

MEMORANDUM

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For the President THE WHITE HOUSE  
From Walt Rostow WASHINGTON  
Herewith the memo requested this morning.

July 7, 1967

Pres file

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~~MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT~~

SUBJECT: Viet-Nam

sent Ranch  
7/7/67  
CAP 67698

The Viet-Nam situation is not a stalemate. We are moving uphill -- slowly but steadily. The enemy is moving downhill, paying an increasingly heavy price for his aggression.

Politically, there has been more rapid progress than we or the Vietnamese dreamed possible only a year or two ago. Items to note:

- free elections last September (80 percent of those eligible voted);
- a Constituent Assembly (free and frank debate, wide representation);
- a new Constitution (a solidly democratic document);
- a political campaign now being launched for a new government (President and Vice President, and a two-house legislature);
- wide interest (19 possible candidates for President, 640 candidates for 60-seat Senate).

The clear lesson: the vast majority of Vietnamese, including prominent leaders and officials, are convinced their country has a future and that the people themselves can build it.

Militarily, progress has been slow but no less real. Items to note:

- performance of ARVN improving (specifically, recent actions by the 18th division in III Corps, 2nd Ranger Group in II Corps, 47th Regiment and Airborne groups in I Corps have been vigorous, aggressive, professional);

DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE  
MARKING CANCELLED PER A.G. 1968  
SEC. 1.3 AND ARCHIVIST'S MEMO OF  
MAR. 18, 1983.

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BY 19 ON 7-18-91

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-- GVN desertion rate steadily declining over past year;  
Communist desertions steadily growing;

*Communist*      *Communist*  
-- weapons losses (two years ago, ARVN was losing three weapons for each VC weapon captured; today the VC are losing almost four weapons for each one they captured);

*Communist*  
-- casualties -- VC losing more than four times as many killed as South Vietnamese, Americans and other allies combined;

-- additional on casualties

VC and North Vietnamese have had more killed (18,400) in last two months than U.S. killed (11,400) in six years of the conflict.

U.S. highway deaths were 52,500 in 1966.

Total U.S. casualties in Viet-Nam -- 72,700.

Total U.S. highway casualties in 1966 alone -- 1,952,500.

Over the July Fourth weekend we killed 722 Americans, about the same as one month of killed in Viet-Nam.

North Vietnamese are paying a high price for their aggression.  
Items:

*VC*  
-- gradual erosion of confirmed combat strength; North Vietnamese make up an increasing share of casualties;

-- more damage to northeast section of North Viet-Nam since April than during entire air campaign to date;

-- 30 MIG's destroyed in five weeks compared with 42 destroyed in previous 22 months;

-- our aircraft loss ratio has gone down: 10 per thousand sorties in last half of 1966; 6.2 per thousand since January 1;

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-- other troubles -- North is losing more trucks than they are getting; major power disruption; industrial shutdowns; slowed port operations; prospect is for another bad harvest (deficit last year was 300,000 tons of rice).

Conclusion: Enemy is hurting badly -- but he still has capacity to fight for a long time, as long as he feels it is worth the price -- but the price is going up, slowly but steadily.

~~Attn:~~

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