another brigade, an additional Australian battalion, and 40 U.S. combat battalions, bringing the total of U.S. maneuver battalions to 74, and the total of U.S. personnel in Vietnam to approximately 400,000 by the end of 1966 with the possible need for an additional 200,000 in 1967.

In the 7 December version of his Memorandum for the President, McNamara added the information that "although the 1966 deployments to South Vietnam may require some shift of forces from other theaters, it is believed that they can be accomplished without calling up reserve personnel; however, the Joint Chiefs of Staff do not believe additional forces can be deployed to Southeast Asia or elsewhere unless reserves are called." 40/

In evaluating this course of action, the Secretary warned that it "will not guarantee success." He estimated the odds to be about even that the NVA/VC will match the U.S. buildup and that "even with the recommended deployments, we will be faced in early 1967 with a military standoff at a much higher level, with pacification still stalled, and with any prospect of military success marred by the chance of an active Chinese intervention."

4. Phases I, II, and IIA Are Published

On 13 December, the Secretary of Defense sent out a Draft Memorandum for the President, which included tables outlining the planned deployments to Southeast Asia under Phases I, II and IIA. This December Plan projected the total strength for Phases I, II and IIA to be 367,800 by the end of 1966 and 393,900 by the end of June 1967. The number of U.S. maneuver battalions would reach 75 by the end of 1966.

Meanwhile, the requirements which Secretary McNamara had brought back from Saigon with him were being reviewed by CINCPAC in preparation for a planning conference scheduled for 17 January to 6 February 1966, at which the refined requirements would be presented and recommended deployment schedules prepared.

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F. Phase IIA is Revised

1. CINCPAC's Requirements

The results of the review were forwarded to the Secretary of Defense on 16 December. CINCPAC's new requirements were summarized by ASD Enthoven as follows:

The CINCPAC request involves a deployment to RVN of 443,000 personnel by December 1966, vice 368,000 in the December plan...In addition he wants to increase Thailand strength from the approved December 1966 total of 26,800 to 57,100 of which 33,000 is available. While CINCPAC still wants 75 US maneuver battalions by December, his request involves an earlier deployment, approximately 711 battalion months in CY 1966 vs 654 in the December plan or 693 Service capability.

The increase and acceleration of Combat Support Battalions is more serious, involving over 82 battalions as compared with less than 60 in the December plan; 13 battalions of this increase are HAWK and Air Defense guns, neither of which are readily available. Similarly CINCPAC wants over 68 battalions of engineers by December, 22 more than in the December plan, and similarly unavailable.

The helicopter problem would be further compounded by the CINCPAC request for 2,884 by December versus 2,391 in the December plan and 2,240 said to be available by the Services.... 42/

With the revised CINCPAC requirements in hand, the services began to estimate their capability of meeting them. This exercise surfaced the problem of assumptions to be made about sources of manpower available to meet the requirements.

2. Assumptions for Planning

These assumptions were grouped into three sets or cases:

CASE 1: Meeting these requirements by providing forces from CONUS current force structure including activations, plus feasible draw-downs from overseas areas, call-up of selected reserve units and individuals, and extending terms of service.

CASE 2: Meeting these requirements by providing forces from CONUS current force structure including activations, plus feasible draw-downs from overseas areas.

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CASE 3: Meeting these requirements by providing forces from CONUS current force structure including activations.

A fourth case was considered by the JCS. It assumed:

...provision of forces from CONUS current force structure including activations, call-up of select reserve units and individuals, and extension in terms of service, but no draw-down from overseas areas.

Assistant Secretary Enthoven added that:

The JCS deleted Case 4 from the agenda largely because they estimate that the President is more reluctant to call up reserve units and extend terms of service than he is to take forces out of Europe. If they are correct, I think that the agenda as they have laid it out makes a great deal of sense and will provide us with much useful information. If, on the other hand, willingness to activate reserves and extend terms of service has been underestimated, I think we should recommend to the JCS that they restore Case 4 to the agenda.

Significantly, the guidance the JCS received was to study only the first three cases, indicating that the JCS had not underestimated the "willingness to activate reserves and extend terms of service."

Meanwhile, Secretary McNamara, in a Memorandum for the President, dated 24 January 1966, gave, as his best estimate of force levels for the next twelve months, the following:

1. By December 1966, the U.S. would have 75 battalions and 367,800 men in Vietnam.
2. Allied nations would have 23 battalions and 44,600. 43/

He noted, however, that the JCS believed that "it would be necessary to have a selective call-up of reserves and a selective extension of terms of service to achieve the personnel strengths shown at the times indicated." He noted that the U.S. figures would rise substantially above those shown if CINCPAC estimates were accepted.

He also included General Westmoreland's estimate that such a deployment would:

"a. Result in destruction of one-third of the enemy's base areas, i.e., in-country resources.

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b. Permit friendly control of just under one-half, as compared with the present one-third, of the critical roads and railroads.

c. Attrite VC/PAVN forces at an increasing rate, leading to the leveling off of enemy forces at the 150+ battalion level...(provided the Chinese do not supply volunteers).

d. Ensure that friendly bases and government centers are defended under any foreseeable circumstances (though some district towns may be overrun and have to be retaken).

e. Lead to government control of an estimated 50 per cent of the population."

3. The Honolulu Conference

However, by 28 January, the CINCPAC/MACV requirements had risen to 102 Free World battalions (79 U.S. including 4 tank battalions...) 44/ An intermediate evaluation was that "it appears that the MACV-CINCPAC requirements (102 battalions...) are valid, and required to meet the military objective on which the Secretary of Defense has been previously briefed. The information brought back by Secretary of Defense in late November as to combat and support force requirements was incomplete."

During the CINCPAC Conference, the top American and Vietnamese leaders also met at Honolulu, primarily to "permit the leaders of the United States and South Vietnam to get to know each other better and to discuss non-military programs."

Upon his return, Secretary McNamara assembled his key subordinates. The summary of this conference follows:

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9 Feb 66

SUMMARY FOR RECORD

A meeting was held in the Conference Room of the Secretary of Defense from 1:45 to 3:00 p.m., February 9, 1966 following the return of the Secretary of Defense from Honolulu. At the conference table were the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Service Secretaries, and the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff minus the Chairman. Also present were Mr. Anthony, Mr. Ignatius, Mr. McNaughton, Mr. Morris, Dr. Enthoven, Mr. Glass, and the undersigned. This memorandum will summarize the major points of the meeting.

1. The Honolulu Conference. Mr. McNamara opened with a general report on the events in Honolulu. The meetings in general were highly successful. The primary purpose of the Honolulu conference was as indicated in the press, namely to permit the leaders of the United States and South Vietnam to get to know each other better and to discuss non-military programs. The top South Vietnamese handled themselves superbly and made a fine impression. They have a non-military program which, if it can be put into effect, should greatly strengthen the government and the country. Most of the discussions concentrated on the non-military programs. The Vice President is going to Saigon to assist on this. McGeorge Bundy is also going there to help the American Embassy organize so as to further the non-military efforts.

Mr. McNamara brought back with him a great deal of material prepared by General Westmoreland and Admiral Sharp. He will have this material reproduced and copies sent to the Service Secretaries and the Chiefs of Staff. No significant military decisions were taken with the exception of one which he will now discuss.

2. The Case 1 Decision. Mr. McNamara reminded the group of the three cases which have been under discussion involving various assumptions. Briefly, Case 1 assumes that the Reserves will be called up, tours will be extended, and units will be re-deployed from other overseas areas. Case 2 is the same as Case 1 but does not involve calling up the Reserves. Case 3 involves no Reserve call-up and no overseas re-deployment. One of the big differences between these cases is in the number of support units available, with the resulting effect on the number of combat units that can be deployed. For example, under Case 1, some 102 maneuver battalions would be deployed by the end of the year as opposed to 80 such battalions under Case 3. This is in comparison to approximately 50 deployed at present.

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General Westmoreland, in his deployment planning, is proceeding on the important assumption that on balance any proposed deployments must increase his overall combat effectiveness; that is, before he deploys a combat unit he must be sure that he has adequate support for it. This does not mean, however, that he will deploy a unit only when he can get 100 percent combat effectiveness for the unit.

Both General Westmoreland and Admiral Sharp put to McNamara the critical question: In our future planning, which of the three cases shall we assume will be followed? McNamara told them that it was simply not possible yet to decide, but for the present, they should plan on combat unit deployments equal to those in Case 1. (In this regard, it should be noted that the combat unit deployments under Case 1 and Case 3 do not differ significantly for the first 6 months of 1966, although the logistics deployments do differ for that period.) Likewise the Department of Defense is to:

(1) Assume and act to deploy combat units as provided under Case 1, but without a reserve call-up. (This does not prejudice the still-open question whether or not the Reserves will be called up.)

(2) Assume and act on the basis that we are authorized to deploy up to 260,000 personnel through March 31, 1966. (This is in lieu of the existing authorization of 220,000 through February 28, 1966.) However, it should be understood that if we need to go above 260,000, we will not hesitate to request further authorizations.

This contemplates the deployment by the end of the year of 102 combat maneuver battalions (including third country forces) and related forces amounting to 429,000 U.S. military personnel.

There was discussion of extensions of tours. With respect to the possible reserve call-up, this is to be subjected to intense critical analysis over the next several weeks. It must be studied on a world-wide basis. Furthermore General Westmoreland and Admiral Sharp have done a good deal of work on alternatives under Case 1 to call-up of the reserves. Mr. McNamara has these studies. Dr. Enthoven will reproduce them and distribute them to the Service Secretaries and the Chiefs of Staff.

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3. Southeast Asia Program Office. It is essential that the Department of Defense has at all times a readily available and centralized bank of information with respect to the Southeast Asia build-up. To this end, Dr. Enthoven is to establish a Southeast Asia Program Office which is to be able to furnish Mr. McNamara and Mr. Vance all information that may be required with respect to Southeast Asia. Among other things, this unit is to be able to provide immediate information on what overseas units are being depleted in order to accommodate Southeast Asia needs. If there is any draw-down anywhere, Mr. McNamara wants to know it promptly. We must know the full price of what we are doing and propose to do.

Mr. McNamara suggested that each Service Secretary establish a similar Southeast Asia Program Unit to bring together and keep current data relating to that Service involving Southeast Asia, and that the Joint Staff might establish a similar set-up.

Mr. McNamara said that it was mandatory that the situation be brought under better control. For example, the Southeast Asia construction program was \$1.2 billion in the FY 66 Supplement; yesterday at Honolulu the figure of \$2.5 billion was raised. Yet there is only the vaguest information as to how these funds will be spent, where, on what, and by whom. This is part of the bigger problem that there is no proper system for the allocation of available resources in Vietnam. McGeorge Bundy is to help organize the country team to deal with this problem, including reconciling military and non-military demands.

4. Manpower Controls. Mr. McNamara designated Mr. Morris as the person to be responsible for the various manpower requirements. He is either to insure that the requirements are met or to let Mr. McNamara know if they are not being met. Mr. McNamara wants a written statement whenever we have been unable to do something that General Westmoreland says he needs for full combat effectiveness. (In this regard, General Westmoreland recognizes that it is not possible to have 100 percent combat effectiveness for all the 102 battalions. For example, there are not sufficient helicopter companies. Roughly, he estimates he will get 96 battalion combat effectiveness out of the 102 battalions.)

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At this point there was a brief discussion concerning the use of U.S. troops for pacification purposes. Mr. Nitze indicated that in his view the Marines were doing this to some degree. The point was disputed. At any rate, Mr. McNamara said that the 102 combat battalions contemplated under Case 1 were not to be used for pacification but only for defense of base areas and offensive operations. Mr. McNamara outlined briefly the South Vietnamese Government's plan for pacification. It will affect some 235,000 people in the whole country. The major allocation of resources and personnel will be to four very limited areas, one of which is near Danang. There will also be a general program extending throughout the country involving some 900 hamlets.

5. Call-Up of Reserves. Mr. McNamara said that it was important that everyone understand why a Reserve call-up is receiving such careful study. There are at least two important considerations. First, the problem is a very complicated one and we do not yet have all the facts. Mr. Morris and others will amass the necessary data as soon as possible. Second, the political aspects of a Reserve call-up are extremely delicate. There are several strong bodies of opinion at work in the country. Look, for example, at the Fulbright Committee hearings. One school of thought, which underlies the Gavin thesis, is that this country is over-extended economically and that we cannot afford to do what we are doing. Another school of thought feels that we plain should not be there at all, whether or not we can afford it. A third school of thought is that although we are rightly there, the war is being mismanaged so that we are heading straight toward war with China. Furthermore, there is no question but that the economy of this country is beginning to run near or at its capacity with the resulting probability of a shortage of certain skills and materiel. If this continues we may be facing wage and price controls, excess profits taxes, etc., all of which will add fuel to the fire of those who say we cannot afford this. With all these conflicting pressures it is a very difficult and delicate task for the Administration to mobilize and maintain the required support in this country to carry on the war properly. The point of all this is to emphasize that a call-up of the Reserves presents extremely serious problems in many areas and a decision cannot be made today.

General Johnson said he wished to add three additional considerations. First, a Reserve call-up might be an important factor

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in the reading of the North Vietnamese and the Chinese with respect to our determination to see this war through. Second, Reserve call-ups are traditionally a unifying factor. Third, as a larger problem, a hard, long-term look should be taken at the degree to which we as a government are becoming committed to a containment policy along all the enormous southern border of China. Mr. McNamara said he would ask for a JCS study of this last point and discussed it briefly.

During the course of the meeting, General Johnson also pointed out that with respect to overseas deployment, the Army is already shortchanging certain overseas areas so as to increase the training cadres in CONUS. He pointed out that because of the effect on the strategic reserve of deployments already made, the quality of new units will be lower than at present. He raised certain additional points affecting the Army. Mr. McNamara, Mr. Vance, Mr. Resor and General Johnson will discuss these problems further.

6. Deployment Schedule. Dr. Brown asked whether there is any single authoritative document which now sets forth the planned deployment schedule. Mr. McNamara said for the time being everyone should operate off of the schedule in the December 11 Draft Memorandum to the President. By Monday evening, February 14, Dr. Enthoven will have a revised deployment schedule which will be distributed and then become the official one. (Mr. McNaughton mentioned that people should keep in mind that Phase II-A in the Draft Memorandum to the President is not quite the same as Case 1.) A procedure will be worked out for changing the deployment schedule in an official and orderly way, probably through the use of a procedure similar to that of Program Change Proposals.

It should be kept in mind that the deployment schedule referred to covers only deployments to South Vietnam (and not to Thailand or elsewhere in Southeast Asia), and that it is a planning deployment schedule. Actual deployment authorizations will continue to be required from Mr. McNamara or Mr. Vance in writing, as at present.

Attachment
a/s

John M. Steadman
The Special Assistant 45/

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Two important items as far as the build-up was concerned were the guidance to "assume and act to deploy combat units as provided under Case 1, but without a reserve call-up," and the emphasis on the serious problems which a reserve call-up would present (in spite of the insistence that the reserve call-up was a "still-open question").

4. Results of the CINCPAC Planning Conference

On 12 February, the results of the CINCPAC Conference were published. 46/

The concept of operations for 1966 had been more completely spelled out. The three basic military objectives had by this time grown to four. Now there were two separate objectives,

1. To extend GVN dominion, direction, and control over SVN, and
2. To defeat the VC and PAVN forces in ARVN and force their withdrawal,

instead of the old task which combined both of these. In achieving the objective for extending GVN domination, US forces' tasks were very carefully spelled out as "assisting the RVNAF in the conduct of clearing and securing the civic action operations...assist and reinforce other US mission agencies, and assist the RVNAF to defend major political, economic, food producing population centers." The object of defeating the VC and PAVN forces required more direct action such as conducting sustained coordinated offensive operations against the enemy, conducting air offensives, raids and special operations against enemy war zones and base areas to render them unusable. In general, "US military operations are aimed at creating operation environment and opportunity for the GVN to gain control and establish security of main food producing areas in order to feed the people, deny food to the enemy, bolster the economy, to cause the enemy to import or fight for food." In explaining the US emphasis on search and destroy, the memorandum stated that such operations "against VC/PAVN forces and base areas attrite VC/PAVN main forces and destroy VC base areas and in-country supplies. These operations, although contributory to, are not a part of the rural construction effort, per se, but are constituted concomitantly with it. It is clear that a known and expected VC/PAVN build-up, the prime focus of combat capable units of US/FWMAF and RVNAF forces must be directed to the search and destroy effort."

CINCPAC conceded that:

This concept of employment of forces is of long standing; however, the lack of sufficient ARVN regular forces for offensive operations plus the increasing VC strength have resulted

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in local RVN military commanders utilizing the security forces (primarily RF, PF) in offensive actions against hard core VC units. The introduction of US/FWMA forces into key areas has reestablished the balance of force in these areas in favor of the GVN. These deployments allow RVNAF forces to be employed in the roles for which they were originally conceived and equipped, and permit the RF and PF to function in their proper role. 47/

The CINCPAC/MACV submission included the following estimates of MACV's requirements and the deployments to Vietnam possible under the assumptions of Cases 1, 2, and 3.

Strength at End of CY '66

<u>Maneuver Bns</u>	<u>Requirement</u>	<u>Case 1</u>	<u>Case 2</u>	<u>Case 3</u>
U.S.	79	79	70*	61
Allied	23	23	23	23
Total	<u>102</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>84</u>
Equivalent Strength	102	96	88	72

Personnel

U.S.	459,000	422,517
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* Other 9 battalions available in Jan 67 48/

The difference in the programs in Case 1 and Case 2 was the degree to which helicopter and combat service support could be provided. The support required for the 102 battalion force would not be completely provided in either case, which would result according to MACV estimates in a reduction in the effectiveness of the 102 battalion force to the equivalent of 96 fully supported battalions under Case 1 and to the equivalent of 88 under Case 2.

Case 3 provided a total of only 84 maneuver battalions.

The CINCPAC requirements also included 20 battalions for reconstitution of the PACOM reserve. Case 1 provided for the full 20 battalions, Case 2 for 10, and Case 3 for 13 battalions.

CINCPAC's evaluation of the impact of the three cases upon military objectives was:

(1) Case 3:

- (a) Provides for the security of the US/FWMAF command at the projected rate of VC/PAVN build up.

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(b) The principal deficiencies of the Case 3 forces are:

1. Inadequate mobility.
2. Inadequate artillery support.
3. There are no ground forces provided for stationing in the Delta.
4. Insufficient force and mobility to guarantee defense of all provinces and districts now under GVN control.

(2) Case 2:

- (a) Provides for the safety of the US/FWMAF command.
- (b) Provides the required number of maneuver battalions.

However, shortfalls in combat and service support restrict the capabilities of the force and produce the following deficiencies:

1. Inadequate mobility.
2. Limited offensive capability, resulting in an inability to produce enemy casualties faster than the enemy can produce replacements, thereby prolonging the war at a high level of casualties on both sides.
3. A high rate of equipment loss and deadline resulting from maintenance deficiencies.
4. The acceptance of a high risk in the event of escalation because the force is not supported adequately for sustained operations of the kind which could be expected.
5. Insufficient forces for desired level of sustained offensive operations to offset VC/PAVN build-up.
6. A shortage of maneuver units, the adverse effects of which are cumulative and project into CY 67.
7. Insufficient logistic support forces to provide desired level of support for US forces in SVN. The adverse effects caused by the shortage of logistic units are cumulative and project into CY 67.

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(3) Case 1:

- (a) Generally adequate when measured against CINCPAC objectives and capabilities except that there is a continuing deficiency in helicopter mobility. 49/

Having received CINCPAC's requirement, the Secretary of Defense directed a series of studies to identify and evaluate the options which appeared to be open. The scope of these studies is indicated by a partial listing of projects compiled by Assistant Secretary for Manpower, Thomas D. Morris:

Views on Army and Marine Corps PACOM reserve forces;

Acceptable draw-down on Europe;

Recommendations on use of third country forces;

Posture paper on strategic reserves and reconstitution of draw-downs;

Analyze rotation base requirements;

Study possibilities for further expansion of Army training base;

Recommend temporary draw-downs on Army CONUS and overseas forces to support deployments, activations and training-rotation base;

Evaluate use of resources of Army temporary forces (9th Division and 2 add-on brigades) to meet other MACV requirements. ... 50/

One key question asked was the latest date at which a decision on use of reserves must be made. 51/

Part of the answer -- the dates by which reserves would have to be called in lieu of forming the 9th Division and the 198th Brigade -- was 15 June for the brigade and 26 June for the division. 52/

With this time to work in, the Secretary of Defense directed the

...Military Departments and the JCS to assume that this the Case 1 deployment schedule is the requirement we will try to meet, to study all possible ways of meeting it short of calling reserves or extending terms of service, and until further notice, in so far as possible, to plan to deploy forces to SVN on this schedule (forces to other SEA areas

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will continue to be deployed on the basis of the "December 11, 1965 Plan"). I would like to urge that you use all the ingenuity you can in developing suggested ways of meeting these conditions by use of suitable substitutes, civilian contractor personnel, etc. In this connection, General Westmoreland and Admiral Sharp have made a list of suggestions which is being analyzed by the JCS J-4 and my staff. Every effort should be made to carry out these and similar suggestions.

The fourth line in the tables is my understanding of the current Service estimates of their capabilities to meet these requirements under the assumption that only cadres are taken from Europe, and that no Reserves or extensions of terms of service are utilized. Would you please study these estimates, improve upon them, and find ways to bring our effective combat capability into equality with the Case 1.

I would like by February 28 the individual Service and JCS comments on our capabilities to meet Case 1 requirements. 53/

G. Phase IIA(R) Presented

1. The JCS Recommendation

On 1 March 1966, the Joint Chiefs of Staff forwarded their recommendation for Phase IIA(R) and their plan to reconstitute the draw-downs on our strategic reserve. 54/ The JCS recommended that the 43-2/3 battalion U.S. force be deployed to Vietnam in CY 1966, which would require a "selective call-up of reserve units and personnel and extension of terms of service." They also considered, at the request of the Secretary of Defense, a variation of Case 1, in which reserve call-up and extension of terms of service were excluded. They recommended against this plan because of the severe effects upon our combat effectiveness in Europe. If the reserves were not to be called or terms of service extended, the JCS recommended that the deployments for Phase IIA(R) be extended into 1967 rather than attempt to complete them by the end of 1966. Their plan was basically to delay the deployment of 13 of the scheduled 37 Army maneuver battalions until the first half of 1967 (7 the first quarter and 6 the second quarter). The battalions themselves would be ready for deployment by 1 January 1967, but the necessary combat service support units would not be.

2. McNamara Directs Another Try

However, the JCS's recommendations were not bought by the Secretary of Defense and on 10 March he stated, "I have reviewed JCSM 130-66 and the related memorandums from the Secretary of the Military Departments. All of these require more study and review. However, until such studies are completed, you should plan to deploy forces to SVN in accordance

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with...Case 1...all necessary actions are to be taken to meet these deployment dates without call-up of reserves or extension of terms of service. Troop movements from Europe will be made only by written approval of Mr. Vance or myself." 55/

3. The JCS Try Again

Accordingly, the JCS submitted their plan on 4 April 1966 which provided for placing all 37 Army maneuver battalions in SVN by January 1967. 56/ The end of year strength for 1966 was projected to be 376,350, while the strength at the end of CY 67 was to be 438,207.

Although Secretary McNamara still had questions about the discrepancy between the JCS plan laid out on 4 April 1966 and the Case 1 capabilities, he apparently accepted the reasoning expressed by Assistant Secretary of Defense Alain Enthoven in his memorandum of 9 April 1966, "that there is not much to be gained by insisting on a more rapid deployment of maneuver battalions." 57/

4. McNamara Acquiesces

Accordingly, on 11 April 1966 Secretary McNamara, "with the exceptions noted.../approved/...the deployment plan proposed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in JCSM 218-66." 58/

Attached to his approval memorandum was a set of tables entitled "April 10 Deployment Plan." These showed planned U.S. strength at the end of December 1966 to be 70 maneuver battalions and 383,500 personnel. The remaining 9 maneuver battalions would arrive in January 1967 and by the end of June 1967 total strength was scheduled to be 425,000. This plan, called the "10 April Plan" by Systems Analysis and the Secretary of Defense's office represented the approved version of what the Services called the Deployment Plan for Phase IIA(R).

Apparently however, even this was not close enough to the original Case 1 deployment capabilities schedule to suit Secretary McNamara, and in a memorandum dated 12 April 1966 he asked why the difference between the revised JCS figure for end of '66 strength and the Case 1 figure for end '66 strength of 413,557. 59/

The Acting Chairman of the JCS answered as follows:

* * * * *

3. (TS) JCSM-218-66 reflects a projected and calendar year 1966 strength of 376,350 compared to the Case I strength of 413,557 -- a shortfall of 37,207. However, due to adjustments since Case I capabilities were developed, including changes in requirements and refinements in strengths, the

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actual net shortfall reflected in the Appendices hereto amounts to 47,731....

4. (S) The basic difference in the two capability plans, as viewed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is that Case I was based upon the call up of Reserve forces, extension of terms of service, and a firm decision by 1 February 1966. The JCSM-218-66 plan represented a changed set of assumptions in that it did not have access to the skilled resources available from the Reserves and from extended terms of service. Furthermore, JCSM-218-66 represented a two-month delay in certain basic decisions. Despite extraordinary actions being taken to improve the availability of combat support and combat service support units, no means have been found to eliminate certain skill shortages and to create these skills in the time available. Another fundamental difference is that Case I would have deployed largely units in being, whereas the current deployment plan will depend primarily on activation of new units.

5. (S) Despite the shortcomings apparent in the 10 April 1966 plan, the Services are taking positive actions to bring this plan, which is based essentially upon Case II rules, in line with the Case I deployment capabilities insofar as possible. Such extraordinary actions have resulted in significant improvements.

6. (S) In consideration of the above, the current approved deployment program in JCSM-218-66 meets as closely as feasible the program for South Vietnam prescribed in your directive to plan, for an interim period, to deploy forces in accordance with Case I. However, this program as well as the Case I capability plan falls short of the total calendar year 1966 CINCPAC force requirements submitted by CINCPAC to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Although there will be a delay in meeting the total requirement, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Services will continue their efforts to fulfill the total requirements as close to CINCPAC's schedule as practicable. 60/

The question of where the numbers for Phases II, IIA, and IIA(R) came from provokes much speculation. It can be hypothesized that from the outset of the American build-up, some military men felt that winning a meaningful military victory in Vietnam would require something on the order of one million men. Knowing that this would be unacceptable politically, it may have seemed a better bargaining strategy to ask for increased deployments incrementally. At the outset, the limiting factor on the build-up was the speed with which units could be readied for deployment, and the speed with which logistical support facilities could be provided in Vietnam (the later constraint being heavily influenced by

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the scarcity of dock facilities and the shipping jam up in Saigon). Once these problems had been surmounted, the barrier then became the level at which the reserves would have to be called up. This barrier became very real in early '66 when General Westmoreland's desires for numbers of men and rates of deployments began to exceed the capabilities of the services to provide them without a reserve call up. In this speculative explanation of military bargaining strategy, the reserve call-up could have been viewed as a barrier that should be breached in order to fight the conflict in South Vietnam along more rational-professional lines.

An alternative explanation is that no one really foresaw what the troop needs in Vietnam would be and that the ability of the DRV/VC to build up their effort was consistently underrated. During the period under review this explanation seems with some exceptions, to be reasonable. The documents from the period around July 1965 seem to indicate that MACV had not given much thought to what he was going to do in the year or years after 1965. The words of the MACV History for 1965 indicate something of this. "The President's 28 July announcement that the U.S. would commit additional massive military forces in SVN necessitated an overall plan clarifying the missions and deployment of the various components. COMUSMACV's Concept of Operations was prepared to fulfill this need." If this is a true reflection of what happened it would indicate the MACV's plan of what to do was derived from what would be available rather than the requirements for manpower being derived from any clearly thought out military plan.

A compromise explanation of the origins of the numbers is that the military may have had a visceral feeling that a large (somewhere above 500,000) number of troops would be needed to win the war, but were unable to justify their requirements in terms clear or strong enough to persuade the President, who had an interest in keeping the domestic effects of war as small as possible.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Memorandum from McGeorge Bundy to SecDef, dated 18 Jun 65.
2. Phase I in the Build-up of U.S. Forces: The Debate, March-July 1965.
3. Intensification of the Military Operations in Vietnam--Concept and Appraisal, Report of Ad Hoc Study Group, 14 July 1965.
4. Ibid., p. ii.
5. Memo for General Goodpaster, Subj: "Forces Required to Win in South Vietnam," dated 2 July 1965.
6. Intensification of the Military Operations in Vietnam--Concept and Appraisal, op. cit.
7. Ibid., p. J-3.
8. SecDef 072352Z Jul 65.
9. Draft Memorandum for the President dated 7/1/65, Subject: Program of expanded military and political moves with respect to Vietnam. Secretary McNamara has inserted "Rev'd" before the typed date, 7/1/65, and written the date 6/26/65 above it.
10. Command History, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, 1965, p. 42.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., pp. 141-148.
13. Memo for the President from SecDef, dtd 20 Jul 65, Subj: Recommendations of Additional Deployments to Vietnam, pp. 4-5.
14. MACV 220625Z Jul 65.
15. Memo for the Record, dtd 12 Jul 65, Subj: "63 Battalion Plan," signed by Col Moody, Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense. The same figures, in McNamara's handwriting, are in his notebook for the Saigon trip.
16. Op. Cit., 20 Jul 65, Memo for the President from the Secretary of Defense.
17. Ibid.
18. Notes on background briefing given by President Johnson on 28 Jul 65, taken by ASD(PA) Goulding.

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19. Message from DepSecDef Vance to Secretary McNamara, 172043Z Jul 65, Back Channel.
20. JCSM 652-65 dated 27 August 1965, Subj: Concept for Vietnam; pp. 1-3.
21. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
22. Ibid., p. 8.
23. Ibid.
24. Memo for SecDef, dtd 8 Sep 65, Subj: Concept for Vietnam, signed McNaughton.
25. Memo for CJCS, Subj: Concept for Vietnam, dtd 11 Sep 65, signed McNamara.
26. MACV Directive 525-4, 20 Sep 65, p. 2.
27. JCSM 811-65, dtd 10 Nov 65, Subj: Future Operations and Force Deployments with Respect to the War in Vietnam.
28. ASD(SA) Memo for Secys of Military Departments, Chmn JCS, Subj: Southeast Asia Deployment Assumptions for Planning, dtd 20 Nov 65, signed Enthoven.
29. JCSM 811-65, 10 Nov 65.
30. 1st Rough Draft of Memorandum for the President, dtd 3 Nov 65, Subj: Courses of Action in Vietnam. Secretary McNamara has written "a copy of this was sent to the President by courier thru Mac's office on 11/7 and discussed with him by me, Dean, George, & Mac on 11/7."
31. MACV 40748, 17 Nov 65, to DIA, Subj: VC and PAVN Forces Build-up.
32. MACV Command History, 1965, p. 168.
33. MACV Command History, 1966, pp. 20-21.
34. COMUSMACV 41485 to CINCPAC, 23 Nov 65. Add-On to Phase II Deployments.
35. SecDef 4539-65 to Saigon, 23 Nov 65.
36. MACV Command History, 1965, pp. 44-45.
37. J-3 Briefing given to McNamara while in Saigon.
38. MACV Command History, 1965, p. 45.

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39. Draft Memorandum for the President, dtd 30 Nov 65.
40. Memorandum for the President, dated 7 December, Subject: Military and Political Actions Recommended for South Vietnam, p. 3.
41. Draft Memo for President, Subject: Recommended FY 1966 Southeast Asia Supplemental Appropriation (U), dated December 11, 1965 (transmitted by multiaddress memo signed by DepSecDef dated 13 Dec 65).
42. ASD Memorandum for Secretary of Defense, Subject: Southeast Asia Deployments, dated 14 Jan 66.
43. Memorandum for the President dated 24 Jan 66, Subj: The Military Outlook in South Vietnam.
44. Notes on Honolulu Visit, dated 1/28/66, unsigned but marked "Mr. Vance has seen."
45. Summary for Record, dated 9 Feb 66, signed by John T. Steadman.
46. CINCPAC 3010, Ser: 00055, 12 Feb 66, to JCS, Subj: Calandar Year 1966 Capabilities Programs (U).
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. ASD(M) Memorandum for Secretary McNamara and Secretary Vance, dated 16 Feb 66.
51. ASD(M) Mmemorandum for Record, Subject: Studies of CINCPAC Requirements as of 2/16/66, dated 14 Feb 66, signed by Thomas D. Morris.
52. ASD(M) Memorandum for Secretary Vance, Subject: Decision Dates Required to Call Reserve Units in Lieu of Forming the 9th Division and one of the Temporary Brigades, dated 16 Feb 66, signed by Thomas D. Morris.
53. SecDef Memo for Secys of the Mil Depts, CJCS, Subj: Southeast Asia Deployment Planning Assumptions (U), dtd 17 Feb 66, signed Robert S. McNamara.
54. JCSM-130-66, dated 1 March 1966, Subject: CY 1966 Deployments to Southeast Asia and World Wide Military Posture.
55. JCSM 218-66, 4 Apr 66, Deployment Program for Southeast Asia and Other PACOM Areas.

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56. JCSM 218-66, 4 Apr 66, Deployment Program for Southeast Asia and Other PACOM Areas.
57. Memorandum for SecDef, Subject: Deployments to Southeast Asia (U), dtd 9 April 1966, from Alain Enthoven.
58. Secretary of Defense Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Assistant Secretaries of Defense, Assistants to the Secretary of Defense, Subject: SEA Deployment Plan, dated 11 April 1966, signed Robert S. McNamara.
59. Memorandum to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, dated 12 April 1966, Subject: JCSM 218-66, dated 4 April 1966.
60. JCSM-274-66, 28 April, Subject: Deployment Program for South Vietnam.

II. PROGRAM NO. 3

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II. PROGRAM No. 3

A. Interlude

As far as the actual conduct of ground operations in Vietnam was concerned, the period of time from 1 May 1965 to 1 November 1965 was spent in building up combat and logistical forces and learning to employ them effectively. This was followed by a period from 1 November 1965 to 1 May 1966, in which the deployment of U.S. forces was extended toward the frontiers, logistical support was exercised in furnishing support to troops in sustained combat, and commanders were indoctrinated on the techniques of sustained ground combat.

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 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 Shau. 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... 1/

It is interesting to note, however, the pattern formed by MACV's operations during 1966. In the I Corps area, the large-scale operations conducted by the Marines in the spring of the year were for the most part located along the coast of the southern part of the area, in the Provinces of Quang Tin and Quang Ngai.

Beginning with Operation DOUBLE EAGLE I (28 January to 17 February), they progressed through DOUBLE EAGLE II (19 February to 1 March); Operation UTAH (4 March); Operation TEXAS (18 March); and Operation HOT SPRINGS on 21 April. All of these operations were keyed on intelligence of an enemy build-up in and around Quang Ngai. Contact on these operations ranged from sporadic to contact with a NVA regiment on Operation UTAH. The major exception to the location of operations in this area was Operation OREGON which was conducted in the vicinity of Thua Thien in late March.

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Another significant activity during the period, although not one initiated by the United States forces, was the fall of the Special Forces camp at A Chau, on the 10th of March.

Operations in the II Corps Tactical Zone in 1966 displayed a similar pattern. The two key areas of concern in II Corps were the coastal plains in Binh Dinh Province and near Tuy Hoa, and the Central Highland Plateau area around Pleiku. Although General Westmoreland appeared to be impatient to find the enemy and defeat him in the relatively sparsely populated plateau area, most of the operations in the first half of the year which resulted in significant contact with the enemy took place near the Coastal Plains. The first operation of the year, which ran from 28 January to 4 February, was Operation MASHER, renamed Operation WHITE WING because of the concern over public reaction to the image portrayed by the name "MASHER."

Operation WHITE WING continued until 6 March. This operation in the Bong Son and An Lao Valley region made heavy contact with 1 VC and 1 NVA regiment. It was followed by DAVEY CROCKETT (4-16 May) and CRAZY HORSE (17 May to 5 June), both in the same area.

Other significant operations in the spring of the year were Operations VAN BUREN and HARRISON which, together, ran from 19 January through 24 March in the area around Tuy Hoa. These operations, conducted by the 1st Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division, were designed to protect the rice harvest in that area.

Operations in the III Corps area began with Operation MARAUDER in Hau Nghia and Long An Provinces on 7 January; Operation CRIMP, along the Hau Nghia/Binh Duong border; and Operation BUCKSKIN near Chu Chi on 11 January.

In February, Operation MASTIFF into the Michelin Plantation, and Operation MALLET in Phouc Tuy Province, were carried out. Neither Operation produced substantial enemy kills, but hopefully they were instrumental in breaking up VC supply and command and control facilities. By 10 February, however, Operation ROLLING STONE had been kicked off and by 20 September it had encountered a 1,000-man VC force in Binh Duong. On 7 March, another search and destroy operation in Binh Duong, Operation SILVER CITY, triggered a four-hour attack by the enemy against 173rd Airborne Brigade, one of the participating units. On 24 April, the center of operations moved further north when BIRMINGHAM began a thrust into Tay Ninh. The most significant part of BIRMINGHAM was the capture of vast quantities of enemy supplies and facilities despite the small number of enemy killed. By May of 1966, the 1st Cavalry Division was operating in the Central Highlands, the 1st Infantry Division was in operation north of Saigon, while the 25th Infantry Division had one brigade operating with the 1st Cavalry Division on the Central Plateau, with the other brigades engaged in the III Corps area.

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As far as the pattern which American forces in Vietnam followed, there seemed to be an initial preoccupation in the spring of 1966 with the Viet Cong and NVA units located in the populated areas, Quang Ngai in the I Corps, Binh Dinh and Phu Yen in the II Corps and Hau Nghia and Binh Duong in the III Corps.

B. Phase IIA(R) Becomes Program No. 3

1. Bookkeeping Changes

Reflecting the relatively low level of combat and the preoccupation with the build-up of U.S. forces, only minor changes and adjustments to the figures in the plan were made during the two months following the publication of Phase IIA(R). By June, however, the number of changes had begun to build up. Assistant Secretary Enthoven, in his 10 June 1966 memorandum to Secretary McNamara, reported that there had been "a large number of changes proposed by the Army...This package of deployment adjustments is the result of detailed CONARC studies of unit availability based upon equipment inventories, personnel training outputs, etc. These changes affect virtually every month and type of unit." 2/

Assistant Secretary Enthoven then followed this with a memorandum on 13 June 1966 providing copies of the current statistical summary of deployments and an explanation of the major changes. Most of these were bookkeeping in nature, having to do with changes in the base from which future strengths were computed and certain other adjustments such as eliminating transients from the totals. This made no change in battalion strengths but brought the December 1966 and June 1967 totals to 378,000 and 427,000, respectively. 3/

On 16 June, Secretary McNamara, in a handwritten note in the margin of this latest Enthoven memorandum, directed Dr. Enthoven to make some changes in strengths to be included and to issue the revised plan as a separate document, not as part of the statistical summary.

By 30 June, when Enthoven sent the revised plan back to McNamara for approval, two changes had occurred which brought the totals for December 66 and June 67 to 391,000 and 431,000. These changes were the acceleration of the deployment of two brigades of the 9th Infantry Division from January 67 to December 66, and the availability of the 196th Infantry Brigade for deployment in August of 1966. This brigade was originally scheduled for deployment to Dominican Republic, but was diverted to Vietnam. These changes brought the total of U.S. maneuver battalions scheduled to be in Vietnam by the end of 1966 to 79 and the total by June 67 to 82. 4/

2. The Pen is Quicker Than The Eye

The question arises here as to why this revision of the plan became Program No. 3 rather than "change x" to the 10 April Plan. The

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difference in the December 66 strengths of the 10 April Plan (later retroactively designated Program No. 2) was 7,500 while the difference in the June 1967 strengths was 5,900 -- hardly very large changes.

An explanation may lie in an exchange of memoranda which took place between 28 June and 15 July. On 28 June, the President wrote Secretary McNamara as follows:

THE WHITE HOUSE
Washington

Tuesday, June 28, 1966
5:05 p.m.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

As you know, we have been moving our men to Viet Nam on a schedule determined by General Westmoreland's requirements.

As I have stated orally several times this year, I should like this schedule to be accelerated as much as possible so that General Westmoreland can feel assured that he has all the men he needs as soon as possible.

Would you meet with the Joint Chiefs and give me at your early convenience an indication of what acceleration is possible for the balance of this year.

Sgd: Lyndon B. Johnson 6/

Secretary McNamara passed the question on to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who replied on 8 July, 7/ that the present revised schedule did meet the CINCPAC requirements of 79 maneuver battalions by December 1966, and that "it appears that no significant acceleration of supportable combat-ready forces beyond those indicated will be attained." McNamara then replied to the President on 15 July that the Department of Defense had been "making strenuous efforts to accelerate deployments." 8/ He added,

I am happy to report that this effort has been successful, and we will be able to provide more troops and equipment during the remainder of this calendar year than we had though possible last spring...To illustrate the degree of acceleration already achieved, we now plan to have 79 Army and Marine Corps maneuver battalions in South Vietnam by December 1966, as compared to the 70 battalions we thought could be safely deployed only four months ago. We now expect to have 395,000 personnel in South Vietnam by the end of this year compared to 314,000 estimated last March.

The whole exchange may have a purpose other than simply requesting information or directing acceleration. Presumably, the President and

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McNamara frequently conferred on the conduct of the Vietnam war and there would seem to be little need for such a request or directive to be placed in writing unless it was to act as some sort of record which could be easily pulled out and displayed in order to demonstrate that the President had been sending troops to Vietnam as rapidly as Westmoreland needed them.

This makes sense if it is recalled that at this particular time the President was just in the process of publicly turning up the pressure on North Vietnam by ordering the bombing of the POL supplies. This effort to step up the pace in the aftermath of the disruption caused by the Buddhist struggle movement probably also included a desire to increase the pace of the ground war in an effort to convince the DRV that we could and would do whatever was necessary to defeat them in the South.

At the same time, there began to be some comment in the news, particularly by Hanson W. Baldwin of the New York Times that top military men were beginning to feel that the policy of a gradual build-up was becoming outmoded and that what was needed was a sharp increase in the application of force.

Seen in this context, the exercise of naming the last change to Phase IIA(R), "Program 3," and the exchange of memoranda between the Secretary of Defense and the President can be interpreted as follows. The President, impatient at being held back by the internal strife in South Vietnam in his effort to convince the North of our will to win the war, was anxious to get on with the war in an attempt to get it over with quickly. The implication, from a writer reputed to have close ties with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that the military felt that the President was not doing enough, prompted the President to write a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense asking him specifically to see if the JCS could think of some way to accelerate the deployments of ground forces. When the JCS wrote back that the present plan did meet Westmoreland's requirements and that additional acceleration was unlikely, the President had in effect secured the agreement of his senior military men that he was doing all that was needed and possible.

The ploy of naming the latest change "Program #3" can be seen to have two effects in this effort. First, it gave the illusion of progress. Second, it neatly wrapped up the changes since the beginning of the year, making the very real progress since December readily apparent, but obscuring the fact that most of the increase in the plan had occurred by 10 April.

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FOOTNOTES

1. MACV Command History 1966, pp. 20-21.
2. Asst SecDef (Systems Analysis) Memo for SecDef, Subj: Report on Deployments to SEA (U), dtd 10 Jun 66.
3. ASD(SA) memorandum for SecDef, Subj: Deployments to Southeast Asia (U), dtd 13 Jun 66.
4. ASD(SA) Memorandum for SecDef, Subj: Southeast Deployment Plan (U), dtd 30 Jun 66.
5. SecDef Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Assistant Secretaries of Defense, Subj: Southeast Asia Deployment Plan, dtd 2 Jul 66.
6. President's Memorandum for the SecDef, June 28, 1966.
7. JCSM 450-66, Subj: CINCPAC Calendar Year Deployments dtd 8 Jul 66.
8. SecDef Memorandum for the President, Subj: Schedule of Deployments to South Vietnam (U), dated 15 July 1966.

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III. PROGRAM No. 4

A. Planning Begins for CY 67

1. CINCPAC's 18 June Request

However, even before the Secretary of Defense published Program No. 3, CINCPAC had submitted his Calendar Year 1966 adjusted requirements and Calendar Year 1967 requirements. 1/

CINCPAC's requirements were based on a new concept for Vietnam. The four basic objectives remained as they had been set forth in CINCPAC's February concept. A new item in the June concept was that US/FWMAF and RVNAF general reserves and ARVN corps reserve forces would conduct sustained and coordinated operations with increased effort in the Highlands and along the western ARVN border. This was in line with the generally increased emphasis given in the concept to restricting NVA/VC forces' access to the coastal and land borders of ARVN through effective land, sea, and air interdiction operations.

During this time, two slightly different estimates of enemy strength were available. The figures used by CINCPAC in their 18 June submission were 125 confirmed, 7 probable, and 18 possible battalions in South Vietnam. It was estimated that the enemy was capable of infiltrating up to 15 battalion equivalents (9,000 personnel) per month into South Vietnam unless denied capability to do so. It was also estimated that the enemy could train 7 VC battalion equivalents (3,500 personnel) per month under the current existing situation. However, the best estimate of his intentions was that he would attempt to reinforce at the rate of 18.5 battalion equivalents (11.5 NVA, and 7 VC) per month, which would give him a maximum build-up total of 180 battalion equivalents by March 1967, at which time losses would exceed inputs and total VC strength would begin to decline.

The estimate of VC strength given in NIE 14.3-66, 2/ was as follows: The total Communist force in South Vietnam was estimated to be between 260,000 and 280,000. The major combat elements included some 38,000 North Vietnamese troops, approximately 63,000 regular main and local forces and from 100 - 200,000 guerrillas. The North was estimated to have a capability to infiltrate from 75,000 to 100,000 individual replacements, but present evidence suggested that the probable infiltration would be between 55,000 and 75,000. The estimate of VC recruiting in the South was from 7,000 to 10,000 a month. A projection of strength for end of 1966 was 125,000 in the Communist regular forces, but this could grow by the end of 1967 to over 150,000. The estimated strength for 1 January 1967, in terms of battalions, was between 170 and 190.

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The requirements for 1966 had been adjusted to 474,786 bringing the year-end totals for 1966 and 1967 to 395,269 and 436,406, although the maneuver battalion strength remained at 79 U.S. battalions (this did not include the windfall of the 3 battalions of the 196th Brigade). The CINCPAC submission also reiterated the request made in February for 20 battalions to reconstitute the PACOM reserve.

The requirements for CY 1967 were basically considered to be "rounding out forces." This force package basically consisted of: 5 tactical strike squadrons; 11 U.S. maneuver battalions of infantry/armored cavalry/tank configuration; a 4th rifle company for each of the 61 U.S. infantry battalions, and 7 FVMAF battalions, 6 of which were to round out the ROK Marine Brigade to a Division, and 1 additional battalion for the Australian Task Force to round it out to a full regiment. After all of the deployments recommended in the plan were carried out, the strength of U.S. forces in Vietnam would be 90 maneuver battalions and 542,588 personnel.

2. JCS Recommendations

These requirements were forwarded to the Secretary of Defense by the JCS in JCSM 506-66, on 5 August. 3/

The memorandum noted that the JCS felt that with a few exceptions the requirements and proposed force additions were valid, and that a capabilities planning conference was scheduled for early October to "correlate this planning into a comprehensive program."

3. Secretary of Defense Directs Studies

On the same day, the Secretary of Defense sent a memorandum to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as follows:

5 August 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: CINCPAC CY 1966 Adjusted Requirements & CY 1967
Requirements (U)

As you know, it is our policy to provide the troops, weapons, and supplies requested by General Westmoreland at the times he desires them, to the greatest possible degree. The latest revised CINCPAC requirements, submitted on 18 June 1966, subject as above, are to be accorded the same consideration: valid requirements for SVN and related tactical air forces in Thailand will be deployed on a schedule as close as possible to CINCPAC/COMUSMACV's requests.

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Nevertheless, I desire and expect a detailed, line-by-line analysis of these requirements to determine that each is truly essential to the carrying out of our war plan. We must send to Vietnam what is needed, but only what is needed. Excessive deployments weaken our ability to win by undermining the economic structure of the RVN and by raising doubts concerning the soundness of our planning.

In the course of your review of the validity of the requirements, I would like you to consider the attached Deployment Issue Papers which were prepared by my staff. While there may be sound reasons for deploying the units questioned, the issues raised in these papers merit your detailed attention and specific reply. They probably do not cover all questionable units, particularly for proposed deployments for the PACOM area outside of SVN. I expect that you will want to query CINCPAC about these and other units for which you desire clarification.

I appreciate the time required to verify the requirements and determine our capability to meet them, but decisions must be made on a timely basis if units are to be readied and equipment and supplies procured. Therefore I would appreciate having your recommended deployment plan, including your comments on each of the Deployment Issue Papers, no later than 15 September 1965.

Enclosures

Sgd: ROBERT S. McNAMARA 4/

The items questioned in the Issue Papers totalled approximately 70,000 troops with artillery and air defense providing the two largest single items.

4. The "Quick Fix"

While the JCS were beginning their review of the items questioned by the Secretary of Defense, they attempted to secure a "quick fix" in the form of a message from General Westmoreland. General Westmoreland evaluated the 1966 and 1967 force requirements as follows:

...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 safehaven, and recently moved a combat division through the DMZ.

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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.

Ref B /The CINCPAC submission/ establishes and justifies minimal force requirements, emphasizing the requirement for a well balanced, sustainable force in SVN for an indefinite period. Consequently, at this point in time I cannot justify a reduction in requirements submitted. 4a/

B. Events in the Summer

1. Emphasis on Pacification

In the meantime, other things were happening which would have a significant effect on U.S. strategy in Vietnam and force requirements for

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supporting that strategy. First of these was the growing emphasis on pacification. The story of this growing emphasis is the subject of another study in this series. However, a few of the highlights and their implications for U.S. force requirements may be useful. Although the war between U.S. and enemy battalions progressed satisfactorily during the spring and early summer of 1966, it became increasingly apparent that the pacification effort was not keeping pace. Urged on by Komer's visits to Vietnam, both Ambassador Lodge and General Westmoreland turned their attention increasingly towards the problem of pacification. On August 3, Ambassador Lodge in his weekly report to the President mentioned that he "conferred with General Westmoreland about the Vietnamese Regular Army -- the ARVN -- contributing more to pacification. He agrees on the urgent desirability of hitting pacification hard at this time when other things are going quite well." 5/

By 10 August, Lodge was putting even more emphasis upon the pacification effort. This 10 August weekly report to the President gives an indication of the atmosphere in Saigon at this time. Lodge's cable opened with the following:

In the struggle of the independence of Vietnam, the following can be said: we are not losing; we cannot lose in the normal sense of the word; never have things been going better; indeed, never have things been going so well. We are "on the track" with regard to almost every aspect of the war and we are winning in several...but all of this is still not called "victory." Indeed, however much they disagree about many things everyone -- in Washington and Hanoi and in Saigon -- seems to agree that what we have now is not victory. In truth we do not need to define "victory" and then go ahead and achieve it 100%. If it becomes generally believed that we are sure to win (just as it is now generally believed that we cannot lose) all else would be a mopping up. If there is "the smell of victory" we will be coasting. 6/

Lodge followed this up by listing a number of things which would psychologically mean "victory." Among these were "smashing results" in the criminal war of terrorism, subversion and local guerrilla action, movement towards constitutional democracy, spectacular success in the Chieu Hoi program and the opening of the roads in Vietnam. Lodge estimated that none of these things were "just around the corner." Therefore, it seemed to him that we had quite a stretch of time ahead of us. His questions then were "Could we shorten the time? Should we shorten the time? and if so, How? It was Lodge's judgment that a quick victory as the result of a relatively big, fast offensive might be easier to obtain than a victory achieved through a relatively moderate, slow offensive. He observed that,

...Maybe the Vietnamese can last indefinitely -- although it may be dangerous to assume it. But certainly it would be

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helped by a quick end to the war, assuming always that a satisfactory outcome was achieved. At present, U.S. military forces must help the Vietnamese actively in order to get the Vietnamese pacification effort moving -- let alone the war against the big units. We have high hopes that eventually they can undertake it all themselves and our soldiers have already expressed appreciation for the newly created Vietnamese political action teams and have recognized that they render the kind of service no American can render. Nonetheless, our help is at present indispensable in the field of criminal-terrorist war as it is on the purely military side. 7/

To back up his feeling that now was the time for a big push, he quoted General Eisenhower's saying that if you desire to conquer one well readied organized and entrenched battalion with two battalions, you may succeed, but it will take a long time and many casualties. However, if you use a Division, you will do the job quickly and the losses will be slight.

Ambassador Lodge then went on to discuss the newest proposals for pacification. He said that MACV had explained that:

In the past ARVN had been so hard pressed by VC main forces and North Vietnamese army units that it had had no choice but to concentrate on major offensive and defensive operations against these forces, leaving regional and popular forces with primary responsibility for providing local security in hamlets and villages. The latter had not been adequate to this mission. Now the build-up in US and Free World military forces makes it feasible to release a major part of ARVN from its former primary task of search and destroy operations and direct its main attention to pacification. This new concept of ARVN support of pacification operations will mean that US tactical forces will be carrying the main burden of search and destroy operations against the VC main force in North Vietnamese army units, while ARVN will be concentrating on pacification. 8/

This new interest was picked up as far away as CINCPAC where a draft military strategy to accomplish the U.S. objectives for Vietnam had been prepared. This draft was sent to MACV for his comments on 23 August 1966. 9/ This draft strategy broke down our concept for Vietnam into three inter-dependent undertakings. The first being U.S. actions against North Vietnam, the second, by actions against Communist forces in the South, and third, "nation building." In the section on nation building, draft strategy stated:

Military operations will provide a steady improvement in security throughout the country permitting extension of government control in creating an environment in which RD can proceed. The RD program is vital to the attainment of military success in South Vietnam. Our forces will vigorously support and

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participate in the program in such areas as logistics, sanitation, medical care, construction, and resources and population control. Military personnel having the necessary skills would be employed in political, economic and social development programs until they can be replaced by qualified civilians. 10/

On 24 August, the Roles and Missions Study Group in Saigon had completed its study and gave its recommendations to the Ambassador. 11/ Among their recommendations were several which had implications for the deployment of U.S. forces. One of these was that "as the increase of FWMAF strength permits, these forces engage with RVNAF in clearing up operations in support of RD with the primary objective of improving the associated GVN forces." They also recommended that ARVN be the principal force in RVNAF to provide the security essential for RD. To accomplish this, they recommended that the bulk of ARVN divisional combat battalions be assigned to sector commanders, that the ARVN division be removed from RD chain of command, and that the province chief be upgraded. They further recommended that Ranger units be disbanded because of their frequently intolerable conduct toward the population and that the RF and PF become provincial and district constabulary under the control of the ministry of RD. Also recommended was that the national police (special branch) assume primary responsibility with the identification and destruction of VC infra-structure.

As far as the U.S. advisory effort was concerned, they recommended that USAID/Field Operations, USAID/Office of Public Safety, JUSPAO/Field Operations, OSA/Cadre Division and OSA/Liaison Branch have one responsibility in each province at a minimum. In MACV, they recommended that a Deputy for RD be established at the division advisory, corps advisory, and COMUSMACV levels.

General Westmoreland, on 26 August, 2 days after the Roles and Missions Study was published, sent a message to CINCPAC, information copies going to the White House and State Department, Secretary of Defense, the JCS, and CIA. He opened by saying that:

In order to promote a better understanding of the role which military operations play in the overall effort in South Vietnam I discern a need at this time to review the military situation in South Vietnam as relates to our concepts; past, present, and future. This is an appropriate time in light of the fact we are on the threshold of a new phase in the conflict resulting from our battlefield successes and from the continuing US/FWMAF build-up. 12/

He went on to describe the enemy's infiltration and build-up in his effort to gain control in South Vietnam: After characterizing his efforts from 1 May 1965 to 1 May 1966, as being basically to build up our combat and logistical forces and to learn how to employ them effectively, he went on

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to describe his strategy for the period from 1 May to November 1966. This SW monsoon season had been spent seeking to:

...contain the enemy through offensive tactical operations (referred to as "spoiling attacks" because they catch the enemy in the preparation phases of his own offensive), force him to fight under conditions of our choosing, and deny him attainment of his own tactical objectives. At the same time, we had utilized all forces that could be made available for area and population security in support of RD...the threat of enemy main forces has been of such magnitude that fewer friendly forces devoted to general area security and support of RD envisualized at the time our plans were prepared for the period. 13/

General Westmoreland visualized his strategy for the period 1 November 1966 to 1 May 1967 -- the NE monsoon season -- as being one of maintaining and increasing the momentum of operations. The strategy would be one of

...a general offensive with maximum tactical support to area and population security in further support of RD. The essential tasks of RD in nation building cannot be accomplished if enemy main forces can gain access to population centers and destroy our efforts. US/FW forces, with their mobility and coordination with RVNAF, must take the fight to the enemy by attacking his main forces and invading his base areas. Our ability to do this is improving steadily...The growing strength of US/FW forces will provide the shield that will permit ARVN to shift its weight of effort to an extent not heretofore feasible, to direct support of RD. Also, I visualize that a significant number of the US/FW maneuver battalions will be committed to tactical areas of responsibility (TAOR) missions. These missions encompass base security and at the same time support RD by spreading security radially from the bases to protect more of the population...At the same time, ARVN troops will be available if required to reinforce offensive operations and to serve as reaction forces for outlying security posts and government centers under attack...The priority effort of ARVN forces will be in direct support of the RD program. In many instances, province chiefs will exercise operational control over these units. This fact notwithstanding, the ARVN division structure must be maintained and it is essential that the division commander enthusiastically support RD. Our highly capable US division commanders who are closely associated with corresponding ARVN commanders are in a position to influence them to do what is required. We intend to employ all forces to get the best results measured, among other things, in terms of population

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security; territory cleared of enemy influence; VC/NVA bases eliminated; and enemy guerrillas, local forces, and main forces destroyed. Barring any unforeseen change in enemy strategy, I visualize our strategy for South Vietnam will remain essentially the same throughout 1967...In summation, the MACV mission, which is to assist GVN to defeat the VC/NVA forces and extend GVN control throughout South Vietnam, prescribes our two principal tasks. We must defeat the enemy through offensive operations against his main forces and bases. We must assist the GVN to gain control of the people by providing direct support of revolutionary development...Simultaneous accomplishment of these tasks is required to allow the people of SVN to get on with the job of nation building. 14/

Westmoreland closed his message by adding that Ambassador Lodge concurred with the following comment:

I wish to stress my agreement with the attention paid to this message to the importance of military support for RD. After all, the main purpose of defeating the enemy through offensive operations against his main forces and bases must be to provide the opportunity through RD to get at the heart of the matter, which is the population of South Vietnam. 15/

A possible interpretation of this message is that it is a reaction both to a growing tendency to focus almost all attention on the pacification effort, and to the on-going battle over who would control the RD effort. General Westmoreland seemed to be saying that, while he fully recognized the essential importance of pacification effort, we should not lose sight of the importance of the mission performed by US/FW forces in keeping the enemy main force units away from the areas undergoing pacification. However, he did not want to restrict MACV only to fighting the war against main force units. He indicated that some US/FW forces would be used in direct support of RD activities, and recommended that the ARVN division be left in the RD chain of command, keeping the RD effort "militarized," and more susceptible to control through MACV. The military's coolness to many of the recommendations of the Roles and Missions Study is indicated by the fact that MACV did not forward the study to CINCPAC until 26 September, while CINCPAC did not forward the study to the JCS until 26 October.

However, Ambassador Lodge, on August 31, felt that he had finally 16/ achieved "the biggest recent American effort affecting Vietnam...giving pacification the highest priority which it has ever had -- making it, in effect, the main purpose of all our activities." He pointed to Westmoreland's "concept of military operations in South Vietnam," a MACV proposal to put ARVN in support of pacification, and the report of the Inter-Agency Roles and Missions Study Group as evidence. He did,

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however, begin to back away from the implication of his earlier cable (in which he felt that now was the time for a big push) by quoting General DePuy as saying that

...As a general rule, he does not undertake pacification operations until RD personnel are ready to put in. Otherwise, he says, the effort is wasted and ground is covered which simply returns to the enemy if no organized formations exist which can be left behind. This statement could influence the question of how much to increase the number of US troops in Vietnam. If US troops assigned to pacification are limited by the availability of RD personnel, and RD personnel are presently being trained at the rate of about 16,000 to 20,000 a year, then this fact (unless offset by others such as increased NVN infiltration) must have a limiting effect on the number of US troops which can profitably be used in Vietnam. 17/

Ambassador Lodge then quoted General Westmoreland as believing that we had "reached a crossover point where the rate of enemy losses equals the rate of infiltration," raising the question whether a certain number of US troops should be pared off of one task (the fighting of main force units) to go to the other (pacification).

He next modified his earlier quotation of General Eisenhower's to read:

There were advantages in having overwhelmingly superior military forces which would cut the time and cut the casualties -- if conditions at the specific time and place warranted it. Clearly, this limit on producing RD personnel is a new and big "if." 18/

Lodge finally rounded out his appeals to authority by quoting an article by Sir Robert Thompson in the 12 August Spectator which advised that American military strategy

...should be rather to commit the minimum forces against the enemy's purely military forces, sufficient only to keep the Viet Cong dispersed and off balance. Thus the remainder of the American troops could then be committed to providing the punch and protection without which the pacification program still left almost entirely in Vietnamese hands will not gather momentum. 19/

Lodge closed by claiming that the new stress on pacification was consistent with Thompson's advice.

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2. Westmoreland's Attention Turns to the Sanctuaries

However, in spite of Ambassador Lodge's belief that the attention of General Westmoreland had been turned toward pacification, and that pacification was now to receive first priority, events were occurring which began to divert COMUSMACV's attention:

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.

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 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 Quong, and Hau Nghia, the three provinces northwest 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. 20/

By July, the focus of operations had shifted. In I Corps during early July, Operation HASTINGS, the largest combined operation of the

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war to that date, began. This operation took place in the area south of the DMZ. As the operation continued, heavy contact was made with the NVA 325B Division, which had infiltrated through the DMZ with the suspected purpose of attacking and seizing Quang Tri Province. Operation HASTINGS was followed by Operation PRAIRIE, which began on 3 August, when one battalion was retained south of the DMZ to keep track of the NVA 324B and 341st Divisions which had been driven back into the DMZ in Operation HASTINGS. Contact with the enemy began immediately and continued to increase. The Marine Corps forces were redistributed and Operation PRAIRIE continued until the end of the year. During this period of time, amphibious Operation DECK HOUSE IV was launched against enemy units which had been detected trying to infiltrate from the DMZ southward along the coast. 21/

In II Corps, General Westmoreland set forth his strategy for the highlands in the immediate future. It was apparent that, although the enemy had begun his final SW monsoon campaign, the US SW monsoon campaign was proceeding admirably and had only to continue to keep the enemy off balance. General Westmoreland envisioned a series of operations in which the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, the 3rd Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division, and a brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division would provide surveillance and a screen to the west of Kontum and Pleiku. 22/

Late in the spring, on 10 May, the 3rd Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division had initiated Operation PAUL REVERE along the Cambodian border near Chupong Mountains. This operation was to be evaluated by MACV 23/ as "probably the single most significant Allied action in keeping the enemy from mounting his vaunted SW monsoon offensive." By July, when the NVA infiltration appeared to have become too much for them to handle, the 1st Air Cavalry was called in to assist. When the 1st Cavalry Division became involved the operation was renamed PAUL REVERE II. It continued for another 25 days when the major threat seemed to abate, at which time the operation was again redesignated, this time, PAUL REVERE III.

In III Corps, BIRMINGHAM was followed by EL PASO II, which ran from 2 June through July. This search and destroy operation marked the entrance of the 1st Infantry Division into the War Zone C. The results of this operation included killing of over 800 enemy, destruction of a substantial quantity of rice, salt, and fish, and the engagement of three VC regiments, the 271st, 272nd, and 273rd -- the regiments of the 9th VC Division. 24/

By August, Operations HASTINGS south of the DMZ in I Corps, PAUL REVERE II along the Cambodian border in the Central Highlands of II Corps, and EL PASO II along the Cambodian border in III Corps had indicated to COMUSMACV that infiltration was increasing from sanctuaries outside the boundaries of South Vietnam. The most pressing of these infiltration routes appeared to be the one through the DMZ. On 8 August, Ambassador Lodge sent a message to the Department of State.

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The recent upsurge of enemy infiltration thru the DMZ is causing a complete re-evaluation of Allied military posture in Quang Tri Province. If, as is strongly indicated, the enemy has made the decision to increase the tempo of his operations thru the DMZ, additional steps must be taken to block that approach effectively. 25/

Ambassador Lodge quoted General Westmoreland as advancing the suggestion, with which he agreed, that there might be merit in giving these measures the greatest possible international flavor by constituting a multi-national organization to help block enemy's infiltration through the DMZ.

The organization would be known as the KANZUS Force from its national components: Korean, Australian, New Zealand, and US. As presently visualized, the organization would be brigade size, with 2 US Marine and 1 ROK battalion as the combat elements. Individual battalions would retain their national identity. Formation of the command headquarters supporting structure would provide a place for incorporating token remaining national contributions from Australia and New Zealand and others such as the Philippines, should this become suitable ...The organization, commanded by a USMC officer, possibly a brigadier general, would operate in the US tactical chain of command in close coordination with and in support of the ARVN. 26/

Ambassador Lodge foresaw that:

The establishment of such a force might eventually provide us with a basis for suggesting the presence of an international force of different composition under UN or Asian regional sponsorship which could inherit the anti-infiltration role of KANZUS. An eventual successor would function obviously as a political and psychological cordon sanitaire and not, of course, as a military Maginot Line. However, a physical barrier is a possible future development. 27/

On 10 August, General Westmoreland, in a message for Admiral Sharp and General Wheeler, 28/ pointed out that the enemy "has increased his rate of infiltration, formed division-size units, introduced new weapons into his ranks, maintained lines of communication into South Vietnam, increased his use of Cambodia as a safe haven, and recently moved a combat division through the DMZ."

The KANZUS suggestion was only the first of a series of ideas proposed by various people and agencies to limit infiltration through the DMZ. On 16 August, Lodge forwarded to the Secretary of State General Westmoreland's proposal that:

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We consider defoliation of the southern portion of the DMZ as a possible means to prevent enemy infiltration through that area...In the event defoliation of the DMZ is not acceptable, MACV staff has drawn up an alternate plan which would call for defoliation of a large area just south of DMZ running east from Laos border to fringe of coastal lowlands. Target would be sufficiently south to insure against accidental spread into DMZ itself. I see no serious political objections. 29/

On September 7th, the JCS sent to CINCPAC, with an information copy to COMUSMACV, a proposal which had resulted from a Jason summer study on an air supported anti-infiltration barrier. 30/

This study suggested that an air supported barrier system specifically designed against the North Vietnamese infiltration system through Laos, based on further development of components that in the main were available, might be obtainable in about a year after the decision to go ahead. The barrier would have two somewhat different parts, one designed for foot traffic and one against vehicles. The proposed location for the foot traffic barrier was the region along the southern edge of the DMZ to the Laotian border, then north to Tchepone, and then to the vicinity of Muong Sen. The location for the anti-vehicle part of the system was further to the west where the road network was more open to traffic.

The anti-troop infiltration system (which would also function against supply porters) would operate as follows. There would be a constantly renewed minefield of non-sterilizing Gravel (and possibly button bomblets) distributed in patterns covering interconnected valleys and slopes over the entire barrier region...There would also be a pattern of acoustic detectors to locate mine explosions indicating an attempted penetration. The minefield is intended to deny opening of alternate routes for troop infiltrators and should be emplaced first. On the trails currently being used from which mines may -- we tentatively assume -- be cleared without great difficulty, a more dense pattern of sensors would be designed to locate groups of infiltrators. Air strikes using Gravel and SADEYES would then be called against these targets. The sensor patterns would be monitored 24 hours a day by patrol aircraft. The struck area would be reseeded with new mines.

The anti-vehicle system would consist of acoustic detectors distributed every mile or so along all truckable roads in the interdicted area, monitored 24 hours a day by patrol aircraft with vectored strike aircraft using SADEYE to respond to signals that trucks or truck convoys are moving. 31/

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The Gravel mines were small mines designed to damage the enemy's feet and legs. These mines were to sterilize (become non-effective) after a given period of time. The button bomblets were small mines (aspirin size) designed to give a loud report but not to injure when stepped on by a shod foot. Their purpose was to make a noise, indicating pedestrian traffic, which could be picked up by the acoustic sensors. The SADEYE was a bomblet cluster, dropped from aircraft, which was exceedingly effective against personnel.

This was not the first barrier proposed against infiltration from North Vietnam. Earlier in the year, in April, CINCPAC had replied to a suggestion to construct a conventional barrier, utilizing mines, and wire with troops to monitor and back it up, which would run from the coast across the northern portion of South Vietnam through the panhandle of Laos, to Thailand. CINCPAC and MACV had argued against this barrier because of the tremendous strain it placed upon the logistical facilities in both South Vietnam and Thailand, and because of the large number of troops which it required. 32/ The CINCPAC reply to the Jason proposal was sent to the JCS on 13 September 1966. Although CINCPAC conceded that "any measure which will effectively impede, disrupt flow of men and materiel from North Vietnam into South Vietnam merits consideration." Their judgment was that even "if we were to invest the time, effort and resources in a barrier project, it is doubtful that it would improve US position in South Vietnam." CINCPAC expressed doubt whether the barrier suggested would impede infiltration. He contended that a barrier system must be tended; if not, it could be breached with ease, while the flow of men and materiel to the VC/NVA continued. An aerial delivered obstacle would not be expected to supplant the need for soldiers on the ground, and the time, effort and resources of men and materiel required to establish a ground barrier would be tremendous. Also, he expressed his misgivings over the reliability and practicality of the electronic and other type gadgetry which would be in the barrier.

However, General Westmoreland was interested in another anti-infiltration device which was under development by the Army. This was a Caltrop -- a non-explosive device designed to penetrate enemy footwear to inflict wounds. On 24 September 1966, General Westmoreland had indicated that a 30-90 days sterilization time for the Caltrop would be acceptable, 33/ and on 2 October, he recommended to CINCPAC and JCS that the Caltrop be deployed for operational tests as soon as possible. 34/

Unfortunately, all of these ideas for halting or slowing the infiltration through the DMZ were to become effective sometime in the future. General Westmoreland's problem was very much in the present. On September 13, he sent Admiral Sharp a message on the threat to the I Corps Tactical Zone. 35/ In this message, Westmoreland laid out what he considered to be the nature of the threat posed by the enemy sanctuaries; in this case, the Demilitarized Zone and North Vietnam immediately above the DMZ.

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The current enemy build-up...constitutes a direct threat to US/FW GVN forces in I CTZ and to the security of Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces. The seriousness of this threat underscores the importance and urgency of utilizing all practicable means to prevent the enemy from generating a major offensive designed to 'liberate' the provinces in question and to inflict maximum casualties on US/FW/GVN forces....The enemy is consolidating his position in northern I CTZ and, according to my J-2, the 324th B Division is reinforced by the 341st Division and being further reinforced by possibly two additional divisions, one now in the vicinity of the DMZ and one on the move south. He continues to use the DMZ as a troop haven and as a supply head for his forces moving into northern I CTZ....The size of his build-up, disposition of forces, forward stockage of supplies, AA weapons systems being deployed southward, and depth of patrol penetrations indicate by all accepted standards that the enemy is developing an offensive as opposed to defensive posture. By October, the weather in Laos will be clearing and the enemy may be expected once again to move personnel and supporting materiel in quantity through the area, thus permitting him to engage our flank in Quang Tri Province from the west. Conversely, worsening weather in the coastal plain of I and II CTZ's would work to the enemy's advantage in attacks on friendly positions in these areas. Utilizing traditional routes through the Laos panhandle he will be able to reinforce large-scale diversionary attacks further south in coordination with a main assault through the DMZ and against the Western flank. The success of our efforts in coping with enemy initiatives has been based upon spoiling attacks by ground and air forces to disrupt the plans before he is capable of completing preparations for attack. He has thus been kept off balance from mounting a successful offensive. It now would appear, however, that because of our approach the enemy is employing a new tactic entailing use of sanctuaries in the DMZ and north thereof in an effort to prevent spoiling attacks. Since we are unable to exercise the initiative in moving ground forces into the DMZ or NVN we are left with fire power alone as the instrument for attack. I consider it imperative in this regard that we utilize aerial delivered fire power and naval gun fire in this situation if we are to thwart the enemy's pending offensive as discussed above."

He concluded by requesting employment of B-52's against the North Vietnamese forces infiltrating through the DMZ.

On 16 September General Westmoreland sent a message to Admiral Sharp 36/ in which he presented his concept for handling infiltration through the Laotian panhandle. As General Westmoreland put it, "With the arrival of the NE monsoon season weather in Laotian panhandle will be clearing and enemy is expected to infiltrate personnel and supporting

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materiel in quantity through that area. The requirement to carry this threat is evident. If allowed to go unchecked, it will permit enemy to engage our flank in Quang Tri Province from the west and will permit large-scale diversionary attacks further south. The seriousness of this thrust led us to development of a new concept to block, deny, spoil and disrupt the infiltration of enemy personnel and supplies through Laos during the forthcoming dry season." The concept hinged upon two basic principles. "First, we will intensify around-the-clock surveillance and interdiction of known infiltration routes. This process will stress attack of selected interdiction points as well as strikes against targets of opportunity. Second, we will concentrate our resources on successive key target areas to be known as 'slams.'" Once an area was designated as a slam it would be hit with B-52 and Tactical Air Strikes to neutralize it. This action would be followed by visual and photo air reconnaissance and/or ground reconnaissance patrols and, if appropriate, exploitation forces. Upon their withdrawal they would leave mines and booby traps, and the Air Force would follow with air delivered land mines. In special instances, General Westmoreland planned to leave stay-behind reconnaissance parties. The term 'slam' itself came from "seek, locate, annihilate, and monitor."

On 20 September 1966, General Westmoreland followed this up with yet another message to Admiral Sharp. 37/

Subject: Containment of Enemy Forces in Sanctuaries

1. The threat to South Vietnam of large enemy forces in the sanctuaries of Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam has now clearly emerged and is of increasing concern to me. Particularly vulnerable to enemy attacks from these sanctuaries are the Special Forces Camps of Khe Sanh, Duc Co, Du Dop, Loc Ninh and Song Be. We are therefore compelled to seek ways of containing the enemy forces in their sanctuaries and preventing a major ingress of these forces in South Vietnam.

2. The problem is now under active study by my staff. Redeployment of available forces to counter this threat may be necessary and could seriously jeopardize other important undertakings. Moreover, additional forces already requested may not be sufficient to contain the enemy forces in their sanctuaries and still accomplish other essential tasks. Studies are now underway to determine what additional forces will be required.

3. The above is submitted for your information in connection with the force requirements and capabilities actions now in progress. You will be advised of the results of our current studies.

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3. Lodge's Attention Turns to Inflation

While General Westmoreland's attention was being increasingly drawn towards the problems of infiltration from sanctuaries outside the borders of Vietnam, Ambassador Lodge's attention was being increasingly drawn towards the problem of inflation inside the borders. As Ambassador Porter in Saigon wrote to Komer on 17 August:

Fiscal year 1966 was a year of inflation. Money supply rose by 72% and Saigon working class cost of living index by 92%. Near of end of year (June 18) the piaster was devalued from 60 piasters per dollar to 118 piasters per dollar and six weeks later at time of writing, prices had begun to stabilize....It appears at this writing (Aug 11, 1966) that devaluation of June 18 has been successful surgical operation. It has increased by nearly 100% the number of piasters withdrawn from circulation for each dollar of imports, and this has sopped up enough demand to stabilize prices and actually reduce the total monetary circulation. Retail price indices have shown little change for last five weeks. Black market price of green dollars appears to have levelled off at a level of about 185-195, and price of gold also declining. There remain, however, number of threats to this newly established and so far fragile stability. 38/

He then listed five primary threats: The first was wage stability. There had been a general round of wage increases since devaluation, but it was not yet certain that labor demands had been satisfied.

Second was mounting U.S. expenditure:

US military build-up has tendency to generate continuously greater piaster expenditure, both by US DOD officially, and by our troops as individuals. Current total rate of expenditure around 36 billion piasters a year. In US, DOD programming rise to rate of over 47 billion piasters was originally foreseen for fiscal year 1967. This order of increase would tend very definitely to upset the stabilization effort. Budget of 36 billion piasters for total DOD generated expenditure in FY 1967 has now been ordered, but this may prove very difficult to implement.

The third danger was seen to be an increased GVN budget. The total GVN civil and military expenditures were about 55 billion piasters in FY 1966, and they might rise to 70 billion or more in FY 67.

On 15 September the Saigon Embassy 39/ forwarded their latest computation of the inflationary gap, based upon programs and budgets which had been submitted for CY 67.

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The GVN military budget was estimated at 57 billion piasters, while the GVN civil budget was estimated at 40.1 billion piasters. The U.S. expenditures were estimated to be as follows: US Military Personal Expenditures, 16.9 billion piasters; US Military Official Purchases, 28.7 billion; Wage Increase for Local Personnel, 2.4 billion; US Mission Civilian Housing, 1 billion; US Military Cantonments, 3 billion; Expenditures of other US Agencies, 8 billion; and Non-Official Purchases, 1 billion. With credit expansion and exports added in the total, monetary creation projected for year 1967 was 175.9 billion piasters. Total monetary absorption was estimated to be 131.8 billion piasters which left an inflationary gap of 44.1 billion piasters. The message concluded:

We consider a gap of this magnitude to be unacceptable in light of current U.S. policies. Mission currently studying ways to reduce gap.

In answer to this news, the Department of State sent back a message on 23 September. 40/ It stated that the size of the inflationary gap was "very disturbing," and tersely indicated that:

...much work needs to be done on policy side to get US house in order in preparation for discussions with GVNOfficial US piaster spending estimated to be 45 billion piasters. However [according to your message, U.S. expenditures], total 59.8 piasters, of which military expenditures alone total 48.6 excluding US civilian housing project and any portion 2.4 billion for wage increase for local military hire. This would appear to represent 50% increase over present level official US spending (including over 1/3 increase in military spending) which is certainly way out of line with stabilization. Military spending figures also gross variance with quarterly ceilings imposed for the first half of CY 67 of 9 billion piasters. 41/

Apparently, at this time Secretary McNamara was also becoming interested in the piaster situation in Vietnam. On 22 September, the JCS answered 42/ a question given them on 2 September by Secretary of Defense with regard to a preliminary examination of the piaster cost per man for the U.S. forces in Vietnam compared to those of GVN forces. Their reply indicated that "the piaster costs per man for U.S. forces [were] several times the magnitude of the joint support piaster costs per man for GVN armed forces. [However,] since available indicators [did] not support a comparable ratio of combat effectiveness per man, consideration purely on a piaster cost basis might suggest increasing GVN armed forces strength in relation to U.S." On the other hand, other considerations had indicated that "we may be near the upper manpower limit on GVN armed forces strength." The Joint Chiefs indicated they would "include appropriate consideration of potential piaster cost tradeoffs in future recommendations with respect to the strength of both US and GVN armed forces in Vietnam," but did not "foresee significant piaster advantages as becoming available through feasible exchanges."

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C. Conflicting Inexorables

1. Lodge's Piaster Ceiling

On 1 October 1966, Ambassador Lodge sent back his reply to the State Department's earlier message. 43/

A. SUMMARY

1. REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN MISSION COUNCIL CONCURRENCE ON PIASTER BUDGETS FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR OF 1967 HAVE NOT PROVEN SUCCESSFUL. AFTER CONSIDERABLE STUDY OF THIS ENTIRE MATTER, I, NEVERTHELESS, PROPOSE THAT WASHINGTON ACCEPT A U.S. PIASTER EXPENDITURE CEILING FOR 1967 OF 42 BILLION FOR THE U.S. MILITARY AND 16 FOR THE U.S. CIVILIAN ELEMENTS. THIS TOTAL OF 58 BILLION FOR 1967 COMPARES WITH 42 BILLION IN 1966. THESE SPENDING LEVELS, WHEN OFFSET BY ANTI-INFLATIONARY MEASURES, GIVE AN ESTIMATED SO-CALLED "INFLATIONARY GAP" OF 10 BILLION PIASTERS FOR 1967. IN MY JUDGMENT, HIGHER U.S. PIASTER SPENDING LEVELS WOULD CAUSE AN ACCELERATION OF INFLATION WHICH WOULD JEOPARDIZE OUR POLITICAL AND MILITARY PROGRESS.

B. STAFF STUDIES

2. DURING THE USAID PRESENTATION TO THE MISSION COUNCIL OF ITS 1967 PROGRAM IT BECAME APPARENT THAT A DECISION ON THE USAID PROGRAM COULD BE MADE ONLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH A REVIEW OF ALL U.S. AGENCY PROGRAMS IN TERMS OF THEIR PIASTER AND MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS. I REQUESTED A REVIEW OF PLANNED PROGRAMS AND SPENDING LEVELS OF U.S. AGENCIES AND RECEIVED REQUESTS TOTALLING 75 BILLION PIASTERS (REF. A), OF WHICH ABOUT 49 BILLION PIASTERS WERE FOR US MILITARY AND 26 BILLION FOR U.S. CIVILIAN PURPOSES. THIS COMPARES TO A TOTAL U.S. PIASTER SPENDING THIS YEAR OF ABOUT 42 BILLION PIASTERS, OF WHICH THE MILITARY CONSTITUTES 30 AND THE CIVILIAN 12. THE INCREASE REQUESTED BY THE MILITARY OF 19 BILLION IS OBVIOUSLY CLOSELY RELATED TO THE PROPOSED INCREASE IN TROOP STRENGTH WHICH LATEST REPORTS AVAILABLE TO ME SHOW LILLIGO FROM ABOUT 386,000 BY THE END OF 1966 TO ABOUT 519,000 OR SO BY THE END OF 1967. THE INCREASE REQUESTED BY THE CIVILIAN SECTOR OF 14 BILLION IS TO FINANCE THE SHARPLY EXPANDING OF "THE OTHER WAR" ACTIVITIES. TOGETHER THESE SUGGESTED BUDGET LEVELS WOULD REQUIRE AN INCREASE OF 33 BILLION PIASTERS, WHICH WHEN PLACED ON TOP OF AN ALREADY TAUT ECONOMY WOULD CERTAINLY CAUSE SERIOUS INFLATION. THE QUESTION IS NOT HOW MUCH WE MUST CUT, BUT WHERE.

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3. I ASKED FOR A STAFF STUDY TO REDUCE THESE PIASTER REQUESTS TO A LEVEL WHICH IS CONSISTENT WITH REASONABLE ECONOMIC STABILITY DURING 1967 AND YET WHICH DOES NOT JEOPARDIZE OUR MILITARY PROGRESS AND OUR CIVILIAN PROGRAMS. THE STAFF RECOMMENDED A LEVEL OF 33 BILLION PIASTERS FOR THE U.S. MILITARY FORCES. MACV STATED THAT THIS WAS TOO LOW TO ALLOW FOR EXPANSION OF FORCES IN 1967 AND I AGREED. A SECOND STAFF STUDY WAS PREPARED WHICH SET 39 BILLION AS A MAXIMUM FIGURE FOR THE U.S. MILITARY FORCES. THIS TOO WAS TURNED DOWN BY GENERAL WESTMORELAND AS BEING INADEQUATE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF MACV DURING 1967. AGAIN, I AGREE.

4. ON THE CIVILIAN SIDE THE FIRST STAFF STUDY RECOMMENDED A LEVEL OF 18 BILLION PIASTERS OF WHICH USAID WOULD RECEIVE 12 BILLION. THIS IS 3 BILLION LESS THAN USAID REQUESTED. THE SECOND STAFF STUDY PROPOSED 16 BILLION PIASTERS OF WHICH USAID WOULD RECEIVE 10 BILLION. HIS REDUCTION WAS NOT AGREED TO BY MR. McDONALD OF USAID WHO SAID HE DID NOT REGARD THIS REDUCED AMOUNT SUFFICIENT FINANCING FOR ESSENTIAL GVN/US BUILD-UP ON THE CIVILIAN SIDE.

C. THE DANGER OF INFLATION

5. FAILING AGREEMENT AMONG U.S. AGENCIES, I HAVE REVIEWED BOTH THE VARIOUS PIASTER REQUESTS AND THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK AND AM HERE PRESENTING FOR WASHINGTON CONSIDERATION MY PROPOSAL FOR PIASTER SPENDING CEILINGS IN CALENDAR YEAR 1967. BEFORE PRESENTING THIS PROPOSAL, IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET CLEARLY IN MIND WHY AN INCREASE IN SPENDING BY U.S. AGENCIES OF 33 BILLION PIASTERS DURING 1967 IS INTOLERABLE AND MUST BE REDUCED. LET US FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT CONSIDER THIS WHOLE SUBJECT IN THE LIGHT OF THE AMERICAN SOLDIER'S LIFE. CLEARLY, HIS LIFE CAN BE IMPERILED SEVERAL WAYS:

A) THE MOST OBVIOUS IS BY DEFEAT IN BATTLE.

B) BUT IN THIS COUNTRY, A WILDCAT, SOUL DESTROYING INFLATION WHICH MEANS THAT VIETNAMESE MILITARY PERSONNEL CANNOT MAKE BOTH ENDS MEET AND THEREBY THE VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES LOSE FIGHTING QUALITY COULD ALSO JEOPARDIZE OUR OWN TROOPS.

C) ALSO, AN INFLATION WHICH RESULTS IN THOUSANDS OF ADULTS DEMONSTRATING IN THE STREETS (WHERE FORMERLY WE HAVE HAD ONLY ROCK-THROWING TEENAGERS), WITH THE RESULTING POLITICAL INSTABILITY LEADING TO THE OVERTHROW OF THE GOVERNMENT, COULD BE AN EVEN MORE PRESSING DANGER--MORE SO EVEN THAN DEFEAT IN BATTLE. INDEED, RAND REPORTS INDICATE VIET CONG PRISONERS NO LONGER BELIEVE THAT THEY CAN BE VICTORIOUS IN BATTLE, BUT ARE COUNTING ON OVERTHROWING THE GOVERNMENT IN SAIGON. THIS IS THE POLITICAL DANGER WHICH INFLATION CAN CAUSE.

6. THEREFORE, IF WE LOOK AT THIS PROPOSITION SOLELY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE SOLDIER, WE FIND OURSELVES CAUGHT BETWEEN VARIOUS INEXORABLES: THE INEXORABLES OF BATTLE, OF INFLATION, AND OF POLITICS

7. LET US NOW CONSIDER THESE VARIOUS, APPARENTLY CONFLICTING, INEXORABLES, TAKING THE MILITARY FIRST.

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8. I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD BRING AS MASSIVE AN AMERICAN MILITARY FORCE TO BEAR IN VIET-NAM AS WE CAN AND THAT WE SHOULD DO SO AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN--SO LONG AS THIS CAN BE DONE WITHOUT A WILDCAT INFLATION AND WITHOUT OTHER LETHAL POLITICAL EFFECTS. I BELIEVE THAT WHEN ONE HAS RECOURSE TO FORCE, OVERWHELMING STRENGTH BRINGS A QUICKER RESULT, A SHORTER WAR AND THUS FEWER CASUALTIES.

9. THE POLITICAL AND INFLATIONARY DANGERS WHICH THE PRESENCE OF TROOPS CREATES MUST BE CONSTANTLY WATCHED. WE HAVE, CLEARLY, FOR EXAMPLE, ALREADY GONE TOO FAR IN PUTTING AMERICANS--MILITARY OR CIVILIAN--INTO VIETNAMESE COMMUNITIES, JOSTLING THE VIETNAMESE, SQUATTING ON AFTER LEASES HAVE EXPIRED, AND IN EFFECT TELLING THEM TO MOVE OVER.

10. I UNDERSTAND THAT TODAY SOME 40 PERCENT OF U.S. TROOPS ARE ASSIGNED UNDER THE GENERAL HEADING OF "GUARDING BASES" AND THAT THE REMAINING 60 PERCENT IS ENGAGED IN SO-CALLED "OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS" AGAINST MAIN FORCE UNITS. IT NOW APPEARS THAT TROOPS ARE GOING TO BE NEEDED FOR AN ENTIRELY NEW KIND OF WORK--THAT IS CONTAINMENT OF THE SANCTUARIES" IN COUNTRIES ADJACENT TO VIET-NAM WHICH ARE BECOMING VERY BIG. THE TROOPS ENGAGED IN SUCH WORK WOULD BE IN RELATIVELY UNPOPULATED COUNTRY AND THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE SERIOUS POLITICAL CONSEQUENCE.

11. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, TROOPS ARE STATIONED IN THE DELTA, WHICH IS BOTH THICKLY POPULATED AND A GREAT RICE PRODUCING COUNTRY, THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DANGERS COULD BE GREAT. THESE THINGS CANNOT BE FORETOLD AHEAD OF TIME AND MUST BE WATCHED ON A DAILY BASIS.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

12. TURNING NOW TO THE CIVIL SIDE, I FEEL IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT USAID EXPENDITURES FOR 1966 ARE 7.6 BILLION AND I BELIEVE WE COULD DO THE ABSOLUTELY VITAL THINGS IN 1967 WITH SOMEWHERE AROUND THAT AMOUNT. THIS IS BECAUSE OF MY BELIEF, AS REGARDS CIVIL EXPENDITURES, THAT THE PROBLEM IS NOT SO MUCH

TO DO MORE AS IT IS TO DO WHAT WE DO BETTER AND MORE SKILLFULLY, THEREBY DEVELOPING AND ENCOURAGING VIETNAMESE SELF HELP AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT. INSTEAD OF GOING TO THE 1966 LEVEL OF 7.6, I PROPOSE AN INCREASE OF UP TO 10. WITH OTHER CIVILIAN EXPENDITURES I THUS PROPOSE AN OVERALL CIVILIAN CEILING OF 16 BILLION PIASTERS. HAVING IN MIND THE FACT THAT IN THIS PAINFUL CONTEMPLATION THE IMMOVEABLE FORCE IS UP AGAINST THE IRRESISTIBLE OBJECT, I BELIEVE THIS WILL BE THE BEST THING TO DO -- DIFFICULT THOUGH IT IS.

B. THE U.S. MILITARY IS THUS ASSIGNED A CEILING OF 42 BILLION PIASTERS FOR 1967. THIS PROPOSED MILITARY CEILING OF 42 BILLION PIASTERS IS 12 BILLION HIGHER THAN THE SPENDING LEVEL FOR 1966. IT CONSTITUTES AN INCREASE OF 9 BILLION PIASTERS ABOVE THE FIRST STAFF STUDY RECOMMENDATION OF 33 BILLION. IT REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF 3 BILLION ABOVE THE SECOND STAFF STUDY. THE LEVEL OF 42 BILLION PIASTERS APPEARS TO BE REASONABLE IN

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LIGHT OF OUR SERIOUS INFLATIONARY PROBLEM. THIS REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF 6 BILLION PIASTERS ABOVE THE CURRENT PIASTER CEILING FOR THIS FISCAL YEAR OF 36 BILLION PIASTERS. WHILE IT IS CLEAR THAT SOME INCREASE OVER THE CURRENT CEILING IS NECESSARY IN VIEW OF THE TROOP BUILDUP, I FEEL THAT AN INCREASE ABOVE 42 BILLION WOULD BE DANGEROUS. SUCH AN INCREASE WOULD CONFRONT US WITH A CHOICE BETWEEN STILL FURTHER REDUCING CIVILIAN PROGRAMS OR FACING DANGEROUS INFLATION DURING 1967. NEITHER OF THESE ALTERNATIVES IS ACCEPTABLE.

14. I, THEREFORE, RECOMMEND THAT WASHINGTON APPROVE MY PROPOSAL FOR U.S. PIASTER SPENDING WHICH, WHEN ADDED TO VIETNAMESE SPENDING, WOULD GIVE THE FOLLOWING GRAND TOTAL: A MILITARY SENIOR BUDGET OF 92 BILLION PIASTERS OF WHICH 50 WOULD BE FOR VNAF AND 42 FOR MACV, AND A CIVILIAN PIASTER BUDGET OF 41 BILLION, OF WHICH 25 WOULD BE FOR GVN CIVIL BUDGET, 10 FOR USAID, AND 6 FOR NON-USAID U.S. MAJOR EXPENDITURES TOTAL 15 BILLION, OF WHICH CREDIT EXPANSION AMOUNTS TO 12. THIS MAKES A TOTAL OF PIASTER EXPENDITURES OF 148 BILLION. FACTORS WHICH DECREASE THE MONEY SUPPLY, SUCH AS IMPORTS AND TAXES, ARE ESTIMATED TO TOTAL 138 BILLION PIASTERS, LEAVING A SO-CALLED "GAP" OF 10 BILLION (SEPARATE TELEGRAM WILL FOLLOW GIVING FURTHER DETAILS).

: WEAKNESSES OF THE GVN

15. PLEASE NOTE TWO POINTS WHICH REINFORCE THE NECESSITY FOR KEEPING OUR PLANNED "INFLATIONARY GAP" TO 10 BILLION PIASTERS OR LESS.

16. FIRST, I DOUBT WHETHER ANY STABILIZATION AGREEMENT HERE CAN DO SO MUCH OR SO WELL AS DESCRIBED IN REF C. VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS WILL PROBABLY TRY TO OBLIGE US BY AGREEING TO A NUMBER OF THINGS, SIMPLY IN ORDER TO BE POLITE. BUT WHEN IT COMES TO MEASURES WHICH REALLY HAVE SOME TEETH, I AM NOT OPTIMISTIC. WHAT MADE KY'S MEASURES ON DEVALUATION AND PORT OPERATIONS VALUABLE IS THAT THEY WERE THINGS WHICH WERE CLEARCUT AND WHICH HE COULD CARRY OUT. I FEAR A MUCH LARGER U.S.-SPONSORED PROGRAM IN VIET-NAM BECAUSE I BELIEVE THAT THE GVN IS ADMINISTRATIVELY TOO WEAK TO CARRY THEM OUT AND SPECIAL INTERESTS ARE STILL VERY STRONG. IT IS A BIT LIKE A FLYWHEEL BELT WHICH CAN BE TIGHTENED SO MUCH THAT TRACTION IS LOST AND THE MOTOR MERELY SPINS WITHOUT GETTING THE FLYWHEEL TO MOVE. AS I HAVE SAID IN PREVIOUS TELEGRAMS, I BELIEVE THERE IS A RATE AT WHICH THESE PEOPLE CAN GO AHEAD AND ANYTHING BEYOND THAT RATE TENDS TO BE LIP SERVICE. THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUES, IN MY MIND, TO RESEMBLE LITTLE EVA, JUMPING FROM ICE FLOE TO ICE FLOE. THIS MAKES THE SEPTEMBER 11 ELECTION A PARTICULARLY WELCOME MIRACLE, BUT SOMEWHAT OF A MIRACLE NEVERTHELESS. THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION IS TENUOUS AND PRECARIOUS.

17. SECOND, OUR GAP ESTIMATES ARE ON THE OPTIMISTIC SIDE. I DOUBT WHETHER THE GVN CAN RAISE DOMESTIC TAX REVENUES FROM ABOUT 13.5 BILLION PIASTERS THIS YEAR TO 20 BILLION PIASTERS NEXT YEAR. FURTHERMORE, GIVEN THE PRESENT LULL IN THE MARKET

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AND CONTINUING PORT CONGESTION, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT IMPORTS WILL REACH THE ASSUMED LEVEL OF \$725 MILLION DURING 1967. TO THE EXTENT THEY DO NOT AND CUSTOMS COLLECTION ARE LESS THAN PLANNED, WE WILL BE FACED WITH A LARGER GAP AND HENCE MORE INFLATION THAN WE NOW ANTICIPATE IN OUR PLANNING FIGURES.

F. KEY ASSUMPTIONS

18. BASED ON THE ABOVE THINKING, WE MADE AS STRINGENT A BUDGET PLAN AS WE COULD, CONSISTENT WITH OUR OTHER MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OBJECTIVES. OUR PROPOSED BUDGET PLAN IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS.

A. VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES ARE ASSUMED TO HOLD DURING 1967 AT A FORCE LEVEL EQUAL TO THAT REACHED AT THE END OF OCTOBER 1966. I FEEL THAT GIVEN OUR INFLATIONARY SITUATION, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE VIETNAMESE MILITARY NOT PLACE FURTHER DRAINS ON THE LIMITED MANPOWER RESOURCES IN THIS COUNTRY. THESE DRAINS HAVE HAD A WEAKENING EFFECT ON THE ABILITY OF THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT TO PERFORM. WITH THE IMPROVEMENT IN OUR MILITARY POSITION DURING 1966, IT SEEMS DESIRABLE TO CONCENTRATE IN 1967 ON IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THE VN ARMED FORCES RATHER THAN EXPANDING THEM IN SIZE.
B) WE HAVE ASSUMED A WAGE INCREASE BY THE GVN OF ONLY 10 PER CENT. CLEARLY THIS IS THE MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE THAT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE.

C) WE HAVE HELD BOTH THE CIVIL AND THE MILITARY GVN BUDGETS TO BARE-BONES LEVELS.

D) WE HAVE ASSUMED THAT THE MILITARY WILL MAINTAIN THEIR PIASTER EXPENDITURES THROUGHOUT CALENDAR YEAR 1967 AT THE 42 BILLION PIASTER LEVEL. THIS IS A CRITICAL ASSUMPTION AND IS BASED ON MY UNDERSTANDING THAT SECRETARY MCNAMARA HAS ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO HOLD U.S. MILITARY PIASTER SPENDING TO WITHIN 36 BILLION PIASTERS DURING THIS FISCAL YEAR. ADMITTEDLY, THIS WILL MEAN A FURTHER STRETCHOUT OF CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS, ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO REDUCE PERSONAL EXPENDITURES BY U.S. TROOPS, AND POSSIBLY THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL U.S. SUPPORT TROOPS. IF THIS BUDGET LEVEL CANNOT BE HELD, IT WILL JEOPARDIZE OUR ENTIRE ANTI-INFLATIONARY PROGRAM HERE IN VIET-NAM. I AM MOST APPRECIATIVE OF THE UNDERSTANDING AND EXCELLENT COOPERATION WHICH SECRETARY MCNAMARA HAS GIVEN TO US ON THIS SUBJECT.

E) WE HAVE CUT THE USAID/GVN PROGRAMS BY ONE-THIRD, BRINGING THEM DOWN FROM THE 15 WHICH WAS REQUESTED TO 10 BILLION PIASTERS. I WAS MOST RELUCTANT TO MAKE A CUT OF SUCH PROPORTIONS IN THIS VITAL AREA, BUT FEEL THAT WE CANNOT MEET OUR STABILIZATION OBJECTIVES UNLESS BOTH THE CIVILIAN AND MILITARY PROGRAMS ARE CUT. CUTTING ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER NEITHER SERVES OUR INTERESTS NOR ALLOWS US TO MEET OUR OBJECTIVES. FURTHERMORE, IT SEEMS TO ME DESIRABLE ON THE CIVILIAN SIDE, TO CONCENTRATE ON IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PROGRAMS AS WELL AS EXPANDING THEM. LODGE

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In essence, what Ambassador Lodge seemed to be looking for was a solution which would balance the conflicting inexorables, especially those of battle and inflation. He ended up by straddling the fence. He stated that he believed that we should "bring as massive an American military force to bear in Vietnam that we can and that we should do so as quickly as we can." But he hedged by adding "so long as this can be done without a wildcat inflation and other lethal political effects." He seemed to think he had found a solution in Westmoreland's new fascination with the sanctuaries across the borders of South Vietnam. He hoped that with large numbers of troops employed in the less populated areas, it might be possible to have both the massive force quickly employed and a relatively small inflationary effect. However, he seems to have been misjudging what Westmoreland had in mind.

Nevertheless, his 42 billion piaster limit on U.S. military expenditures was to become one of the controlling factors in the decision on Program #4 strengths.

2. Westmoreland's Reclama

On 5 October, COMUSMACV sent a message to Washington to set forth his reclama to the Ambassador's proposed piaster expenditure limit. 44/

1.While MACV does not concur in the Ambassador's message, we are fully committed to maintaining restrictions on US spending in Vietnam. COMUSMACV's position concerning the military and economic situation in SVN is as follows:

A. The primary mission of US forces in RVN is to defeat the VC/NVA forces in SVN, and to assist GVN in extending governmental control throughout the land. If MACV must operate within a piaster ceiling of 42 billion for CY 67 and if our actual deployments approach the approved deployment level as identified in OSD's South-east Asia Deployment Program No. 3 dated 1 Aug 66, 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 66 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 66 approved force level of 445,000, an average of 440,000 during CY 67.

B. While it is recognized that inflation is a serious problem, a reduction of US military piaster spending with a corresponding reduction of US forces or military efforts could seriously jeopardize our military progress.

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C. Today, with the US/FW forces available, large scale sustained operations can be mounted within any geographical area of SVN. However, with the enemy's increasing buildup capability he has been able to increase his combat strength in SVN to 131,200, approximately 7 combat divisions. It is estimated that he will have a combat strength of 147,300 consisting of 181 Inf Bns and 63 Combat Spt Bns, or approximately 10 Combat Divisions, in country during the second quarter of CY 67. By maximizing his training capability in NVN, the input could be substantially increased. If the enemy adopts this course of action, further selected increases in US/FW strength in SVN may be required over requested 1967 force levels.

D. The CY 66 US/FW force increases will allow tactical commanders to step up their search and destroy and other offensive operations both in size and frequency. This increase is necessary to turn the tide of the enemy buildup. The estimated enemy attrition made possible by this force increase would hold the enemy buildup to approximately 147,300 combat strength as stated above. If the US/FW forces continue attrition of the enemy at the same increasing rate during the next 12 month period as accomplished during Jan-Jul 66, the enemy combat strength should start to decline during the second quarter CY 67. However, if the enemy accelerates buildup in SVN to his maximum capability, his strength probably will not start to decline until some time in CY 68. The enemy continues to show every inclination to continue his military efforts.

E. On the basis of the foregoing, it can be seen that a large scale forced deferral of troop increases at this time, while the enemy continues to build up, would be a most imprudent course of action that could jeopardize seriously....

* * * * *

2. Part C, Ref A discusses the dangers of inflation and refers to the RAND reports on Viet Cong prisoners. It is recognized that the political danger of inflation is a continuing threat to the GVN and that we must use all available resources to insure the economy is not faced with a "wildcat" rise in prices. However, we must not at this time impose a restriction that possibly would hamstring our military effort.

3. RAND reports are difficult to assess. The time lag in publication and the conclusions drawn from the studies will vary.

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It is true that the majority of "hard core" captives and defectors cited in the RAND reports no longer predict an inevitable VC victory, many of this selected group now see the war as a stalemate with each side building up its respective force. Although some of this group now see defeat, in the main the confidence of the individual enemy soldier in a military victory has dwindled due, in large measure, to the string of defeats he has suffered at the hands of the US/GVN/Free World Forces. However, limitation of these US/GVN forces for economic reasons would curtail the momentum of the military effort at this critical point and conceivably jeopardize the overall US effort in Vietnam.

4. Para 10 & 11, Part C, Ref A discusses troop utilization but does not depict clearly the military concept of operations in Vietnam for CY 67. Our concept recognizes and is built around two equally important, continuing and complementary requirements which call for the same type of military resources and flexibility in their application. On the one hand, we must maintain the security of our bases and key population and food producing centers and assist in expanding security of areas under Government control. On the other hand we must seek out and destroy the enemy's main forces and his bases to create the environment in which meaningful Revolutionary Development can proceed. The priority of US/FW military efforts will continue to be devoted to our main mission, the destruction of enemy main forces and bases. The "entirely new kind of work" referred to by the Ambassador is in reality a continuation of our surveillance and rapid reaction tactics vis-a-vis enemy forces occupying sanctuaries in adjacent territory. We are according heightened emphasis to this effort, and may find it necessary to ask for additional forces to insure its success.

Information copies of this message were sent to the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Also on 5 October, Dr. Alain Enthoven, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis, in a memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, 45/ compared Lodge's proposed 42 billion piaster budget with several other relevant figures. The first figure was 41 billion piasters, which would allow Program 3 deployments based upon actual July and August piaster spending rates, but which did not allow for any price increases during CY 67. The next figure given was 44 billion piasters which allowed for completion of Program 3 deployments and for prices to rise during the period July 1966 to December 1967 by 7%. The third figure given was 43.6 billion piasters which would allow a rise in U.S. strength to a total of 525,000 by December of 1967, but did not allow room for inflation. The last figure given was 47.4 billion piasters, which would allow completion of CINCPAC's deployment plan which envisioned an end '68 strength of 569,000, but which did not allow for any increase in prices. Assistant

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Secretary Enthoven pointed out that differences in spending associated with different deployments were small in CY 67 relative to the uncertainty about spending for a given deployment. However, he also added that if Lodge's expenditure program were achieved, it was likely that at best the rate of inflation would be reduced to about 20% per year. At this rate, he estimated that even Program 3 would cost nearly 50 billion piasters.

3. The JCS: Issue Papers and World Wide Posture

Meanwhile, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had completed their review of CINCPAC's 18 June requirements for CY 66 and 67 and the issue papers which the Secretary of Defense had given them on 5 August. On 24 September, they forwarded their review of these requirements and their answers to the issue papers. ^{46/} This document was reviewed by Dr. Enthoven's office and on 29 September, he sent a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense. He reported that deletions of requirements by CINCPAC and the JCS totaled 49,000 personnel of the 215,000 add-on requirements for US forces in PACOM (excluding Hawaii). Of the deletions, 39,000 were included in the issue papers. He added that his SEA Programs Division was in the process of analyzing the detailed rationale for the remaining requested units and that new deployment issue papers would be provided to the Secretary of Defense for his approval on 3 October. ^{46a/} Apparently, the Secretary of Defense approved them for on 6 October he forwarded another set of deployment issue papers to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, asking that they review the issues and have their recommendations for him by 1 November when he planned to make his decision on the papers. The items considered in the issue papers totaled some 54,000 troops out of CINCPAC's total request of 569,000 for deployment to South Vietnam. The leading items considered were the 15,000 troops (9,000 Army and 6,000 AF) which were involved in IV Corps operations and 12,000 Artillery troops.

By this time, Secretary McNamara had already decided to make a trip to Saigon to see if he could get a better feel for the situation there. However, before he departed, the Joint Chiefs of Staff forwarded to him a paper analyzing the world-wide military posture of the United States in light of the August CINCPAC requirements study for CY 1967. ^{47/}

Assuming that there would be no call-up of reserves, no change in rotation policies, and that resources for the proposed deployments would be obtained from the world-wide military structure, the impact of meeting the CINCPAC 1967 requirements, as they saw it, would be tremendous. The Army would suffer most, meeting the CINCPAC requirements (12 additional maneuver battalions) on the average six to eight months late, and in the process emasculating CONUS STRAF, leaving it but two airborne brigade forces for 1967 and the first part of 1968. Other NATO reinforcing division forces could not be ready from the Army until late 1968. USAREUR, USARAL and PACOM reserve would all be at a reduced level because of "qualitative personnel withdrawals." In total, the Army would have a force deficiency of three and two-thirds active division forces if it were to satisfy strategic reserve and sustaining base requirements.

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Carrier pilots would remain the major Naval shortage. The Air Force, upon completion of the required deployments (in September of 1967) "would not have the capability to deploy rapidly any combat-ready tactical fighter forces." With one exception, all tactical and reconnaissance units in the United States were assigned and executing training tasks. To meet CINCPAC requirements would require drawing down from 21 TFS (486 aircraft) in Europe to 13 squadrons or 288 aircraft. Given all Air Force commitments and responsibilities to respond to NATO and provide other reinforcements a short-fall of some 22 TFS (445 aircraft), 5 TRS (90 aircraft) and 4 TCS (64 aircraft) would result.

In the "guts" portion of the memorandum detailed consideration was given to the extent which mobilization of the reserves could alleviate shortages. It noted these:

Army. Significant withdrawals of equipment have been made from the reserve components to support new activations. This has resulted in a degradation of the training capability and the mobilization potential of the reserve components. Therefore, full or partial mobilization of reserve units would have only limited effectiveness in accelerating Army deployments. However, mobilization of reserve units would permit a more rapid restoration, personnel-wise, of the STRAF. In addition, reserve unit mobilization and subsequent deployment of these units to Europe or Korea would accelerate restoration of Army forces in those areas. Selective mobilization of reservists possessing critical skills could greatly improve the quality of the training and sustaining base and the quality of deploying units which are now having to deploy with shortages of skills and experienced leaders. Selective mobilization would permit some acceleration of unit deployments.

Air Force. Mobilization could provide 20 deployable ANG tactical fighter squadrons (409 aircraft minimum) and 12 ANG tactical reconnaissance squadrons. While not nuclear capable and possessing less modern aircraft, the TFSs would partially provide for the 22 TFS shortfall anticipated. By using older equipment, shortfalls in TRSs would be reduced to zero, and the CONUS base posture improved. TCS shortfalls would be reduced through use of C-119 aircraft. Some personnel shortages would be alleviated.

* * * * *

In conclusion, the Services cannot fully respond to CINCPAC's CY 1966 (adjusted) and CY 1967 force requirements on the time schedule he has prescribed and under the conditions stated in paragraph 4, above. Providing the preponderance of his requirements, even on a delayed schedule, would further impair the US military posture and capability to maintain forward deployments to deter aggression world-wide. It would

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further reduce the capability to reinforce NATO rapidly, to provide forces for other contingencies, and to maintain a sufficient rotation and training base. Mobilization of reserves, extension of terms of service, and extending overseas tours would assist in alleviating shortfalls associated with satisfying CINCPAC's requirements. Certain critical problems cannot be fully resolved by mobilization because of equipment and skill shortages. Of particular note in the case of the Army, equipment withdrawals from the Reserve components have substantially weakened the Army's reserve structure. 48/

Interestingly enough, the kind of mobilization the JCS were talking about in JCSM-646-66 was a full-blown affair which added 688,500 reservists generally in units to the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines by December 1966. Other than listing units, availability dates and programmed total strengths, the memorandum did not delve into specific applications of these reserve forces or how they would alleviate the manpower/unit/equipment crunch which the JCS described. 49/

D. McNamara Goes to Saigon -- Decision on Four

With all of this information in hand, Secretary McNamara departed for Saigon. While the records available do not indicate what went on in Saigon, the results were clearly spelled out in the Secretary of Defense's Memorandum for the President, submitted upon his return. 50/

1. A Memorandum for the President

1. Evaluation of the situation. In the report of my last trip to Vietnam almost a year ago, I stated that the odds were about even that, even with the then-recommended deployments, we would be faced in early 1967 with a military stand-off at a much higher level of conflict and with "pacification" still stalled. I am a little less pessimistic now in one respect. We have done somewhat better militarily than I anticipated. We have by and large blunted the communist military initiative -- any military victory in South Vietnam the Viet Cong may have had in mind 18 months ago has been thwarted by our emergency deployments and actions. And our program of bombing the North has exacted a price.

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My concern continues, however, in other respects. This is because I see no reasonable way to bring the war to an end soon. Enemy morale has not broken -- he apparently has adjusted to our stopping his drive for military victory and has adopted a strategy of keeping us busy and waiting us out (a strategy of attriting our national will). He knows that we have not been, and he believes we probably will not be, able to translate our military successes into the "end products" -- broken enemy morale and political achievements by the GVN.

The one thing demonstrably going for us in Vietnam over the past year has been the large number of enemy killed-in-action resulting from the big military operations. Allowing for possible exaggeration in reports, the enemy must be taking losses -- deaths in and after battle -- at the rate of more than 60,000 a year. The infiltration routes would seem to be one-way trails to death for the North Vietnamese. Yet there is no sign of an impending break in enemy morale and it appears that he can more than replace his losses by infiltration from North Vietnam and recruitment in South Vietnam.

Pacification is a bad disappointment. We have good grounds to be pleased by the recent elections, by Ky's 16 months in power, and by the faint signs of development of national political institutions and of a legitimate civil government. But none of this has translated itself into political achievements at Province level or below. Pacification has if anything gone backward. As compared with two, or four, years ago, enemy full-time regional forces and part-time guerrilla forces are larger; attacks, terrorism and sabotage have increased in scope and intensity; more railroads are closed and highways cut; the rice crop expected to come to market is smaller; we control little, if any, more of the population; the VC political infrastructure thrives in most of the country, continuing to give the enemy his enormous intelligence advantage; full security exists nowhere (not even behind the US Marines' lines and in Saigon); in the countryside, the enemy almost completely controls the night.

Nor has the ROLLING THUNDER program of bombing the North either significantly affected infiltration or cracked the morale of Hanoi. There is agreement in the intelligence community on these facts (see the attached Appendix).

In essence, we find ourselves -- from the point of view of the important war (for the complicity of the people) -- no better, and if anything worse off. This important war must be fought and won by the Vietnamese themselves. We have known this from the beginning. But the discouraging truth is that, as was the case in 1961 and 1963 and 1965, we have not found the formula, the catalyst, for training and inspiring them into effective action.

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2. Recommended actions. In such an unpromising state of affairs, what should we do? We must continue to press the enemy militarily; we must make demonstrable progress in pacification; at the same time, we must add a new ingredient forced on us by the facts. Specifically, we must improve our position by getting ourselves into a military posture that we credibly would maintain indefinitely -- a posture that makes trying to "wait us out" less attractive. I recommend a five-pronged course of action to achieve those ends.

a. Stabilize US force levels in Vietnam. It is my judgment that, barring a dramatic change in the war, we should limit the increase in US forces in SVN in 1967 to 70,000 men and we should level off at the total of 470,000 which such an increase would provide.^{a/} It is my view that this is enough to punish the enemy at the large-unit operations level and to keep the enemy's main forces from interrupting pacification. I believe also that even many more than 470,000 would not kill the enemy off in such numbers as to break their morale so long as they think they can wait us out. It is possible that such a 40 percent increase over our present level of 325,000 will break the enemy's morale in the short term; but if it does not, we must, I believe, be prepared for and have underway a long-term program premised on more than breaking the morale of main force units. A stabilized US force level would be part of such a long-term program. It would put us in a position where negotiations would be more likely to be productive, but if they were not we could pursue the all-important pacification task with proper attention and resources and without the spectre of apparently endless escalation of US deployments.

b. Install a barrier. A portion of the 470,000 troops -- perhaps 10,000 to 20,000 -- should be devoted to the construction and maintenance of an infiltration barrier. Such a barrier would lie near the 17th parallel -- would run from the sea, across the neck of South Vietnam (choking off the new infiltration routes through the DMZ) and across the trails in Laos. This interdiction system (at an approximate cost of \$1 billion) would comprise to the east a ground barrier of fences, wire, sensors, artillery, aircraft and mobile troops; and to the west -- mainly in Laos -- an interdiction zone covered by air-laid mines and bombing attacks pin-pointed by air-laid acoustic sensors.

The barrier may not be fully effective at first, but I believe that it can be made effective in time and that even the threat of its becoming effective can substantially change to our advantage the character of the war. It would hinder enemy efforts, would permit more efficient use of the limited number of friendly troops; and would be persuasive evidence both that our sole aim is to protect the South from the North and that we intend to see the job through.

^{a/} Admiral Sharp has recommended a 12/31/67 strength of 570,000. However, I believe both he and General Westmoreland recognize that the danger of inflation will probably force an end 1967 deployment limit of about 470,000.

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c. Stabilize the ROLLING THUNDER program against the North. Attack sorties in North Vietnam have risen from about 4,000 per month at the end of last year to 6,000 per month in the first quarter of this year and 12,000 per month at present. Most of our 50 percent increase of deployed attack-capable aircraft has been absorbed in the attacks on North Vietnam. In North Vietnam, almost 84,000 attack sorties have been flown (about 25 percent against fixed targets), 45 percent during the past seven months.

Despite these efforts, it now appears that the North Vietnamese-Laotian road network will remain adequate to meet the requirements of the Communist forces in South Vietnam -- this is so even if its capacity could be reduced by one-third and if combat activities were to be doubled. North Vietnam's serious need for trucks, spare parts and petroleum probably can, despite air attacks, be met by imports. The petroleum requirement for trucks involved in the infiltration movement, for example, has not been enough to present significant supply problems, and the effects of the attacks on the petroleum distribution system, while they have not yet been fully assessed, are not expected to cripple the flow of essential supplies. Furthermore, it is clear that, to bomb the North sufficiently to make a radical impact upon Hanoi's political, economic and social structure, would require an effort which we could make but which would not be stomached either by our own people or by world opinion; and it would involve a serious risk of drawing us into open war with China.

The North Vietnamese are paying a price. They have been forced to assign some 300,000 personnel to the lines of communication in order to maintain the critical flow of personnel and materiel to the South. Now that the lines of communication have been manned, however, it is doubtful that either a large increase or decrease in our interdiction sorties would substantially change the cost to the enemy of maintaining the roads, railroads, and waterways or affect whether they are operational. It follows that the marginal sorties -- probably the marginal 1,000 or even 5,000 sorties -- per month against the lines of communication no longer have a significant impact on the war. (See the attached excerpts from intelligence estimates.)

When this marginal inutility of added sorties against North Vietnam and Laos is compared with the crew and aircraft losses implicit in the activity (four men and aircraft and \$20 million per 1,000 sorties), I recommend, as a minimum, against increasing the level of bombing of North Vietnam and against increasing the intensity of operations by changing the areas or kinds of targets struck. a/

a/ See footnote on page 82

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Under these conditions, the bombing program would continue the pressure and would remain available as a bargaining counter to get talks started (or to trade off in talks). But, as in the case of a stabilized level of US ground forces, the stabilization of ROLLING THUNDER would remove the prospect of ever-escalating bombing as a factor complicating our political posture and distracting from the main job of pacification in South Vietnam.

At the proper time, as discussed on pages 6-7 below, I believe we should consider terminating bombing in all of North Vietnam, or at least in the North-east zones, for an indefinite period in connection with covert moves toward peace.

d. Pursue a vigorous pacification program. As mentioned above, the pacification (Revolutionary Development) program has been and is thoroughly stalled. The large-unit operations war, which we know best how to fight and where we have had our successes, is largely irrelevant to pacification as long as we do not lose it. By and large, the people in rural areas believe that the GVN when it comes will not stay but that the VC will; that cooperation with the GVN will be punished by the VC; that the GVN is really indifferent to the people's welfare; that the low-level GVN are tools of the local rich; and that the GVN is ridden with corruption.

Success in pacification depends on the interrelated functions of providing physical security, destroying the VC apparatus, motivating the people to cooperate and establishing responsive local government. An obviously necessary but not sufficient requirement for success of the Revolutionary Development cadre and police is vigorously conducted and adequately prolonged clearing operations by military troops, who will "stay" in the area, who behave themselves decently and who show some respect for the people.

This elemental requirement of pacification has been missing.

In almost no contested area designated for pacification in recent years have ARVN forces actually "cleared and stayed" to a point where cadre teams, if available, could have stayed overnight in hamlets and survived, let alone accomplish their mission. VC units of company and even battalion size remain in operation, and they are more than large enough to overrun anything the local security forces can put up.

Now that the threat of a Communist main-force military victory has been thwarted by our emergency efforts, we must allocate far more attention and a portion of the regular military forces (at least half of the ARVN and perhaps a portion of the US forces) to the task of providing an active and permanent security screen behind which the Revolutionary Development teams and police can operate and behind which the political struggle with the VC infrastructure can take place.

The US cannot do this pacification security job for the Vietnamese. All we can do is "massage the heart." For one reason, it is known that we do not intend to stay; if our efforts worked at all, it would merely postpone the eventual confrontation of the VC and GVN infrastructures. The GVN must do the job; and I am convinced that drastic reform is needed if the GVN is going to be able to do it.

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The first essential reform is in the attitude of GVN officials. They are generally apathetic, and there is corruption high and low. Often appointments, promotions, and draft deferments must be bought; and kickbacks on salaries are common. Cadre at the bottom can be no better than the system above them.

The second needed reform is in the attitude and conduct of the ARVN. The image of the government cannot improve unless and until the ARVN improves markedly. They do not understand the importance (or respectability) of pacification nor the importance to pacification of proper, disciplined conduct. Promotions, assignments and awards are often not made on merit, but rather on the basis of having a diploma, friends or relatives, or because of bribery. The ARVN is weak in dedication, direction and discipline.

Not enough ARVN are devoted to area and population security, and when the ARVN does attempt to support pacification, their actions do not last long enough; their tactics are bad despite US prodding (no aggressive small-unit saturation patrolling, hamlet searches, quick-reaction contact, or offensive night ambushes); they do not make good use of intelligence; and their leadership and discipline are bad.

Furthermore, it is my conviction that a part of the problem undoubtedly lies in bad management on the American as well as the GVN side. Here split responsibility -- or "no responsibility" -- has resulted in too little hard pressure on the GVN to do its job and no really solid or realistic planning with respect to the whole effort. We must deal with this management problem now and deal with it effectively.

One solution would be to consolidate all US activities which are primarily part of the civilian pacification program and all persons engaged in such activities, providing a clear assignment of responsibility and a unified command under a civilian relieved of all other duties.^{a/} Under this approach, there would be a carefully delineated division of responsibility between the civilian-in-charge and an element of COMUSMACV under a senior officer, who would give the subject of planning for and providing hamlet security the highest priority in attention and resources. Success will depend on the men selected for the jobs on both sides (they must be among the highest rank and most competent administrators in the US Government), on complete cooperation among the US elements, and on the extent to which the South Vietnamese can be shocked out of their present pattern of behavior. The first work of this reorganized US pacification organization should be to produce within 60 days a realistic and detailed plan for the coming year.

From the political and public-relations viewpoint, this solution is preferable -- if it works. But we cannot tolerate continued failure. If it fails after a fair trial, the only alternative in my view is to place the entire pacification program -- civilian and military -- under General Westmoreland. This alternative would result in the establishment of a Deputy COMUSMACV for Pacification who would be in command of all pacification staffs in Saigon and of all pacification staffs and activities in the field; one person in each corps, province and district would be responsible for the US effort.

^{a/} If this task is assigned to Ambassador Porter, another individual must be sent immediately to Saigon to serve as Ambassador Lodge's deputy.

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(It should be noted that progress in pacification, more than anything else, will persuade the enemy to negotiate or withdraw.)

e. Press for negotiations. I am not optimistic that Hanoi or the VC will respond to peace overtures now (explaining my recommendations above that we get into a level-off posture for the long pull). The ends sought by the two sides appear to be irreconcilable and the relative power balance is not in their view unfavorable to them. But three things can be done, I believe, to increase the prospects:

(1) Take steps to increase the credibility of our peace gestures in the minds of the enemy. There is considerable evidence both in private statements by the Communists and in the reports of competent Western officials who have talked with them that charges of US bad faith are not solely propagandistic, but reflect deeply held beliefs. Analyses of Communists' statements and actions indicate that they firmly believe that American leadership really does not want the fighting to stop, and that we are intent on winning a military victory in Vietnam and on maintaining our presence there through a puppet regime supported by US military bases.

As a way of projective US bona fides, I believe that we should consider two possibilities with respect to our bombing program against the North, to be undertaken, if at all, at a time very carefully selected with a view to maximizing the chances of influencing the enemy and world opinion and to minimizing the chances that failure would strengthen the hand of the "hawks" at home: First, without fanfare, conditions, or avowal, whether the stand-down was permanent or temporary, stop bombing all of North Vietnam. It is generally thought that Hanoi will not agree to negotiations until they can claim that the bombing has stopped unconditionally. We should see what develops, retaining freedom to resume the bombing if nothing useful was forthcoming.

Alternatively, we could shift the weight-of-effort away from "Zones 6A and 6B" -- zones including Hanoi and Haiphong and areas north of those two cities to the Chinese border. This alternative has some attraction in that it provides the North Vietnamese a "face saver" if only problems of "face" are holding up Hanoi peace gestures; it would narrow the bombing down directly to the objectionable infiltration (supporting the logic of a stop-infiltration/full-pause deal); and it would reduce the international heat on the US. Here, too, bombing of the Northeast could be resumed at any time, or "spot" attacks could be made there from time to time to keep North Vietnam off balance and to require her to pay almost the full cost by maintaining her repair crews in place. The sorties diverted from Zones 6A and 6B could be concentrated on the infiltration routes in Zones 1 and 2 (the southern end of North Vietnam, including the Mu Gia Pass), in Laos and in South Vietnam.a/

a/ Any limitation on the bombing of North Vietnam will cause serious psychological problems among the men who are risking their lives to help achieve our political objectives; among their commanders up to and including the JCS; and among those of our people who cannot understand why we should withhold punishment from the enemy. General Westmoreland, as do the JCS, strongly believes in the military value of the bombing program. Further, Westmoreland reports that the morale of his Air Force personnel may already be showing signs of erosion -- an erosion resulting from current operational restrictions.

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To the same end of improving our credibility, we should seek ways -- through words and deeds -- to make believable our intention to withdraw our forces once the North Vietnamese aggression against the South stops. In particular, we should avoid any implication that we will stay in South Vietnam with bases or to guarantee any particular outcome to a solely South Vietnamese struggle.

(2) Try to split the VC off from Hanoi. The intelligence estimate is that evidence is overwhelming that the North Vietnamese dominate and control the National Front and the Viet Cong. Nevertheless, I think we should continue and enlarge efforts to contact the VC/NLF and to probe ways to split members or sections off the VC/NLF organization.

(3) Press contacts with North Vietnam, the Soviet Union and other parties who might contribute toward a settlement.

(4) Develop a realistic plan providing a role for the VC in negotiations, post-war life, and government of the nation. An amnesty offer and proposals for national reconciliation would be steps in the right direction and should be parts of the plan. It is important that this plan be one which will appear reasonable, if not at first to Hanoi and the VC, at least to world opinion.

3. The prognosis. The prognosis is bad that the war can be brought to a satisfactory conclusion within the next two years. The large-unit operations probably will not do it; negotiations probably will not do it. While we should continue to pursue both of these routes in trying for a solution in the short run, we should recognize that success from them is a mere possibility, not a probability.

The solution lies in girding, openly, for a longer war and in taking actions immediately which will in 12 to 18 months give clear evidence that the continuing costs and risks to the American people are acceptably limited, that the formula for success has been found, and that the end of the war is merely a matter of time. All of my recommendations will contribute to this strategy, but the one most difficult to implement is perhaps the most important one -- enlivening the pacification program. The odds are less than even for this task, if only because we have failed consistently since 1961 to make a dent in the problem. But, because the 1967 trend of pacification will, I believe, be the main talisman of ultimate US success or failure in Vietnam, extraordinary imagination and effort should go into changing the stripes of that problem.

President Thieu and Prime Minister Ky are thinking along similar lines. They told me that they do not expect the enemy to negotiate or to modify his program in less than two years. Rather, they expect the enemy to continue to expand and to increase his activity. They expressed agreement with us that the key to success is pacification and that so far pacification has failed. They agree that we need clarification of GVN and US roles and that the bulk

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of the ARVN should be shifted to pacification. Ky will, between January and July 1967, shift all ARVN infantry divisions to that role. And he is giving Thang, a good Revolutionary Development director, added powers. Thieu and Ky see this as part of a two-year (1967-68) schedule, in which offensive operations against enemy main force units are continued, carried on primarily by the US and other Free World forces. At the end of the two-year period, they believe the enemy may be willing to negotiate or to retreat from his current course of action.

Note: Neither the Secretary of State nor the JCS have yet had an opportunity to express their views on this report. Mr. Katzenbach and I have discussed many of its main conclusions and recommendations --- in general, but not in all particulars, it expresses his views as well as my own.

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APPENDIX

Extracts from CIA/DIA Report "An Appraisal of the Bombing of North Vietnam
through 12 September 1966"

1. There is no evidence yet of any shortage of POL in North Vietnam and stocks on hand, with recent imports, have been adequate to sustain necessary operations.
2. Air strikes against all modes of transportation in North Vietnam increased during the past month, but there is no evidence of serious transport problems in the movement of supplies to or within North Vietnam.
3. There is no evidence yet that the air strikes have significantly weakened popular morale.
4. Air Strikes continue to depress economic growth and have been responsible for the abandonment of some plans for economic development, but essential economic activities continue.

Extracts from a March 16, 1966 CIA Report "An Analysis of the ROLLING THUNDER
Air Offensive against North Vietnam"

1. Although the movement of men and supplies in North Vietnam has been hampered and made somewhat more costly [by our bombing], the Communists have been able to increase the flow of supplies and manpower to South Vietnam.
2. Hanoi's determination [despite our bombing] to continue its policy of supporting the insurgency in the South appears as firm as ever.
3. Air attacks almost certainly cannot bring about a meaningful reduction in the current level at which essential supplies and men flow into South Vietnam.

Bomb Damage Assessment in the North by the Institute for Defense Analysis'
"Summer Study Group"

What surprised us [in our assessment of the effect of bombing North Vietnam] was the extent of agreement among various intelligence agencies on the effects of past operations and probable effects of continued and expanded Rolling Thunder. The conclusions of our group, to which we all subscribe, are therefore merely sharpened conclusions of numerous Intelligence summaries. They are that Rolling Thunder does not limit the present logistic flow into SVN because NVN is neither the source of supplies nor the choke-point on the supply routes from China and USSR. Although an expansion of Rolling Thunder by closing Haiphong harbor, eliminating electric power plants and totally destroying railroads, will at least indirectly impose further privations on the populace of NVN and make the logistic support of VC costlier to maintain, such expansion will not really change the basic assessment. This follows because NVN has demonstrated excellent ability to improvise transportation, and because the primitive nature of their economy is such that Rolling Thunder can affect directly only a small fraction of the population. There is very little hope that the Ho Chi Minh Government will lose control of population because of Rolling Thunder. The lessons of the Korean War are very relevant in these respects. Moreover, foreign economic aid to NVN is large compared

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to the damage we inflict, and growing. Probably the government of NVN has assurances that the USSR and/or China will assist the rebuilding of its economy after the war, and hence its concern about the damage being inflicted may be moderated by long-range favorable expectations. Specifically:

1. As of July 1966 the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam had had no measurable direct effect on Hanoi's ability to mount and support military operations in the South at the current level.
2. Since the initiation of the Rolling Thunder program the damage to facilities and equipment in North Vietnam has been more than offset by the increased flow of military and economic aid, largely from the USSR and Communist China.
3. The aspects of the basic situation that have enabled Hanoi to continue its support of military operations in the South and to neutralize the impact of U.S. bombing by passing the economic costs to other Communist countries are not likely to be altered by reducing the present geographic constraints, mining Haiphong and the principal harbors in North Vietnam, increasing the number of armed reconnaissance sorties and otherwise expanding the U.S. air offensive along the lines now contemplated in military recommendations and planning studies.
4. While conceptually it is reasonable to assume that some limit may be imposed on the scale of military activity that Hanoi can maintain in the South by continuing the Rolling Thunder program at the present, or some higher level of effort, there appears to be no basis for defining that limit in concrete terms, or for concluding that the present scale of VC/NVN activities in the field have approached that limit.
5. The indirect effects of the bombing on the will of the North Vietnamese to continue fighting and on their leaders' appraisal of the prospective gains and costs of maintaining the present policy have not shown themselves in any tangible way. Furthermore, we have not discovered any basis for concluding that the indirect punitive effects of bombing will prove decisive in these respects.

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In this memorandum, McNamara reveals with striking clarity that many of the premises under which the war to that point had been fought (and manned) were shifting.

He agreed with COMUSMACV that the military situation has gone "somewhat better in 1966 than anticipated," but he found little cause for optimism in the longer run. In fact, he seemed almost disheartened as he noted that there was "no reasonable way to bring the war to an end soon." Finding an injured but undismayed opponent committed now to "waiting us out" while sapping our national will and seeing "pacification a basic disappointment...no better, and if anything worse off..." hardly was the kind of progress he hoped for.

His solution was to get ourselves into "a military posture that we credibly would maintain indefinitely -- a posture that makes trying to 'wait us out' less attractive." To do this, he proposed a five part program:

(1) First, he suggested that, barring a major change in the war, we should stabilize U.S. force levels in Vietnam at about 470,000. The new figure of 470,000 for U.S. force levels (only 25,000 above the latest figure of 445,000 for Program #3) apparently was arrived at during the sessions in Saigon. Before the meetings, Westmoreland had estimated that Program 3 would entail a piaster cost of 47.4 billion. The follow-up papers to the conference all continued to focus upon the piaster costs of various troop deployments with the intent to keep them under the 42 billion Lodge ceiling. The most probable explanation of the genesis of the 470,000 figure is that it represented the best guess at the time of the Saigon meeting of what strength could be supported within the 42 billion limit by making very strong efforts to reduce piaster costs per man.

(2) He recommended a barrier near the DMZ and "across the trails of Laos."

(3) He opposed expansion of the ROLLING THUNDER program, recommending instead a "stabilization" to prevent the unsettling escalations from complicating our political situation (and negotiating posture) and distracting from the main job of pacification.

(4) He said we should "pursue a vigorous pacification program" noting that "progress in pacification more than anything else, will persuade the enemy to negotiate or withdraw." 51/

(5) Finally, he proffered a three-sided attempt to get negotiations going by (a) shifting the pattern of our bombing (or perhaps even stopping it); (b) considering strategies designed to enhance the probability of a split between the VC and Hanoi; and (c) "developing a realistic plan providing a role for the VC in negotiations, postwar life, and the government of the nation."

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The summation was a somber conclusion to a resounding new emphasis in American strategic thought. He believed that there was no great probability of success lurking on any of the routes he proposed, only a "mere possibility." The solution in his eyes, was to gird openly for a longer war.

...and in taking actions immediately which will in 12 to 18 months give clear evidence that the continuing costs and risks to the American people are acceptably limited, that the formula for success has been found, and that the end of the war is merely a matter of time. 52/

The recommendations as a whole showed the influence of the studies which had been done over the summer. The Jason studies on the anti-infiltration barrier and the effects of U.S. bombing in the north were apparently influential in the decisions to move ahead with the barrier but to stabilize ROLLING THUNDER.

The increased emphasis on the pacification effort is apparently a result of the feeling that, since it represented the heart of the problem in Vietnam, and the main force war was only contributory to it, perhaps all that was needed in the main force war was to keep the enemy off the back of the pacification effort in a strategic defensive, rather than to destroy the enemy in a strategic offensive.

In a sense, the memorandum was a clear "no" to MACV, CINCPAC and JCS proposals for expanded bombing and major ground force increases, but it was a negative with a difference. It provided alternatives. From this time on, the judgment of the military as to how the war should be fought and what was needed would be subject to question. New estimates of what was needed in Vietnam would have to be calculated in light of new objectives and new criteria for success, as well as new assumptions about "winning." The warning had rung and unless dramatic outcomes measured in time and political advantage could be promised, additional force increases in the upward direction promised to be sticky indeed.

2. The JCS Reclamas

The JCS reaction to the DPM was predictably rapid -- and violent. The Chiefs expressed their agreement with McNamara's basic evaluation of a long war, but disagreed on his guarded assessment of the military situation, which in their eyes had "improved substantially over the past year." 53/ They were especially concerned that the DPM did not take into account the "adverse impact over time of continued bloody defeats on the morale of VC/ NVA forces and the determination of their political and military leaders." 54/

However, they noted that the 470,000-man figure was "substantially less" than earlier recommendations of COMUSMACV and CINCPAC, and they wished to "reserve judgment" until they reviewed the revised programs being prepared during the CINCPAC planning conference.

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The disagreement was less veiled on the bombing:

c....The Joint Chiefs of Staff do not concur in your recommendation that there should be no increase in level of bombing effort and no modification in areas and targets subject to air attack. They believe our air campaign against NVN to be an integral and indispensable part of our over-all war effort. To be effective, 'the air campaign should be conducted with only those minimum constraints necessary to avoid indiscriminate killing of population.'

Nor did they find the new organizational arrangements for pacification especially appetizing:

d....The Joint Chiefs of Staff informed you earlier that, to achieve early optimum effectiveness, the pacification program should be transferred to COMUSMACV. They adhere to that conclusion. However, if for political reasons a civilian-type organization should be considered mandatory by the President, they would interpose no objection. Nevertheless, they are not sanguine that an effective civilian-type organization can be erected, if at all, except at the expense of costly delays. As to the use of a substantial fraction of the ARVN for pacification purposes, the Joint Chiefs of Staff concur. However, they desire to flag that adoption of this concept will undoubtedly elicit charges of a US takeover of combat operations at increased cost in American casualties.

Finally, they did not share the Secretary's views on how to induce negotiations. They believed the bombing was one "trump card" in the President's hand and should not be surrendered without an equivalent quid pro quo, such as "an end to the NVN aggression in SVN." The essence of disagreement here centered around what each party, Secretary of Defense and JCS felt was adequate return for a "trump," the JCS believing that as the military campaign wore on with "increasing success, the value of the trump would become apparent." 55/

In this regard, the Chiefs seemed to sense that a significant turn in our views about Vietnam had been taken in high policy circles of our government. In final comment, they observed that the conflict had reached a stage at which decisions taken over the next sixty days could determine the outcome of the war, and therefore they wished to provide the President with "their unequivocal views" on two salient aspects of the war situation: the search for peace and military pressures on NVN.

The frequent, broadly-based public offers made by the President to settle the war by peaceful means on a generous basis, which would take from NVN nothing it now has, have been admirable. Certainly, no one -- American or foreigner

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-- except those who are determined not to be convinced, can doubt the sincerity, the generosity, the altruism of US actions and objectives. In the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the time has come when further overt actions and offers on our part are not only nonproductive, they are counterproductive. A logical case can be made that the American people, our Allies, and our enemies alike are increasingly uncertain as to our resolution to pursue the war to a successful conclusion.

They recommended a "sharp knock" on NVN military assets and war supporting facilities rather than the campaign of slowly increasing pressures which was adopted.

Whatever the political merits of the latter course, we deprived ourselves of the military effects of early weight of effort and shock, and gave to the enemy time to adjust to our slow quantitative and qualitative increase of pressure. This is not to say that it is now too late to derive military benefits from more effective and extensive use of our air and naval superiority.

Accordingly, they recommended:

(1) Approval of their ROLLING THUNDER 52 program, which is a step toward meeting the requirement for improved target systems. This program would decrease the Hanoi and Haiphong sanctuary areas, authorize attacks against the steel plant, the Hanoi rail yards, the thermal power plants, selected areas within Haiphong port and other ports, selected locks and dams controlling water LOCs, SAM support facilities within the residual Hanoi and Haiphong sanctuaries, and POL at Haiphong, Ha Gia (Phuc Yen) and Can Thon (Kep).

(2) Use of naval surface forces to interdict North Vietnamese coastal waterborne traffic and appropriate land LOCs and to attack other coastal military targets such as radar and AAA sites.

6. The Joint Chiefs of Staff request that their views as set forth above be provided to the President.

All of these developments persuaded the JCS that they needed a reply with powerful arguments for a program force level far above the 470,000 proposed by the Secretary.

The JCS hesitation in discussing the new 470,000 force level was rooted in an educated estimate of what was coming out of MACV-CINCPAC in the next two weeks. 56/

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3. CINCPAC Planning Conference Results

On 20 October, the CINCPAC Planning Conference was done and the results forwarded to the JCS. 57/

There were few surprises. The concept had been changed to include a heavier emphasis on RD, set forth in a preamble to the concept contained in the 18 June submission. The estimate of Communist forces in South Vietnam was 83,000 combat, 46,000 combat support, with 35,000 guerrillas. Total strength was estimated at 144 infantry battalions, 60 of which were North Vietnamese. The enemy addition to his force was estimated at the monthly rate of 12,500 -- 9,500 NVA and 3,000 VC. A projection of enemy strength for the end of 1966 was 143,000 combat and combat support, while the projections for the end of 1967 was 190,000. The courses of action which seemed to be open to the enemy in October were:

1. To increase the level of operations to include the conduct of simultaneous widely separated operations, utilizing forces of up to division size.
2. To maintain the current level of operations which would include the conduct of simultaneous widely separated multi-battalion operations.
3. To threaten large-scale attacks in the DMZ in order to divert large numbers of forces into the hinterland, thus reducing forces available in populated areas to accomplish Revolutionary Development.
4. To decrease the level of operations to include reverting to guerrilla warfare.

CINCPAC's requirements and the services capabilities to provide them were listed as follows:

	Requirements <u>Maneuver Bns, US</u>	Capabilities <u>Man.Bns. Pers.</u>
End CY 66	82	79 384,361
End CY 67	94	91 493,969
End CY 68	94	94 519,310
End CY 69	94	94 520,020
Plus Requirements with Availability Rates Unknown		555,741

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Requirements for PACOM other than Vietnam would total 23 maneuver battalions and 271,666 personnel. The PACOM conference results clearly amplified what General Westmoreland had echoed over a month earlier as the manpower problem in Vietnam worsened. NVA infiltration in the DMZ area, the strategy of hitting the enemy in his sanctuaries and the additional manpower requirements of the pacification program punctuated the critical conclusion of the PACOM conference; they could not justify a reduction in requirements submitted. In the meantime, information which the Secretary of Defense had requested on alternative force structures possible under piaster ceilings of 42, 44, and 46 billion, had been forwarded to the JCS. 58/ The three packages did not cost out at the exact ceilings, because of the requirement for balanced forces, but the alternatives were as follows:

	CY 67 Piaster Cost (Billions)	Total Strength Man.Bns. Pers.	End '67 Strength Man.Bns. Pers.
MACV Requirement	46.21	94 555,741	94 493,969
Plan A	45.07	88 499,749	88 467,850
Plan B	44.54	84 481,705	84 457,803
Plan C	42.03	73 443,487	73 421,574

4. Manila

Before the formal JCS ratification of the CINCPAC-COMUSMACV requirements was forwarded, one other important contact between the major decision-makers on Program 4 occurred. This was at Manila in late October. What views were exchanged between the President and General Westmoreland remain a mystery, but the General twice sought out Mr. John McNaughton, Assistant Secretary of Defense, ISA, and laid out his thinking on force levels, ROLLING THUNDER, the barrier, and Revolutionary Development. 59/

The American commander was thinking about an end CY 67 strength of about 480,000, fleshed-out to 500,000 by the end of CY 68. Barring surprises, he would plan to hold it there. This was a substantial drop from his original request through CINCPAC, but apparently he had not yet resigned himself to McNamara's figure of 470,000. He believed that those levels were what "the U.S. [could] sustain over time without mobilization and without calling up reserves and what the Vietnamese economy [could] bear." He said the 480,000-500,000 man level would be enough "even if infiltration went on at a high level," but he waffled by adding he was not sure if he had enough troops to take on the Delta.

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Westmoreland remained apprehensive about the absence of a sizeable reserve located within quick reaction distance in the Pacific, asking McNaughton to stress to the Secretary that he badly needed such a "Corps Contingency Force." He reiterated his desire for a strategy devoted to building "a balanced, powerful force that we can sustain indefinitely," a posture that would be of critical importance in communicating our resolve to the North. 60/

On the bombing, Westmoreland favored reducing restrictions on targets ("more flexibility"), but he could not make a good case for the effects an expanded RT program would have on his operations. McNaughton cited a CIA study showing that even with enlarged strikes, the enemy could supply several times the amount of material required to support a much increased level of combat in the South. Pressed, Westmoreland observed that "I'm not responsible for the bombing program. Admiral Sharp is. So I haven't spent much time on it. But I asked a couple of my best officers to look into it and they came up with the recommendations I gave you." 61/

The barrier idea appeared to be evolving as a substitute for some ROLLING THUNDER activity -- and Westmoreland "shuddered" at this. Some of his earlier resistance, founded on a belief that MACV resources in SVN would be drawn down to man the barrier trace, seemed to have softened. In a way, he seemed to sense that the NVA was providing the justification for more U.S. troops in the area in much more eloquent fashion than he ever could -- the threats in I CTZ, to Conthien and Khe Sanh, embryonic as they were, would provide impulse for additional troops well beyond the artificial program dates established.

Revolutionary Development figured heavily in his plans, but he predicted that it would be July 1967 before the new orientation of ARVN to pacification would be in full effect. (He cited as a rough figure 75% ARVN and 25% of US devoted to RD.)

Westmoreland did not outline the same picture of urgency as had the JCS memoranda. (The fact he was really not set on some figures may suggest that he (and his staff) were looking at "ballpark" figures and had not really analyzed the new outputs they would produce.) Explaining why at that time he soft-pedalled the threat developing in the border region sanctuaries and I CTZ is difficult. He certainly had been concerned earlier, even telling Lodge that the new enemy actions possibly made a re-evaluation of basic strategy necessary. Possibly his formal warnings (such as his 20 September message to Sharp) were exaggerated, or the threat had diminished. Events were to prove neither was so. Probably he missed an excellent opportunity to put his arguments for more troops before the President, and then felt it best to fight the battle for more troops "through channels," -- the CINCPAC-JCS funnel.

Nevertheless, his views surely had an important bearing on Mr. McNamara's estimates in early November. The senior field commander was

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saying he could get along with small force increases. Of course, he added that such a force level would degrade his ability to meet time deadlines ("it would be a longer war") but, as the 14 October DPM clearly shows, the Secretary was thinking along different lines -- if there was to be no quick, "successful" end to the war, why invest greater resources and run greater political risks to get there -- still late.

The President returned from his highly publicized swing to Manila and the Far East to find some press rumblings about the services exceeding their budgeted FY 1967 strengths, and some speculation that the bombing would increase; there had always been some change after such a trip. 62/ Richard Nixon had fired a final broadside in a belated attempt to heat up the war issue for the election berating the President for making a trip which "accomplished nothing" and which "resigned America and the free Asian nations to a war which could last five years and cost more casualties than Korea." 63/ These events notwithstanding, even though President Johnson's administration was facing its first extensive national test at the polls early in November, the Vietnam war was not a central public issue. Basic uncertainty about how the electorate really felt about the war, combined with the traditional wariness of old-line politicians in bucking a "patriotic issue" had dampened some of the heat of the Vietnam war as an issue. The only major race which focused on the war occurred in Oregon, where Robert Duncan, an outspoken advocate of President Johnson's VN policies, was defeated by what he described as "voter dissatisfaction with the war." 64/

The war itself seemed to cooperate with the Administration's efforts to low-key the issue. Our forces were doing well in Operation HASTINGS near the Cambodian border where, in the words of one commander, we "had blunted the spearhead of the enemy winter offensive." 65/

The superficial quiet of an off-year election was in no way reflected by the President's private activity upon his return from Manila. It was budget time and he was wrestling with a war budget, featuring a whopping supplemental of \$9.1 billion for Vietnam prior to the beginning of FY 68. Working out of the Texas ranch, the President generated a constant stream of travelers from official Washington as he sought information, counsel, and exposure. Secretary McNamara and General Wheeler made two trips to the Pedernales, visiting the President on Friday and Saturday, 4 and 5 November, and later on Friday, the 11th. 66/

The visits coincided with the decision branch-points in the Program 4 development, for they occurred in sequence with significant new inputs of information and discussions, and in each case resulted in an important decision or public announcement.

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5. JCS Recommendations

On 4 November, the JCS forwarded to the Secretary of Defense the results of the October PACOM Planning Conference with their "refinements" added. The document, labeled JCSM 702-66, "Deployment of Forces to Meet CY Requirements," held few surprises. The memorandum addressed the crux of disagreement:

....As in past concepts, it goes beyond certain restraints that have been placed on US operating forces to date, such as those on the air campaign in North Vietnam, on cross border operations, on certain special operations, and on ground actions in the southern half of the demilitarized zone. Further, this concept should be carried out in its entirety, if achievement of US objectives is to be accomplished in the shortest time and at the least cost in men and materiel. The concept describes preparation for operations that have not as yet been authorized, such as mining ports, naval quarantine, spoiling attacks and raids against the enemy in Cambodia and Laos, and certain special operations. Such action will support intensified and accelerated revolutionary development and nation building programs. Since the force requirements are based on this concept in its entirety, continued restraints and the absence of authorization for recommended operations could generate significantly different requirements for forces and timing. 67/

In a sense, it embraced all of the right arguments (for "intensified and accelerated revolutionary development and programs" and "shortest time at the least cost," an overdetermined test) but unfortunately for all the wrong reasons. McNamara and Johnson were not politically and militarily enchanted with a costly major force increase at that time, nor with cross border and air operations which ran grave political risks. The specter of early mobilization, while briefly raised by the JCS, was temporarily erased by an ambiguous statement acknowledging that "capability to meet these requirements cannot be developed without significant modification to the criteria mentioned earlier: draw down latitude, rotation policy, no call-up of reserves, maintenance of CONUS training base. Nevertheless, the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that, while the program is less than that desired, it will provide for the effective execution of the concept of operations set forth." 68/

Finally, the Chiefs expressed their views about the plaster ceiling which Lodge and members of the Mission Council had found so attractive.

....They consider that the requirement to reduce plaster expenditures in the interest of combating inflation in South Vietnam is important; however, this factor cannot be overriding in determining force levels because enemy actions could

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require US force levels substantially above those recommended. They note especially that the equation and factors used to price out piaster costs permit only rough approximations and have not been tested over a length of time. They also note that the three force-level packages do not cost out precisely at 42.0, 44.0, and 46.0 billion piasters, respectively, since the operational requirement for balanced forces prevented that degree of precision...." 69/

6. Decision on Program #4

With the Chiefs' views in hand the Secretary of Defense met with the President on 4 November, and again at the ranch on Saturday, the 5th. By late Saturday morning, the basic ground force deployment decision had been made. Mr. McNamara announced in an open-air press conference that increases in Vietnam would be forthcoming "but at a substantially lower rate and that draft calls for the next four months would be significantly smaller." 70/ He also quoted a "new study" based upon interrogations of NVA/VC captives and defectors which showed that extensive allied air-ground operations impaired morale, exposed the sanctuaries, reduced food supplies and brought the enemy death figure to over 1,000 per week. He did not comment on how he thought the war effort was going or what meaning he saw in the new report.

The elections were held on Tuesday, 8 November, with mixed results for the Administration. It was difficult to tie specific results, or even the general trend to the war issue. Even when there was some relationship, "basic dissatisfaction" was usually the explanation, a neutral reply which failed to explain whether the respondents wanted to hasten the end by escalation of our military efforts, by withdrawal, or what. The fact that off-year elections are traditionally damaging to the party in power further blurred the issue. In the end, 47 House seats and 8 Governorships had been gained by the Republicans and, in light of even those "minor" gains, the 1968 Presidential race, potentially one debating our war policies, promised to be a more interesting and heated campaign than anyone had anticipated two years before.

E. Anti-Climaxes

1. Program Four is Announced

McNamara and General Wheeler returned to the ranch on Friday, the 10th, to participate in a joint news conference. In the meantime, Dr. Enthoven had given the following memorandum to the Secretary of Defense:

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Enclosed for your signature is a memorandum to the JCS replying to their November 4 memorandum submitting recommended deployments to Southeast Asia for FY 67-68. Their recommended program and my proposed alternative (Program #4) are compared below with the CINCPAC P46 billion force. The major elements of the OSD and JCS forces are compared in greater detail on the attached table:

	(Thousands of Personnel in SVN)				
	<u>Dec 66</u>	<u>Jun 67</u>	<u>Dec 67</u>	<u>Jun 68</u>	<u>Total</u>
JCS Rec.	395	456	504	522	564
CINCPAC P.46 Bil.	392	448	476	484	508
Program #4	391	440	463	469	469

In general my proposal follows the CINCPAC 46 billion piaster alternative force. The JCS recommended force ignores piasters and the JCS do not endorse the P46 billion force. My alternative adds five maneuver battalions (3 armored cavalry and 2 infantry) compared to 6 maneuver battalions (3 armored cavalry and 2 infantry and 2 airborne) in the CINCPAC P46 billion force. Both add 10 artillery battalions. The CINCPAC force adds 5 tactical air squadrons, Program #4 cuts the current program by 1 squadron (the F-100 squadron to deploy in March to replace the E-5 squadron to be converted to the VNAF).

My proposed force provides about 25,000 fewer Army support personnel with only 1 fewer maneuver battalion than in the P46 billion force. The JCS will most likely claim that the recommended force is not balanced. However, our forces are operating effectively at present with an even leaner mix of support personnel. Program #4 consists of about 6 1/3 Army division equivalents. If the U.S. ARVN advisors and 2 separate armored cavalry regiments are excluded, the division slice is about 48,000. While U.S. forces are also providing some support for 3rd country troops and to an extent to the ARVN, this division slice appears adequate.

The JCS state their recommendation is exclusive of any personnel needed by Task Force 728. In the absence of data as to the TF 728 requirements, I cannot say that all of its needs are met by my recommended force. However, the air cavalry, armored cavalry, and related units were included in my force primarily because of their usefulness for a barrier operation. Furthermore, the inflationary situation

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in SVN appears so critical in CY 1967 that I cannot recommend any additions to Program #4, at least until CY 1968.

A detailed troop list has been prepared to define precisely Program #4. As soon as it can be reproduced, it will be provided to you for transmission to the JCS. This should be by close of business tomorrow, November 10.

One can speculate that the two officials carried back detailed plans and costs associated with the earlier broad force decision made the preceding week-end.

It appears they were quite ready to talk about Vietnam. General Wheeler read a short prepared statement explaining that after his recent trip he was able to report to the President that "the war in my judgment continues in a very favorable fashion. General Westmoreland retains the initiative and in every operation to date has managed to defeat the enemy." Beyond this, questions about Vietnam were little more than rehash of the previous week's session. 72/

On 11 November, the Secretary of Defense informed the JCS formally that he had approved a new deployment program for MACV with an end strength of 470,000 by June of 1968.

I have reviewed your recommendations in JCSM-702-66, November 4, 1966, and the related military and economic effects of your recommended deployments. The attached table summarizes your plan and the forces which I am approving for planning purposes.

As you know, a reasonably stable economy in South Vietnam is essential to unite the population behind the Government of Vietnam -- indeed to avoid disintegration of the SVN society. Runaway inflation can undo what our military operations accomplish. For this reason, we have already taken actions to reduce military and contractor piaster spending towards the minimum level which can be accomplished without serious impact on military operations. Nevertheless, the price stability achieved last summer may be giving way to a new round of severe inflation. More must be done.

Ambassador Lodge has asked that U.S. military spending be held to P42 billion in CY 1967. The Ambassador proposed program of tightly constrained U.S. and GVN civilian and military spending will not bring complete stability to SVN; there would still be, at best, a 10 billion piaster inflationary gap. It would, however, probably hold price rises in CY 1967 to 10%-25% as opposed to 75%-90% in FY 1966. The

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burden of inflation falls most heavily on just those Vietnamese -- the ARVN and GVN civil servants -- upon whose efficient performance our success most heavily depends. Unless we rigidly control inflation, the Vietnamese Army desertion rate will increase further and effectiveness will decline, thus at least partially cancelling the effects of increased U.S. deployments. Further, government employees will leave their jobs and civil strife will occur, seriously hindering both the military and the pacification efforts and possibly even collapsing the GVN.

For these reasons we must fit our deployments to the capacity of the Vietnamese economy to bear them without undue inflation. As your memorandum indicates, the program you recommend would cost over P46 billion in CY 1967 at current prices. I believe implementation of a program of this size would be self-defeating. The plan I am approving at this time for budgetary planning appear to me to be the maximum consistent with my reasonable hope of economic stability. If contingencies arise during the year, we can re-examine the plan accordingly. I plan to provide sufficient combat-ready forces in the U.S. to meet reasonable contingencies.

A troop list containing each unit in Program #4 is attached. You may wish to suggest changes in the unit mix, if there are units that have been deleted that have a higher priority than those I have approved. I would like to have these recommendations by December 1, 1966. I also would like your proposals as to ways in which approved units can be accelerated so as to provide maximum combat capability as early as possible in CY 1967.

SOUTHEAST ASIA DEPLOYMENT PROGRAM #4

PLAN SUMMARY 73/

	<u>Jun 67</u>		<u>Dec 67</u>		<u>Jun 68</u>	
	<u>JCS</u>	<u>OSD</u>	<u>JCS</u>	<u>OSD</u>	<u>JCS</u>	<u>OSD</u>
	<u>Plan</u>	<u>Plan</u>	<u>Plan</u>	<u>Plan</u>	<u>Plan</u>	<u>Plan</u>
1. Personnel-SVN (000)						
Army	292.6	286.0	334.8	307.9	350.5	313.9
USMC	70.6	70.6	70.6	70.6	70.6	70.6
Air Force	60.6	55.3	63.3	55.4	65.3	55.4
Navy	32.1	27.6	35.3	29.4	35.8	29.4
	<u>455.9</u>	<u>439.5</u>	<u>504.0</u>	<u>463.3</u>	<u>522.2</u>	<u>469.3</u>
2. Maneuver Battalions-SVN						
Army	62	62	74	67	74	67
USMC	20	20	20	20	20	20
	<u>82</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>87</u>

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He had disapproved the force recommendations of JCSM 702-66, but had not commented on the "new" concept and objectives -- an omission which left an excellent opening for the next round of force requirements discussions. The 11 November memorandum explained the decision to hold the force levels at 470,000 almost solely in terms of piaster costs and the dangers of inflation.

2. Program Four is Explained

A fuller explanation of the reasoning behind the Program Four decisions was given by the Secretary of Defense in his 17 November Draft Memorandum for the President. 74/

* * * * *

I have reviewed the additional funding and forces required to support our planned deployments and operations in Southeast Asia. I recommend a supplemental appropriation request totaling \$12.4 billion in Total Obligational Authority be submitted to Congress in January for the following purposes:

	FY67 TOA (\$ Billions)
I. Direct Support of SEA Operations	
a. Land forces	\$5.4
b. Tactical air and B-52 forces	4.3
c. Naval forces	.3
d. Logistic support	1.0
II. Rotational Base and Strategic Reserve	
a. Land forces	.5
b. Air forces	.3
c. Naval forces	.03
d. Defense Agencies	.1
III. Non-Sea b/	.6
Total	\$12.4 a/

- a/ These costs are subject to revision in the budget review.
Construction costs are still under review and are excluded.
- b/ Includes pay raise and home owners assistance.

Forces totaling 469,000 be approved, for planning and budgeting purposes, for deployment to SVN by June 30, 1968.

Current U.S. military forces be augmented by 346,134 to total end FY68 strength of 3,476,400 personnel to support these deployments to Southeast Asia. Deployment, force augmentation, and financial summaries follow. The December 1965 plan on which the FY67 Budget was based is shown for comparison.

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SUMMARY DEPLOYMENTS TO SEA

	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>
	<u>June</u>	<u>Jun</u> <u>Dec</u>	<u>Jun</u> <u>Dec</u>	<u>June</u>
<u>Personnel - SVN (000)</u>				
Dec Plan - Total	60	278 386	394 -	-
SecDef Rec - Army	27	160 244	286 308	314
Marines	18	54 69	71 71	71
Air Force	11	36 54	55 55	55
Navy	4	17 25	28 29	29
TOTAL	60	267 392	440 463	469
JCS Rec - Army		244	292 335	350
Marines		69	71 71	71
Air Force		57	61 63	65
Navy		25	32 35	36
TOTAL		395	456 504	522
<u>Personnel - WESTPAC (000)</u>				
Dec Plan	242	484 588	618 -	-
SecDef Rec	242	474 624	677 701	707
JCS Rec		634	703 756	774
<u>Maneuver Bns</u>				
Dec Plan	9	48 77	77 -	-
SecDef Rec	9	51 $\frac{2}{3}$ 79	82 87	87
JCS Rec		79	82 94	94
<u>Artillery Bns</u>				
Dec Plan	3	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ 47	47 -	-
SecDef Rec	3	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ 47 $\frac{2}{3}$	57 $\frac{2}{3}$ 61 $\frac{2}{3}$	63 $\frac{2}{3}$
JCS Rec		47 $\frac{2}{3}$	57 $\frac{2}{3}$ 63 $\frac{2}{3}$	69 $\frac{2}{3}$
<u>Engineer Bns</u>				
Dec Plan	6 $\frac{1}{3}$	37 47 $\frac{1}{3}$	47 $\frac{1}{3}$ -	-
Sec Def Rec	6 $\frac{1}{3}$	30 $\frac{2}{3}$ 44	56 56	56
JCS Rec		44	59 60	60
<u>Fighter-Attack a/c (U.S)</u>				
Dec Plan	599	801 894	929 -	-
SecDef Rec	599	849 1046	989 998	983
JCS Rec		1046	1061 1106	1127
<u>Attack Sorties (000)</u>				
Dec Plan	10	21 26	26 -	-
SecDef Rec	10	24 28	28 28	28
JCS Rec		28	30 32	34
<u>Air Ordnance (000 Tons)</u>				
Dec Plan	11	52 68	73 -	-
SecDef Rec	11	35 65	65 65	65
JCS Rec		70	89 93	96
<u>Other Fixed Wing a/c</u>				
Dec Plan	397	891 963	975 -	-
SecDef Rec	397	826 1134	1293 1376	1376
JCS Rec		1131	1385 1494	1521

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I have not denied any funding request necessary to conduct the war and which can be effectively utilized during the current fiscal year. The FY67 supplemental and FY68 budgets have been designed to meet war needs through the FY68 funding leadtime. If the tempo of the conflict increases beyond the level now planned, additional funds will be required. The recommended Southeast Asia deployments and supporting supplemental budget requests are in accord with the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with the exceptions noted later.

To date, we have met virtually all of COMUSMACV's requirements for maneuver battalions at or near the time he requested them, without recall of the Reserves or withdrawals of units deployed to Europe or other key overseas areas. Moreover, we still have the capability to deploy additional active forces as well as a large ready force wherever they may be needed.

The decision to retain the organized reserve as a reserve led to a requirement to organize certain units that were not available in the CONUS active forces. With only a few exceptions, we have deployed them as required and on a schedule quite close to what we could have expected under a reserve mobilization. Many of the units that could not be provided as required (e.g., aviation units) were not available in the reserve structure either. The table below compares the current plan with the deployment schedule that the JCS last March estimated could be met if the reserve forces had been called to active duty.

	1966				1967	
	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun
<u>Strength in SVN (000)</u>						
SecDef Rec	231	267	313	392	424	440
With Reserves <u>a/</u>	227	284	359	411	421	426
<u>Maneuver Bns in SVN</u>						
SecDef Rec	46	52	64	79	82	82
With Reserves <u>a/</u>	46	52	67	76	79	79

a/ Case I, CINCPAC Capabilities Conference, 12 February 1966.

U.S. forces in SEA have performed exceedingly well. In the summer of 1965 NVA forces threatened to destroy the SVN armed forces and achieve a military victory. The introduction of U.S. forces almost completely neutralized the VC/NVA large units. He has lost 114,000 troops in the last year, including invaluable cadre. The B-52 and tactical air effort has hurt enemy morale, produced casualties, and disrupted his operations and logistics operations. It is our success to date that permits the analysis in the next section of the incremental value of still more deployments.

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The incremental annual cost of the conflict amounted to \$9.4 billion in FY66 and is estimated at \$19.7 billion for FY67. If in FY68 the forces and rates of operations stabilized at the levels shown in this paper, the cost will be about \$24 billion, calculated as follows:

	<u>(\$ Billions)</u>
Military Personnel	\$ 5.5
Operations and Maintenance	6.7
Ammunition Consumption	4.5
Aircraft & Helicopter Attrition	1.4
Other Procurement	4.3
Free World Force Support	1.5
Construction	.2
	<u>\$24.1</u>

These data exclude economic aid to Vietnam and other SE Asia nations that might be attributed to the conflict. Economic aid for SVN currently is running at about \$.7 billion per year.

I. MILITARY STRATEGY IN VIETNAM

The war in Vietnam has two highly interdependent parts: (1) the "regular" war against the main force VC/NVA battalions and regiments, and the interdiction of their men and supplies flowing down from North Vietnam, and (2) the "Pacification" or revolutionary development war to neutralize the local VC guerrillas and gain the permanent support of the SVN population.

The infiltrated men and supplies serve to bolster the regular units whose function is to support the local VC guerrillas and infrastructure by defeating the GVN forces in the area and generally exposing the GVN's inability to protect the rural populace. The local guerrillas and infrastructure maintain a constant VC presence in their area and support the offensive efforts of the regular units by providing intelligence, terrain guidance, supplies, and recruits. In addition, the guerrillas conduct many of the thousands of incidents of terror, harassment, and sabotage reported each month. The principal task of U.S. military forces in SVN must be to eliminate the offensive capability of the regular units in order to allow the GVN to counter the guerrilla forces and extend permanent control over areas from which regular units have been cleared.

We now face a choice of two approaches to the threat of the regular VC/NVA forces. The first approach would be to continue in 1967 to increase friendly forces as rapidly as possible, and without limit, and employ them primarily in large-scale "seek out and destroy" operations to destroy the main force VC/NVA units.

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This approach appears to have some distinct disadvantages. First, we are finding very strongly diminishing marginal returns in the destruction of VC/NVA forces. If our estimates of enemy losses (killed, captured and defected) are correct, VC/NVA losses increased by only 115 per week - (less than 15%) during a period in which we increased friendly strength by 160,000 including 140,000 U.S. military personnel and 42 U.S. and Third Country maneuver battalions. At this rate, an additional 100,000 friendly personnel deployed would increase VC/NVA losses by some 70 per week. Second, expanding U.S. deployments have contributed to a very serious inflation in South Vietnam. Prices increased 75-90% in FY66. An extra 100,000 U.S. forces would add at least P9 billion to our piaster expenditures, doubling the 1967 inflationary gap in SVN. Third, the high and increasing cost of the war to the United States is likely to encourage the Communists to doubt our staying power and to try to "wait us out."

The second approach is to follow a similarly aggressive strategy of "seek out and destroy," but to build friendly forces only to that level required to neutralize the large enemy units and prevent them from interfering with the pacification program. It is essential to this approach that such a level be consistent with a stable economy in SVN, and consistent with a military posture that the United States credibly would maintain indefinitely, thus making a Communist attempt to "wait us out" less attractive.

I believe that this level is about 470,000 U.S. and 52,000 Free World personnel and less than half of the ARVN.* The remainder of the ARVN, plus a portion of the U.S. force, would give priority to improving the pacification effort. The enemy regular units would cease to perform what I believe to be their primary function of diverting our effort to give security to the population. This, plus the effects of a successful interdiction campaign to cut off their other support, would effectively neutralize them, possibly at the cost of far fewer casualties to both sides than the first approach would allow.

I believe it is time to adopt the second approach for three reasons: (1) if MACV estimates of enemy strength are correct, we have not been able to attrite the enemy forces fast enough to break their morale and more U.S. forces are unlikely to do so in the foreseeable future; (2) we cannot deploy more than about 470,000 personnel by the end of 1967 without a high

*Admiral Sharp has recommended a 12/31/67 U.S. strength of 570,000. However, I believe both he and General Westmoreland recognize that the danger of inflation will probably force a 6/30/68 deployment limit of about 470,000.

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probability of generating a self-defeating runaway inflation in SVN and (3) an endless escalation of U.S. deployments is not likely to be acceptable in the U.S. or to induce the enemy to believe that the U.S. is prepared to stay as long as is required to produce a secure non-communist SVN. Obviously a greatly improved pacification campaign must be waged to take advantage of the protection offered by the major friendly forces. Alternatively, if enemy strength is greatly overstated and our "seek out and destroy" operations have been more effective than our strength and loss estimates would imply - a possibility discussed below - more than 470,000 U.S. personnel should not be required to neutralize the VC/NVA main force.

Attriting Enemy Forces. All of our estimates of enemy strength and variations in it contain very great uncertainties. Thus, any conclusions drawn from them must be considered to be highly tentative and conjectural. Nevertheless, the data suggest that we have no prospects of attriting the enemy force at a rate equal to or greater than his capability to infiltrate and recruit, and this will be true at either the 470,000 U.S. personnel level or 570,000. The table on the following page shows our estimates of the average enemy loss rate per month since April 1965. By 4th quarter 1965, estimated military losses (killed, captured, military defectors) reached 2215 per week. The weekly average for CY66 has remained about the same, although enemy losses increased to 2330 per week in the 3rd quarter and to 2930 in October.

Enemy losses from wounds are included above based on the U.S. Intelligence Board estimate that there are 1.5 enemy wounded for each one killed, with one-third of the wounded put out of action, resulting in a loss of .5 for each VC/NVA recorded killed, or 520 additional average losses per week. (MACV estimates .28 additional losses for each VC/NVA killed, or an average loss of 300 per week.) Also included are defectors not turning themselves into the GVN centers, based on the Board estimate that there is one unrecorded military deserter for each military defector, resulting in another 235 average losses per week.

The enemy loss rate was apparently not affected significantly by the greatly increased friendly activity during 1966, which included: 44% increase in battalion days of operation; 25% increase in battalion sized

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VC/NVA LOSSES
(Weekly Average)

	1965			1966				Last 4
	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	Oct	Qtrs
	Qtr	Qtr	Qtr	Qtr	Qtr	Qtr		Plus Oc
Estimated Losses								
Killed a/	705	1165	1555	1505	1370	1805	1915	1585
Captured	100	145	135	130	145	170	545	175
Mil Defectors b/	345	435	525	580	430	355	470	470
Total Est Losses	1150	1745	2215	2215	1945	2330	2930	2230
Average Friendly Strengths (000)	672	759	871	930	982	1037	1113	967
Total Losses/1000 Friendly/Week	1.7	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.0	2.2	2.6	2.3

a/ 1.5 times recorded "body count."

b/ 2 times recorded military defectors.

operations contacting the enemy; and 28% increase in small unit actions accompanied by a 12% increase in contacts. Moreover, armed helicopter sorties doubled from 14,000 to 29,000 per month and attack sorties in SVN rose from 12,800 to 14,000 per month.

The failure of enemy losses to increase during the first half of 1966 was primarily due to the January Vietnamese New Year lull, the political turmoil during the Spring, the apparent decrease in ARVN efficiency, and an increasing enemy reluctance to fight large battles.

Despite improvements during the past four months, it is impossible to predict the point at which we can expect to attrite enemy forces at the rate he introduces new ones. As the table above indicates, an average enemy total loss rate of 2230 per week has prevailed for the past 13 months, compared to the calculated enemy personnel input rate of 2915 per week for the same period. The input rate is that required to provide the average increase of 685 per week reflected in the VC/NVA order of battle strength figures estimated by MACV, it is not estimated independently. Assuming that the weekly infiltration rate from NVN for the past 13 months averaged 1075 as estimated (MACV indicates that the 1966 figure may be as high as 1638 per week), VC recruitment (input minus infiltration) must have been about 1840 per week. This recruitment rate lies well within the current U.S. Intelligence Board estimate that the VC can recruit and train 1635 to 2335 men per week, and can replace current losses solely from within South Vietnam if necessary. But it lies far above the current MACV recruitment estimate of 815 VC personnel per week.

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As indicated in the VC/NVA losses table, enemy losses increased by 115 per week during a period in which friendly strength increased by 166,000; an increase of about 70 losses per 100,000 of friendly strength. There are far too many uncertain variables in the situation to permit a simple extrapolation of these results to the effect of introduction of the next 100,000, or a subsequent 100,000 troops. However, we have no evidence that more troops than the 470,000 I am recommending would substantially change the situation. For example, if it were assumed that new forces would produce enemy losses at a rate equal to the average of all forces deployed by the end of October 1966, each deployment of 100,000 additional friendly troops would produce only 230 more total enemy losses per week compared to the 2915 current enemy input rate. A U.S. force of 470,000 would result in enemy losses of 2450 per week; an extra 100,000 U.S. personnel would increase average weekly enemy losses to about 2680, still less than the 3500 per week that the enemy is supposed to be able to infiltrate/recruit. Moreover, it is possible that our attrition estimates substantially overstate actual VC/NVA losses. For example, the VC/NVA apparently lose only about one-sixth as many weapons as people, suggesting the possibility that many of the killed are unarmed porters or bystanders.

VC/NVA PERSONNEL INPUT
(Weekly Average)

	<u>1965</u>			<u>1966</u>				
	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>Oct.</u>	<u>Last 4</u>
	<u>Qtr</u>	<u>Qtr</u>	<u>Qtr</u>	<u>Qtr</u>	<u>Qtr</u>	<u>Qtr</u>		<u>Qtrs</u>
								<u>Plus Oct</u>
MACV Estimate of Strength								
(End of Qtr - 000) <u>a/</u>	231.5	238.3	250.3	265.6	277.4	282.0	277.0	
Net Change per wk. <u>b/</u>		520	920	1175	905	355	-1130.0	685
Estimated Losses		1745	2215	2215	1945	2330	2930	2230
Required Gross Personnel								
Input		2265	3135	3390	2850	2685	1800	2915
Less MACV Accepted								
NVA Infiltration		315	945	1760	1525	430	0d/	1075
Calculated Residual VC								
Recruitment <u>c/</u>		1950	2190	1630	1325	2255	1800	1840

- a/ Sources: MACV submission of August 15, 1966 and Table 101 OSD SEA Statistical Summary.
b/ Net quarterly gain divided by 13.
c/ No figures reported. Figures shown equal gross input minus NVA infiltration.
d/ MACV confirmation of infiltration figures normally lags several weeks behind actual entry of personnel.

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In summary, despite the wide variations in estimates of infiltration, recruitment and losses, the data indicate that current enemy recruitment/infiltration rates and tactics have more than offset the increased friendly deployments, enabling the enemy to increase his forces in the past and in the foreseeable future. If we assume that the estimates of enemy strength are accurate, the ratio of total friendly to total enemy strength has only increased from 3.5 to 4.0 to 1 since the end of 1965. Under these circumstances, it does not appear that we have the favorable leverage required to achieve decisive attrition by introducing more forces. It may be possible to reduce enemy strength substantially through improved tactics or other means such as an effective amnesty/defection program or effective pacification to dry up VC sources of recruitment, but further large increases in U.S. forces do not appear to be the answer.

Enemy Offensive Capability. These estimates of enemy strength, losses and replacement rates raise some important questions. They assume that the enemy has all of the battalions carried in the MACV Enemy Order of Battle (OB), and that most of these battalions have retained their offensive capability. Neither assumption can be supported by available data.

In the last 7 months (February-August) for which data are available, friendly forces averaged 35 contacts per month with VC/NVA battalions. If each contact represented a different battalion, the contact rate would equal 20% of the average reported total enemy VC/NVA battalions; at best, we would contact each battalion one in 5 months. However, analyzing the August OB of 175 battalions, only 112 battalions had been positively identified as contacted during the 7 month period and 59 battalions were unrecorded as to last contact. (The remaining battalions were contacted prior to period.) Other battalions in addition to the 112 positively identified were undoubtedly active during the period. Nevertheless, it appears that the actual existence, or ability to operate, of some of the 59 units with no records of contact with friendly forces is open to question. Moreover, enemy activity rates reflected in the number of battalion contacts initiated by themselves or by us do not show increases that we might expect as the result of the 49 battalion increase reflected in the Order of Battle reports.

CONTACTS WITH VC/NVA BATTALIONS

	1966							AVG.
	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	
VC/NVA Initiated Contacts	18	19	8	15	14	14	18	15
Total Contacts	46	43	20	22	35	39	34	35
Estimated Total Battalions in Force	126	145	152	157	174	175	175	158

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Furthermore, the enemy is undertaking fewer large scale offensive operations in recent months and concentrating his small scale attacks, ambushes, and harassments against easier targets (troops in the field and isolated military posts). This indicates a possible regression to activities characteristic of earlier stages of guerrilla warfare, is inconsistent with large numbers of battalions and even divisions, and may reflect an increasing inability to conduct large scale operations without incurring unacceptably high casualties. The VC/NVA have not won a significant large scale military victory in several months. There is every reason to be on guard, as General Westmoreland is, but there is no reason to believe that we need to increase our planned deployment of large units to prevent such victories in the future.

The Interdiction Campaign. The VC force has reportedly increased by 20 battalions (from 74 to 94) since last December, NVA by 43 (from 43 to 86) during the same period. The NVA represented only 25,600 of 249,700 (10%) last December, increasing to 45,600 of 277,000 (16% in October. The weekly rate of accepted infiltration has been about 1115 in 1966 compared to 945 in 4th quarter 1965 and 510 for all of 1965. MACV has recently reported that infiltration may have been as high as 1630 per week in 1966. The NVA units, equipped almost exclusively with Chinese and Russian weapons, have a much greater requirement for infiltrated ammunition and supplies, thus increasing their dependence on the logistics network flowing from NVN to SVN.

Air Interdiction. The use of air power to interdict enemy infiltration and supply has been very great by any standard. Attack sorties in Laos and NVN have risen from 4750 per month at the end of last year to 9100 in 1st quarter of this year and to 10,600 and 12,900 in subsequent quarters. The interdiction campaign has absorbed most of the increase in deployed attack-capable aircraft in the past years.

A substantial air interdiction campaign is clearly necessary and worthwhile. In addition to putting a ceiling on the size of the force that can be supported, it yields three significant military effects. First, it effectively harasses and delays truck movements down through the southern panhandles of NVN and Laos, though it has no effect on troops infiltrating on foot over trails that are virtually invisible from the air. Our experience shows that daytime armed reconnaissance above some minimum sortie rate makes it prohibitively expensive to the enemy to attempt daylight movement of vehicles, and so forces him to night movement. Second, destruction of bridges and cratering of roads forces the enemy to deploy repair crews, equipment, and porters to repair or bypass the damage. Third, attacks on vehicles, parks, and rest camps destroy some vehicles with their cargoes and inflict casualties. Moreover, our bombing campaign may produce a beneficial effect on U.S. and SVN morale by making NVN pay a price for its aggression and by showing that we are doing what we can to interdict the enemy. But at the scale we are now operating, I believe our bombing is yielding very small marginal returns, not worth the cost in pilot lives and aircraft.

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II. CONSOLIDATION AND EXTENSION OF GVN CONTROL

Pacification. Based on available reports of questionable validity, the table on the following page indicates the various degrees of GVN and VC/NVA population and hamlet control. In the 14 months between July 31, 1965 and September 30, 1966, the GVN reportedly gained control of an additional 1,500,000 people, raising its control of the total SVN population from 47% to 55% - the highest level to date. During the same period VC/NVA control of the total population decreased 6%, a loss of 800,000 people. GVN control of the rural population rose from 23% to 35%, while VC/NVA rural control fell from 35% to 28% during the same period.

It is highly likely that these figures are grossly optimistic. It should be noted that about 30% of the reported gains probably came from movement of refugees into cities and towns. Another report indicates that GVN increased its control of area only from 8% to 12% in 1966 through September. Since 1965 the VC/NVA have claimed control of 80% of the SVN territory and 75% of the population. At the end of September 1966, the GVN controlled about 25% of the vital roads in SVN. It controlled about 20% of the total roads, down from 35% in 1965 and 40% in 1964. The rest were marginal or closed and could be traveled only with adequate security precautions.

The pacification program has been stalled for years; it is stalled today. The situation in this regard is no better - possibly worse - than it was in 1965, 1963 and 1961. The large unit war, at which we are succeeding fairly well, is largely irrelevant to pacification as long as we keep the regular VC/NVA units from interfering and do not lose the major battles.

POPULATION AND HAMLET CONTROL a/

	July 1965	Net Change	Dec 1965	Net Change	Sep 1966	Total Net Change
	Pop %	Pop	Pop	Pop %	Pop %	Pop
<u>Population Control</u>						
<u>(In Thousands)</u>						
Total SVN Population						
GVN Control	6865 47	+859	7724 52	+627	8351 55	+1486
VC/NVA Control	3658 25	-301	3357 23	-470	2887 19	- 771
<u>Rural Population b/</u>						
GVN Control	2338 23	+756	3094 30	+554	3648 35	+1310
VC/NVA Control	3658 36	-301	3357 33	-470	2887 28	- 771
GVN Hamlet Control	3345	+558	3903	+287	4190	+845

a/ Source: MACV monthly Population and Area Control Report.

b/ Rural population equals total population minus the cities and towns under GVN control.

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The most important problems are reflected in the belief of the rural Vietnamese that the GVN will not stay long when it comes into an area but the VC will; the VC will punish cooperation with the GVN; the GVN is indifferent to the people's welfare; the low-level GVN officials are tools of the local rich; and the GVN is excessively corrupt from top to bottom.

Success in changing these beliefs, and in pacification, depends on the interrelated functions of providing physical security, destroying the VC organization and presence, motivating the villager to cooperate, and establishing responsive local government.

Physical security must come first and is the essential prerequisite to a successful revolutionary development effort. The security must be permanent or it is meaningless to the villager, and it must be established by a well organized "clear and hold" operation continued long enough to really clear the area and conducted by competent military forces who have been trained to show respect for the villager and his problems. So far this prerequisite has been absent. In almost no area designated for pacification in recent years have ARVN forces actually "cleared and held" to a point where cadre teams could have stayed overnight in hamlets and survived, let alone accomplished their missions. VC units of company and even battalion size, too large for local defenses, have remained in operation.

Now that the threat of a Communist large-unit military victory has been eliminated, we must allocate far more attention and a significant portion of the regular military forces (at least half of the ARVN) to providing permanently secure areas in which Revolutionary Development (RD) teams, police, and civilian administrators can root out the VC infrastructure and establish the GVN presence. This has been our task all along. It is still our task. The war cannot come to a successful end until we have found a way to succeed in this task.

Assignment of ARVN to Revolutionary Development Role. The increasingly unsatisfactory performance of ARVN in combat operations is reflected in U.S. Army advisory reports and in ARVN and U.S. operational statistics. During the January-September period for which data are available, U.S. field advisors rated combat effectiveness as unsatisfactory or marginal in up to 32% of all ARVN combat battalions. Over 115,700 SVN military personnel (19%) deserted in 1965, and desertions in 1966 through October were at the annual rate of 130,000, 21% of the regular, regional, popular and CLDG forces. The poor ARVN performance also shows in the operational statistics. ARVN made contact in only 46% of its large-scale operations against a U.S. contact rate of 90%. Similar actions for small unit actions are not readily available.

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ARVN & U.S. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCES - CY1966 a/
(Weekly Averages)

	<u>1st</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>2nd</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>3rd</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>1966</u> <u>Thru Sep</u>
Maneuver Battalions (AVG)				
U.S.	44	51	62	52
ARVN	147	157	158	153
<u>Large Operations</u>				
Battalion Days per Bn				
U.S.	3.0	3.1	3.8	3.3
ARVN	2.9	2.2	1.8	2.3
% of Large Operations with Contact				
U.S.	79	94	97	90
ARVN	44	47	47	46

a/ Source: JCS (CM-1901-66).

ARVN effectiveness against the enemy has declined markedly during the January-September 1966 period. ARVN kills of VC/NVA dropped from a weekly average of 356 to 238, while the U.S. averages rose from 476 to 557 per week. VC/NVA killed per ARVN battalion per week averaged 1.8 compared to 8.6 for U.S. battalions. Conversely, the friendly killed rates were .6 per ARVN battalion and 1.7 per U.S. battalion per week. The enemy/friendly killed ratios for ARVN and U.S. were 3.2 and 5.4 to 1 respectively.

ARVN EFFECTIVENESS AGAINST VC/NVA a/ - CY1966
(Weekly Averages)

	<u>1st</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>2nd</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>3rd</u> <u>Qtr</u>	<u>1966</u> <u>Thru Sep</u>
<u>Results</u>				
VC/NVA Killed by:				
U.S.	476 ^{b/}	446	557	493
ARVN	356	244	238	279
VC/NVA Captured by:				
U.S.	45 ^{b/}	52	54	50
All GVN Forces	67 ^{b/}	79	105	84
Weapons Captured by:				
U.S.	105 ^{b/}	119	110	111
ARVN	134	84	88	102

a/ Source: Secret NOFORN CINCVICID Message DTG 311950Z Oct 66.
NMCC/MC Nr. 10163, Subject: Comparison of Ground Forces (U).

b/ January data unavailable.

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In view of the ARVN's low efficiency in major combat operations and the increasing difficulties that SVN forces have had in recruiting and retaining the planned forces in an overtaxed economy, I believe that we should not increase the SVN forces (ARVN, Regional and Popular Forces) above the present strength of 158 battalions with 610,000 men. It is likely that GVN control can be extended most rapidly by using SVN forces mainly for revolutionary development, and using additional recruitable personnel for non-military and para-military revolutionary development duty. The ARVN must be retrained and assigned to RD duty, and General Westmoreland plans to do so. The performance of the ARVN and other SVN forces as an instrument for winning popular support for the GVN has been decidedly unsatisfactory. Apparently ARVN personnel have not appreciated the decisive importance of revolutionary development and popular support; the importance of these items will be heavily emphasized in the retraining programs.

The Problem of Inflation. To unite the population behind the Government - indeed, to avoid disintegration of SVN society - a sound economy is essential. Runaway inflation can undo what our military operations accomplish. For this reason, I have directed that a "piaster budget" be established for U.S. military funded activities. The intent of this program is to hold military and contractor piaster spending to the minimum level which can be accomplished without serious impact on military operations.

Ambassador Lodge has asked that U.S. military spending be held to P42 billion in CY 67. The Ambassador's proposed program of tightly constrained U.S. and GVN civilian and military spending will not bring complete stability to SVN; there will still be, at best, a P10 billion inflationary gap. It should, however, hold price rises in CY 67 to 10% to 25% as opposed to 75% to 90% in the current year. Unless we rigidly control inflation, the ARVN desertion rate will further increase and effectiveness will decline thus partially canceling the effects of increased U.S. deployments. Further, government employees will leave their jobs and civil strife will occur, possibly collapsing the GVN and, in any event, seriously hindering both the military and the pacification efforts.

The success of our efforts to hold U.S. military expenditures to P42 billion depends, among other things, on U.S. force levels. The impact of three differing deployment plans on piaster spending at constant prices is shown in the table below. The actual level of piaster spending associated with each deployment program is, of course, determined by what policies are pursued in saving piasters. The planning factors used in the table are based on little actual experience and may be either too high or too low to serve as a reliable basis for projection. They do, however, reflect first quarter FY 67 experience, MACV planning factors, and expected anti-inflationary programs.

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U.S. TROOP DEPLOYMENTS AND DOD PIASTER SPENDING

U.S. Deployments	End Strength				Average Strength		
	CY66	CY67		CY68	FY67 ^{a/}	CY67	CY68
	Dec	Jun	Dec	Jun			
Current Program ^{b/}	392	434	434	434	368	424	434
SecDef Recommended	391	440	463	479	370	440	468
JCS Recommended	395	456	504	522	376	461	520
<u>Piaster Spending ^{c/}</u>							
Current Program					38	41	37
SecDef Recommended					38	43	39
JCS Recommended					39	46	47

^{a/} All FY 67 statistics based on actual figures for the first quarter and projections for final three.

^{b/} Program 3 through change 21. Assumes forces hold at June 1967 levels.

^{c/} Based on annual planning factors of P38,432(\$234) per man-year for personnel spending, P43,200(\$540) per man-year for O&M and, for construction:

	<u>SecDef</u>	<u>JCS</u>
FY 67	7,878	7,967
CY 67	6,702	8,343
CY 68	1,386	4,551

The table clearly illustrated that with the deployment of 463,000 troops the CY 67 goal of P42 billion is feasible. The planning factors used, however, entail a "pushing down" of O&M and personal spending from the MACV planning factors (\$360 per man year for personal spending, \$600 for O&M) in light of past performance and likely future savings; application of the MACV planning factors result in P46 billion piaster spending. If these later planning factors hold, the P46 spending rate would increase the inflationary gap by 40% and would be a severe blow to the stabilization program. If inflation occurs and U.S. expenditures are maintained in constant dollar terms, piaster expenditures will increase and the problem will be worsened. If the CINCPAC construction program were approved, similar problems would result. It appears imperative to adopt a plan, such as the one exemplified in the table above, which will call for a strong effort to reduce spending below the levels embodied in the MACV planning factors.

In addition to U.S. military spending, stabilization of the SVN economy requires strict limitation of RVNAF spending. We must plan to support the RVNAF at no higher than the Ambassador's requested level of P50 billion during CY 67.

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3. The Combined Campaign Plan is Published

Ten days earlier, on the 7th, COMUSMACV, in a formal ceremony had signed with General Vien, the Chairman of the RVNAF Joint General Staff, the Combined Campaign Plan 1967, which committed RVNAF to support pacification with the majority of its forces, and identified as priority for U.S. effort military operations in areas adjacent to the populated regions of Vietnam -- the concept advocated by Lodge and Komer throughout the summer. 75/

The concept for conducting operations was as follows:

a. Concept. The initiative achieved in the 1966 Campaign will be retained through a strategic and tactical offensive conducted in consonance with political, economic and sociological programs of GVN and US/FW agencies. RVNAF, U.S. and FWMA forces will be employed to accomplish the mission in accordance with the objectives established and tasks assigned for this campaign. RVNAF will have the primary mission of supporting Revolutionary Development activities, with priority in and around the National Priority Areas and other areas of critical significance, defending governmental centers, and protecting and controlling national resources, particularly rice and salt. U.S. forces will reinforce RVNAF; operate with other FWMAF; and as necessary, conduct unilateral operations. The primary mission of U.S. and FWMAF will be to destroy the VC/NVA main forces, base areas, and resources and/or drive the enemy into the sparsely populated and food-scarce areas; secure their base areas and clear in the vicinity of these bases; and as directed assist in the protection and control of national resources.

Throughout this campaign increased emphasis will be given to identifying and eliminating the VC infrastructure and to small unit operations designed specifically to destroy the guerrilla force. These operations will be characterized by saturation patrolling, ambushes, and an increase in night operations by both ARVN and US/FWMAF.

River Assault Group forces will be used to the optimum in III and IV CTZ's in small unit operations against enemy river crossing points and tax collection points; in armed river patrol operations in the major rivers of the Delta; and in any other operations where their special capabilities may be profitably employed.

Surface LOC's will be used to the maximum, to include optimum use of River Assault Groups where appropriate, in

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support of all operations with a corresponding decrease on the dependence on airlift support. Riverine operations, amphibious operations along the RVN coast, and rapid spoiling attacks will be conducted against enemy units confirmed by hard intelligence. Emphasis will be placed on all types of reconnaissance, especially long range patrols, to acquire the necessary hard intelligence.

The systematic neutralization of the enemy's base areas will be pursued aggressively during this campaign. By directing priority of effect to the neutralization of those base areas which directly affect the National Priority Areas, key population and economic centers, and vital communications arteries, the accomplishment of both objectives for this campaign will be facilitated.

Although RVNAF is assigned the primary responsibility of supporting Revolutionary Development and US/FWMAF are assigned the primary mission of destroying the main VC/NVA forces and bases, there will be no clear cut division of responsibility. RVNAF General Reserve and ARVN Corps Reserve units will conduct unilateral and participate in coordinated and combined search and destroy operations. US/FWMAF will continue to provide direct support and implicit aid to Revolutionary Development activities.

The people are the greatest asset to the enemy and control of the people is the enemy's goal. With them, the enemy has most of the ingredients needed for success: food, supplies, money, manpower, concealment and intelligence. During this campaign every effort will be made to deny these assets to the enemy. Map 1 reflects the National Priority area for each corps tactical zone, and the area for priority of military offensive operations. These priority areas together cover a large majority of the population, food producing lands, and critical lines of communications within SVN. The National Priority Areas are areas of major significance at the national level where critical civil and military resources are figured on a priority basis for revolutionary development. The purpose of designating the area for priority of military offensive operations in conjunction with the national priority areas is to focus the attention and effort of RVNAF and US/FWMAF in those areas where operations will destroy or drive the enemy into sparsely populated and food-scarce areas; insure the protection of the population, control of resources and provide unrestricted use of major lines of communications, all of which will facilitate follow-on Revolutionary Development. Spoiling attacks to frustrate the VC strategy will continue to be conducted in other areas as directed. 76/

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Of particular interest in the Combined Campaign Plan is the emphasis given to Revolutionary Development. The concept for this was as follows:

a. Strategic Concept.

(1) The GVN strategic concept for defeating the VC/NVA forces and building a viable, free nation includes three separate but mutually supporting operations as follows:

(a) A military offensive conducted by RVNAF and US/FWMAF to defeat the VC/NVA military forces.

(b) Revolutionary development conducted by RVNAF and GVN civil elements, with the assistance of US/FWMAF and US/FW civil agencies, to establish and maintain security in populated areas and extend legal government control over these areas.

(c) Nation building conducted by GVN civil elements, with the assistance of US/FW civil agencies, to complete the development of nationwide political, economic, and social institutions necessary for a viable, free, non-communist Republic of Vietnam.

(2) The three operations will take place concurrently. In areas where there is adequate government control, nation building will be in progress. In other areas, RD will be underway, while in less secure areas, the military offensive will be prosecuted. Previously, the military offensive dominated national efforts; however, during 1967, RD will receive increasingly greater emphasis. With regard to the military offensive, priority of effort will be given to destroying the enemy forces in those areas where RD is expected to be carried out in the future. Offensive operations also will be conducted to prevent major VC/NVA main forces from interfering in RD and nation building programs that are in progress. 77/

However, as the year wore on, attention was increasingly focused toward the border regions and the problems of halting enemy infiltration from sanctuaries outside South Vietnam. This is reflected in the operations just south of the DMZ in the I Corps, west of Pleiku, and Kontum in the II Corps, and the movement towards War Zone C in III Corps.

In I CTZ, by the end of October, the NVA 324B Division again was drawn back across the DMZ. Intelligence indicated that the 324B Division had been relieved by the NVA 341st and had withdrawn north of the DMZ. The 341st was in and just north of the DMZ near the

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eastern edge of the mountainous area. By the end of the year, the attention of the Marines in the I Corps Tactical Zone was fastened on the DMZ. 78/

In II CTZ, PAUL REVERE IV, which ran from 18 October through the end of the year, conducted by elements of the recently arrived 4th Infantry Division and the 25th Infantry Division with later reinforcement by two battalions of the 1st Cavalry Division, resulted in almost a thousand enemy killed. 79/

In III CTZ, in spite of the casualties which the enemy had sustained in EL PASO II, the 9th VC Division moved into well-concealed base areas where he absorbed replacements, retrained them on their equipment. In early November, the 9th VC Division moved into a new base area near the Michelin Plantation intending to use this base as a jumping off place for objectives in Tay Ninh. Instead, the enemy collided with the 196th Infantry Brigade, resulting in Operation ATTLEBORO. ATTLEBORO, begun on 14 September as a single battalion search and destroy operation, expanded as additional base areas were located and by 3 November, the operation had grown to include portions of the 1st Infantry Division, the 3rd Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division and 173rd Airborne Brigade. By the time ATTLEBORO was terminated in late November, the enemy had lost over 1,000 killed. The pattern in III Corps, with the exception of a couple of operations in Phuoc Tuy Province designed basically to clear the lines of communication from Saigon to Vung Tau, was a gradual shifting of emphasis northward from Long An Province to Hoa Ninh Province to Binh Duong and then north and west into Tay Ninh Province and War Zone C. 80/

By the end of the year, MACV estimated the total forces available to the enemy in Vietnam at 152 combat battalions, the total personnel strength of 280,600, of which 123,600 were combat or support troops, 112,000 were militia, and 39,000 were political cadre. MACV had accepted a figure of 48,400 infiltrators during the year. An additional 25,600 may have infiltrated on the basis of information evaluated as possibly true. This total of 74,000, accepted and possible, was based on information available to MACV as of 31 Dec 66. The infiltration rate for the first 6 months of 1966 was approximately 15 battalion equivalents. Although most of this infiltration took place through Laos, an increasing number had begun to infiltrate through the Demilitarized Zone as the year wore on. 81/

Program 4 was promulgated on 18 November 1966. 82/ At the time it was published events in Vietnam and decisions in Washington had essentially rendered the ground strategy concepts of AB 142 meaningless. Program 4 denied COMUSMACV the additional troops he proclaimed necessary for the tasks set forth in AB 142, while the troops he did have were engaged in War Zone C, in the highland border areas, and along the DMZ -- far from the populated regions of Vietnam, which constituted the National Priority areas of AB 142.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA DEPLOYMENT PROGRAM #4-SUMMARY SCHEDULE
(To be used to Manpower and Logistical Planning and Financial Budgeting)

		1965					1966	1967								1968				
		Jun	Oct	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun
MANEUVER BATTALIONS IN SVN:	Actual - ARMY	2	22	22	29	33	44	50												
	USMC	7	13	13	17	19	20	20												
	TOTAL US	9	35	35	46	52	64	70												
	11/11/66 Plan								70	79	82	82	82	82	82	82	86	87	87	87
US & VNAF FIGHTER AND ATTACK SORTIES	12/11/65 Plan	9	35	35	42	48	59	59	62	77	77	77	77	77	77	77				
	Actual - SVN	7,234	12,090	12,763	15,153	12,672	12,797	11,746												
	LAOS	511	966	3,003	6,247	3,442	1,261	2,310												
	NVN	2,401	3,468	2,198	4,497	7,733	12,249	8,656												
B-52 SORTIES	TOTAL	10,146	16,524	17,964	25,897	23,902	26,307	22,712												
	11/11/66 Plan-SVN								13,810	14,567	14,609	14,720	14,102	13,701	14,466	14,348	13,988	13,110	12,725	12,861
	LAOS								3,013	4,422	4,999	4,834	4,732	4,307	3,566	3,186	2,805	4,348	4,938	2,815
	NVN								9,988	9,566	9,724	9,699	9,798	10,236	10,111	10,746	10,791	9,877	9,496	11,793
AIR ORDNANCE: CONSUMPTION ^{a/} (Thousands of Tons)	TOTAL								27,811	28,555	29,332	29,253	28,632	28,244	28,143	28,280	27,584	27,335	27,159	27,469
	12/11/65 Plan Total	10,146	16,524	18,758	21,193	21,193	22,377	23,933	25,770	25,770	25,770	25,770	25,770	25,770	25,770	25,770				
	Actual		297	316	410	353	448	410												
	11/11/66 Plan								600	650	650	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800
USAF & USMC FIGHTER AND ATTACK TACTICAL SQUADRONS	12/11/65 Plan		300	300	500	700	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800				
	Actual	11	32	36	41	35	46	43												
	7/1/66 Plan								52	56	60	64	64	64	64	64	64	64	64	64
	Actual - SVN	11	14	19	22	23	29	29												
US FIGHTER AND ATTACK TACTICAL AIRCRAFT (INCL NAVY)	THAI	5	7	7	8	12	12	12												
	TOTAL	16	21	26	30	35	41	41												
	11/11/66 Plan								41	43	43	43	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
	12/11/65 Plan	16	20	27	31	31	34	36	38	40	40	40	40	40	40	40				
US & VNAF FIGHTER AND ATTACK AIRCRAFT LOSSES	Actual - SVN	214	274	371	427	421	494	509												
	THAI	96	130	127	157	221	227	249												
	CARRIER	188	217	183	204	207	161	200												
	TOTAL	498	621	681	788	849	902	958												
AF: Actual	11/11/66 Plan	498	621	723	801	801	807	840	1,002	1,046	1,038	1,040	1,022	1,014	1,011	989	987	998	998	983
	12/11/65 Plan	16	18	15	17	23	40	21	876	894	929	929	929	929	929	929				
	11/11/66 Plan								34	33	35	35	34	34	34	35	33	30	29	32
	12/11/65 Plan	16	18	23	26	26	28	31	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34				
USMC: Actual	11/11/66 Plan	0	5	3	4	4	2	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	12/11/65 Plan	0	4	2	4	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3				
	11/11/66 Plan																			
	12/11/65 Plan	0	4	2	4	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3				
NAVY: Actual	11/11/66 Plan																			
	12/11/65 Plan																			
	11/11/66 Plan								20	19	19	22	23	24	23	23	18	16	20	21
	12/11/65 Plan	8	13	12	13	12	13	12	13	12	13	13	12	13	12	13				
VNAF: Actual	11/11/66 Plan	0	1	2	2	2	0	2												
	12/11/65 Plan	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
	11/11/66 Plan																			
	12/11/65 Plan																			
TOTAL: Actual	11/11/66 Plan	24	37	35	37	38	52	36	59	57	59	62	62	63	62	63	55	50	53	57
	12/11/65 Plan	24	36	38	42	41	44	46	50	50	50	50	49	50	50	51				
	11/11/66 Plan																			
	12/11/65 Plan																			
ATTACK SORTIE LOSS RATES	SVN: Actual	1.03	0.59	0.63	0.73	0.47	0.47	0.68	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.47	0.47	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.46
	11/11/66 Plan								0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87				
	12/11/65 Plan	1.03	0.78	0.64	0.71	0.71	0.75	0.81												
	LAOS: Actual	3.91	1.04	0.33	0.16	0.87	0.79	1.73	1.19	1.17	1.15	1.16	1.15	1.17	1.26	1.27	1.31	1.15	1.03	1.15
HELICOPTER DEPLOYMENTS	11/11/66 Plan	3.91	1.04	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09				
	12/11/65 Plan	3.91	1.04	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09												
	Actual	3.90	4.90	5.91	3.78	2.31	2.69	1.96	3.24	3.16	3.18	3.41	3.44	3.43	3.45	3.35	3.12	3.01	3.24	3.20
	11/11/66 Plan	3.90	4.91	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61	4.61				
HELICOPTER LOSSES (ARMY AND USMC)	12/11/65 Plan	507	882	1,466	1,629	1,853	2,073	2,152	1,856	1,934	2,092	2,112	2,234	2,360	2,419	2,452	2,600	3,008	3,143	3,167
	Actual	11	36	17	36	23	24	33	2,246	2,391	2,552									
	11/11/66 Plan																			
	12/11/65 Plan	11	36	33	36	41	45	47												
TOTAL US MIL PERSONNEL-SVN	Actual - ARMY	27.3	92.8	116.8	137.4	160.0	189.2	209.9(P)												
	USMC	18.1	36.8	38.2	48.7	53.7	56.5	58.9(P)												
	NAVY	3.8	8.5	8.7	12.8	17.4	21.9	22.4(P)												
	USAF	10.7	15.2	20.6	32.3	36.4	45.5	46.4(P)												
PIASTER EXPEND (Billions: P.)	TOTAL	59.9	153.3	184.3	231.2	267.5	313.1	337.6(P)												
	11/11/66 Plan								360.0	391.0	404.0	415.0	423.0	432.0	437.0	440.0	452.0	463.0	468.0	469.0
	12/11/65 Plan	59.9	153.3	194.9	244.3	277.8	321.4	326.5	356.8	367.3	379.9									
	Actual						3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.7				

P - Denotes preliminary data.
a/ Excludes approximately 1500 tons per month consumed in world-wide training.
b/ Figure is being verified for accuracy.
c/ Tentative pending detailed analysis.

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F. What Did It Mean?

Program 4 had important historical antecedents which provide the basic texture of the decision-making on Program 5. The preceding sections have outlined the major themes and historical developments which projected into the succeeding program with telling effect. These can be briefly summarized as follows:

(1) A precedent, albeit a seemingly fragile one, of essentially saying "no" to the COMUSMACV force requirements was established. Actually, DoD and the President were beginning to question the concept of operation for Vietnam which had led to programs, now becoming increasingly costly and depressingly barren of tangible results. The illusion of quick victory "on the cheap" had fled, and hard reality intervened. People in and out of government were beginning to seek alternatives to our policies in Vietnam with increased interest, and Program 5 was to increasingly reflect this basic mood surfacing in late 1966.

(2) The JCS had adopted a strategic concept based upon widely expanded operations in the North, widened and intensified operations in the South designed to seek out and destroy enemy forces, and committed to assisting the GVN in building an "independent, viable, non-communist society" -- a vestige of the unfortunate wording of NSAM 288. ^{83/} The military heads had been denied the troops they said they required to successfully accomplish the objectives developed under the concept, but the concept itself had survived. This strategic thought was to provide the conceptual baseline for Program 5.

(3) The basic troop requirement numbers, so important to Program 5, were introduced during Program 4. In fact, the refined figure the JCS proposed in JCSM 702-66 for mid-1968, 524,288, became the eventual "approved" figure for Program 5. This number remained a focal point throughout the planning period despite frequent important changes in the strategic situation.

(4) Certain "oblique alternatives," those which were not directly substitutable options appeared during this time -- all of them designed to relieve pressure on U.S. resources, especially manpower. Among these were the barrier plan (proposed by McNamara), new free world military force sharing formulas (KANZUS), efforts to subtly hold the RVNAF's "feet to the fire," and operations of various kinds in the "sanctuaries."

(5) The Reserve mobilization line -- a political sound barrier as it were, remained unbroken.

The JCS had made a two-pronged case for breaking it: One, that we could not adequately meet CINCPAC's 1967 requirements and simultaneously fulfill our commitments to NATO and other threatened areas without mobilization (and even then probably dangerously late); and

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secondly, only such massive infusions of firepower in the North and manpower in the South as they proposed could possibly achieve our war termination objectives "in the shortest time with the least cost" and this could not be done unless we mobilized. Other arguments emerged in discussions. There were those who feared the move because of the inherent uncertainties about public reaction. To this the Chiefs replied that mobilization had traditionally unified the country, and it would also provide a strong indication of our national resolve -- an important message to relay to Hanoi, and one in which Westmoreland as a field commander was also interested. Regardless, the issue loomed as the ceiling figure in the majority of ground-force strategy deliberations -- it appeared that the level was periodically studied, possibly negotiated, but always there -- the "Plimsoll line." 84/

(6) Public disenchantment with the war was growing, and this was being manifested in diverse ways. On the "hawk" side powerful political figures (and many lesser ones) were increasingly vocal in their opposition to bombing restraints and restrictive force levels. Senator Stennis was in the vanguard of this group. On the other side, public and private figures alike were energetically working to create a genuine political war issue and to generate palatable alternative policies for the upcoming Presidential elections in 1968. Feeding a less focused sense of public dissatisfaction was an increasing awareness of the opportunity costs of the war in terms of national resources -- men, money and attention -- denied to domestic programs. As the defense slice of the budget hovered near the eighty billion dollar mark, the public realized it was "paying more and liking it less." There were strong inclinations to "paying less" as long as the voter was resigned to liking it less.

The press was moving beyond the bounds of its traditional adversary relationship vis-a-vis the Administration and assuming a leading role in catalyzing the swell of public opposition and questioning about the war. Acute even early on in the war, the press opposition intensified and expanded as the divergence of official public pronouncements on the war and what reporters and their sources saw on the ground increased.

(7) Failure is in the truest sense an orphan and as the sense of futility and self-doubt about achieving our objectives in Vietnam heightened, the architects of our military ground strategy found themselves increasingly isolated. The official base of support for the MACV strategy narrowed as more alternatives to it were seriously examined in Washington. This tended not only to aggravate a communications problem which had always hindered political-military planning, but it placed COMUSMACV-CINCPAC on the defensive, creating an information and planning bias (from those sources) toward protection, justification and continuation of present programs.

(8) Finally, we had a field commander facing a strategic dilemma with no high prospect of satisfactory resolution. If it had

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any hope of success, the Combined Campaign Plan for 1967 required both a military "shield" to keep large enemy units from the populated areas where pacification was proceeding, and a "shelter" under which pacified areas could be respectably kept that way. The "shield" concept could be implemented in a number of ways, statically or dynamically, (mobile vs. position defense) geographically oriented or enemy force oriented, or by different combinations of these at different times. General Westmoreland's strategy based upon exploitation of our inherent superior mobility and firepower was designed to simultaneously attrite the enemy and retain the initiative by disrupting VC/NVA operations before they completely materialized. This led to seeking engagement with enemy main force units well out into the border regions, where they literally could be held at distance before jumping off in operations. Related to this was the notion that the important thing was to fight -- to engage the enemy and create casualties. It mattered little that you accepted combat in regions with certain advantages for the enemy -- the prime objective was to engage and to kill him.

Fighting the mobile defense kind of war provides an adequate but not perfect shield. You can liken it to a vast semi-permeable membrane which has significant leakage by small amounts, over time. Backing up this kind of a "shield" is the "shelter" also manned by combat troops, geographically dispersed (actually occupying) in the areas where pacification is going on. The combination of the two, shield and shelter, require men and the balance is crucial, especially so if you have limited resources. If your operating assumptions are those held by COMUSMACV in late 1966, then what you have for the "shelter" is a function of the kind and sizes of enemy forces you are fighting in the "shield" mission. If you are fighting large units at many points simultaneously, you are forced to strip "shelter" forces -- or to use ARVN (or request more U.S. forces). As Program 4 closes we find MACV facing just those same large multiple threats, stripping the "shelter" forces, and relying upon an inadequate ARVN for the majority of pacification security. With sufficient forces, U.S. and ARVN, the task was prodigious -- and precarious. To attempt to "shield" without adequate forces to "shelter" was bound to be precarious.

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FOOTNOTES

1. CINCPAC 3010, Ser: 000255, 18 Jun 66, Subj: Calendar Year 1966 Adjusted Requirements and Calendar Year 1967 Requirements.
2. National Intelligence Estimate 14.3-66, North Vietnamese Military Potential for Fighting in South Vietnam, 7 Jul 66.
3. JCSM 506-66, dated 5 Aug 66, Subj: CINCPAC CY 1966 Adjusted Force Requirements and CY 1967 Force Requirements.
4. SecDef Memo for Chairman of the JCS, dtd 5 Aug 66, Subj: CINCPAC CY 66 Adjusted Requirements and CY 67 Requirements.
- 4a. MACV 27578 dtd 10 Aug 66, Westmoreland to Admiral Sharp and General Wheeler, Subj: CY 66-67 Force Requirements, emphasis added.
5. Saigon 2564, dtd 3 Aug 66, from Lodge for the President.
6. Saigon 3129, dated 10 Aug 66.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. CINCPAC 232333Z Aug 66 to COMUSMACV, Subj: Draft Military Strategy to Accomplish US Objectives for Vietnam.
10. Ibid.
11. Report of Inter-Agency "Roles and Missions" Study Group, U.S. Mission, Vietnam, 24 Aug 66.
12. MACV 29797 to CINCPAC, Subj: Concept of Military Operations in SVN (U), dated 26 Aug 66.
13. Ibid., p. 2.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 6.
16. Saigon 4923, dated 31 Aug 66.
17. Ibid., p. 2.
18. Ibid., p. 3.
19. Ibid., Section two, page 2.

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20. Command History, 1966, Hq USMACV, 19 Apr 67, pp. 21-22.
 21. Ibid., pp. 366-369.
 22. Ibid., p. 377.
 23. MACV Command History, 1966, p. 376.
 24. Ibid., p. 385.
 25. Saigon 2934 from AmEmb Saigon to Sec/State, dtd 8 Aug 66.
 26. Ibid.
 27. Ibid.
 28. MACV 27578, Subj: CY 66-67 Force Requirements dtd 10 Aug 66.
 29. Saigon 3601 from AmEmb Saigon to SecState, dtd 16 Aug 66.
 30. Air Supported Anti-Infiltration Barrier, Aug 66, Institute for Defense Analyses, JACN Division.
 31. Ibid.
 32. CINCPAC to JCS, DTG 071925Z Apr 66, Subj: Counter-Infiltration Barrier.
 33. MACV 4287, 24 Sep 66.
 34. MACV 4326, 2 Oct 66.
 35. COMUSMACV 41191 to CINCPAC, Subj: Threat to I CTZ, dtd 13 Sep 66, emphasis added.
 36. MACV 160519Z Sep 66 to CINCPAC, Subj: COMUSMACV Slam Concept
 37. MACV 8212 from Westmoreland to Sharp, Subj: Containment of Enemy Forces in Sanctuary, DTG 201156Z Sep 66, emphasis added.
 38. Saigon 3670 to SecState, Porter for Komer, dated 17 Aug 66.
 39. Saigon 6100, Subj: Inflation Control in CY 1967 Programs, dtd 15 Sep 66.
 40. State 53541, Subj: CY 67 Inflation Control, dtd 23 Sep 66.
 41. Ibid.
 42. CM-1774-66, Subj: Revised Piaster Limits on Military Spending in Vietnam, dtd 22 Sep 66.

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43. Saigon 7332 to SecState, dtd 1 Oct 66.
44. MACV 44378, Subj: Piaster Budget, CY 1967, 5 Oct 66.
45. ASD(SA) Memo for SecDef, Subj: US Military Piaster Spending in South Vietnam FY 67 and CY 67, dtd 5 Oct 66.
46. JCSM 613-66, Subj: CINCPAC CY 1966 Adjusted Force Requirements and CY 1967 Force Requirements.
- 46a. Memo for SecDef, Subj: SEA Deployment Plan, dtd 29 Sep 66.
47. JCSM-646-66, Subj: World-Wide U.S. Military Posture (U), dtd 7 Oct 66. Its baseline for requirement analysis was JCSM 721-65, dtd 24 Sep 65, Subj: "US Military Posture (U)," which provided a broad strategic concept embracing the following objectives:
 - a. In conjunction with allied forces, maintain forward deployments world-wide to deter communist aggression.
 - b. A military capability to support NATO/Europe obligations with active, readily deployable forces through the first month (M/D+30) in the event or imminence of hostilities.
 - c. A military capability to conduct other contingency operations in which force commitments are of a minor nature but where timely commitment of such forces may be crucial to the attainment of US objectives.
 - d. Support military operations in Southeast Asia.
 - e. Maintain an adequate training and rotation base to support the above.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid. See: Tab F to Appendix A, "Summary of U.S. Army Forces (U)" to JCSM 646-66, dated 7 October 1966.
50. SecDef memo for the President, Subj: Actions Recommended for Vietnam, dated 14 Oct 66, emphasis added.
51. For a detailed analysis of this aspect, see Task Force Paper entitled "Re-emphasis on Pacification."
52. Memorandum for the President, 14 Oct 66, op. cit.
53. JCSM-672-66, Subj: "Actions Recommended for Vietnam (U)," dtd 14 Oct 66.
54. Ibid.

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55. Ibid.
56. In a sense, JCSM-672-66 appears to be a delaying device used to buy time for the COMUSMACV reclamation to the DPM. However, it concomitantly provided an excellent opening through which to drive home their views on the bombing and negotiations.
57. CINCPAC 3010, Ser 000438, Subj: Calendar Year 1966, and 1967 Force Requirements/Capabilities Programs (U), dtd 20 Oct 66.
58. CINCPAC Serial 000445, 23 Oct 66.
59. Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from McNaughton, ASD(ISA), Subj: "McNaughton in Manila, October 23-25," dtd 26 Oct 66.
60. Ibid. For McNamara's views on the communications aspects of our force structure in SVN, see page 5, Memo for the President, 14 Oct 66.
61. Ibid., At another time Westmoreland reported that the President had asked him his views in front of Thieu and Ky and he had given them; that Rostow had asked him to put them into a memo which he was drafting. McNaughton observed that he had a sort of paired list of favorable targets -- ones related to air defense, ones to infiltration and ones to "bargaining," but none very explicitly analyzed.
62. The New York Times, 1 November 1966. The article said the Army had 76,451 men more than authorized, the Air Force 44,313, the Navy 12,029, and the Marines over 2,000. The conclusion was that with the increased forces (the Army had been told to go to 1,500,000 according to the piece) the country could support 500,000 troops in SVN in CY 1967 and to these increases 600,000 the following year. It did indicate that resistance from both civilian and military sources was growing in the Pentagon.
63. The New York Times, 4 November 1966.
64. The New York Times, 9 November 1966.
65. The New York Times, 6-12 Nov 66. The officer quoted in a front page story was M/G William DePuy, then CG, 1st Division.
66. The New York Times, 3-11 Nov 66.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid. The ambiguity in the statement is interesting. The JCS acknowledge that the program as proposed was adequate (even in light of their earlier analysis of US worldwide posture deficiencies), but could not be developed without some yet unnamed "modifications" to the criteria. The door remained open to come back in for the reserves if need be.

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69. Ibid.
70. The New York Times, 6 November 1966.
71. ASD(SA) Memo for the SecDef, Subj: Deployments to Southeast Asia, dtd 9 Nov 66.
72. The New York Times, 11 Nov 66. The subject of Vietnam was obscured at this conference by the Soviet ABM issue, for McNamara confirmed at this conference that the Soviets had an ABM system, and the US was studying the problem.
73. Memo for the Chairman of the JCS, Subj: Deployments to Southeast Asia (U), dtd 11 Nov 66.
74. Draft Memorandum for the President, Subject: Recommended FY 67 Southeast Asia Supplemental Appropriation (U), dtd 17 Nov 66.
75. See MACV 52414, Subj: "Military Planning and Progress in SVN," dated 8 December 1966. This message extends MACV 061300Z November 1966, same title. This plan, transparently an effort to get the GVN officially on the line for emphasis upon revolutionary development, in COMUSMACV's eyes incorporated two significant innovations:

"...First, the plan requires RVNAF and MACV subordinate commands to prepare supporting plans to accomplish the objectives, tasks and goals stated in AB 142 and to support the achievement of goals stated in provincial revolutionary development (RD) plans. These plans are to be submitted for review by 15 December. Second, to maintain the viable nature of this plan, a requirement for quarterly reviews has been incorporated. These reviews will cover progress made, problems encountered, and recommendations for improvement. A combined RVNAF/MACV directive is being developed which establishes procedures for these reviews..." (See: MACV 341, 080245Z December 1966)

The follow-up to this message, also an extension, is MACV 00989, 9 January 1967.

76. AB 142 Combined Campaign Plan, 1967, pp. B-1, B-2.
77. Ibid.
78. MACV Command History, 1966, pp. 368-369.
79. Ibid., pp. 378-379.
80. Ibid., pp. 386-387.

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81. Ibid., p. 22.
82. Memo for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Chairman of the JCS, Assistant Secretaries of Defense, Subj: Southeast Asia Deployment Program #4, dtd 18 Nov 66.
83. JCSM 702-66, op. cit.
84. An early plumbing of this line was an article in early 1965 by Hanson W. Baldwin, entitled: "We Must Choose -- (1) 'Bug Out'; (2) Negotiate; (3) Fight." He wrote:

"How many United States soldiers would be needed is uncertain -- probably a minimum of three to six divisions (utilized chiefly in battalion or brigade sized units), possibly as many as 10 or 12 divisions. Including Air Force, Navy and supporting units perhaps 200,000 to 1,000,000 Americans would be fighting in Vietnam.

"Obviously this would mean a Korea type conflict, a major war, no matter what euphemisms would be used. Nor could we wage it in the present 'business as usual' economy. We would require partial mobilization, vastly beefed up military production. Many weaknesses in our military structure would need strengthening. Even so, we could not anticipate quick success. The war would be long, nasty and wearing." (The New York Times, 21 February 1965, p. 63).