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NAVMC HQ 3359-CMC (REV. 9-64)

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					G-2
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LtGen WALT
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MGen MURRAY
MGen LEEK
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 21 Feb 1979

H.C. Shaw Signature Date 1/8/89 ATA16-gm
 10 JUL 1967

VIETNAM STRATEGY

1. The US objective of an independent, non-communist South Vietnam, dictates that the war must ultimately be won among the people and in the villages of that country. All military effort invested in Vietnam by US, GVN, and Free World forces must contribute to this objective. Any effort which does not contribute to the accomplishment of this ultimate requirement is profligate of our resources.
2. The war is multi-facet and complex. It may be separated into components of the war against the enemy external to SVN and the war in SVN. The war in the South may be further divided into the conventional war of maneuver against regular forces and the pacification effort that in itself subsumes; (1) the reduction of provincial and local enemy forces and; (2) the GVN sponsored RD program. Both the war in and the war external to the South must contribute to the reduction of infiltration of men and materials into the South. The fundamental bases of this strategy are the provision of adequate forces and the most economical application of these resources to the separate facets of the war.
3. There is no promise of any early resolution of this war. Concepts and programs to support this military strategy must be long range to accommodate planning in five year cycles.
4. The war external to SVN. The enemy is fully capable of supporting the war at the current tempo of operations for an extended period of time. The attack against his capability to continue support of the war in the South must be vigorously pursued and expanded. The NVN investment in the war must be attacked throughout its extension. The most economical, prudent and least-risk concept capitalizes upon our dominance of the air and sea. The air campaign in the North augmented by our naval surface and sub-surface supremacy must close the ports, reduce

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the enemy fabrication and distribution systems, interdict the rail lines, destroy the power facilities, fuel and heavy industry. An integrated, expanded air and naval campaign will be conducted against the infiltration routes throughout the DMZ, Laos and the South China Sea. Special operations are conducted in Cambodia and Laos.

5. Infiltration. Should the infiltration of men and materials into the South be completely stopped, the GVN would still be faced with a sizeable task in achieving its objective of a stable RVN free of subversion and insurgency. The cessation or substantial reduction of infiltration would be a significant milestone in the prosecution of the war, but would not, in itself, insure the accomplishment of US objectives. Counter-infiltration measures should be considered in this context and should not divert excessive manpower resources from the fundamental tasks implicit in the war in the South.

6. The war in the South. US/GVN/Free World ground/air and naval efforts must be oriented to tasks that deliver the people of SVN from Vietcong control, provide continuing security to the populace and resources of the South, and thereby provide the environment essential to the evolution of a viable GVN.

a. Conventional operations. The temptation to orient upon a conventional war of maneuver against main force units must be subjugated to the realities of the objective. Searching out and destroying enemy main force units is not an objective in itself--it dictates a war of attrition in which the enemy ultimately enjoys the advantage. The NVN/VC main force enemy must be contained and deprived of access to the populated and resource laden areas of SVN. The war against large enemy maneuver forces must be waged as economically as possible. It must capitalize on small unit, economy of force missions devoted to detecting and

(TAB A)

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observing the enemy until he presents a target worthy of the commitment of mobile, large unit friendly forces. In each such commitment, the relative costs and benefits of drawing these forces from operations which support the pacification effort, and the threat posed must be weighed.

b. Pacification -- operations against provincial and local forces. Devote all available forces, both military and paramilitary to the task of providing continuing security to the populace and resources of the South. Destroy VC provincial and local forces and provide a secure atmosphere that will promote the reduction of the VC infrastructure. Extend the Combined Action Company advisory effort throughout those areas of SVN undergoing or prepared to undergo pacification. Investment of manpower resources to this program provides true economy of force and promotes a more viable Popular Force in the villages and hamlets. Intensify the psychological warfare campaign to encourage and abet the Chieu Hoi program and attack the morale of the VC.

c. Pacification - RD. Support the GVN controlled RD program with all the military resources available. Intensify the civic action programs. Integrate the US assistance to the RD programs at each level of command within the US civil/military structure. Integrate the US/GVN political, economic and social programs at each level to provide the maximum encouragement and, where necessary, direction of the GVN effort.

(TAB A)

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NAVMC HQ 335g-CMC (REV. 9-64)

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19 JUL 1967MEMORANDUM

From: Deputy Chief of Staff (P&P)
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps
Subj: Vietnam Appraisal, 1967

1. On 18 April 1967, the Commandant provided verbal guidance that CMC concurrence should not be given without reservation on the subject report. CMC stated specific reservations on the methodology employed in evaluating the impact of the air campaign on LOC capacities and the exclusion of Cambodia in the consideration of infiltration. The following statement would provide the qualified endorsement CMC desires, without citing specific reservations. The citation of specific reservations could be construed as acceptance of the remainder of the analysis.

"The Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps concurs in the findings and recommendations of enclosure (1) without endorsing all elements and details of the analysis upon which the findings are based."

2. Recommendations: It is recommended that the statement in paragraph 1 above be approved for submission to the Staff of the CNO as the CMC position.


R. K. ROTTET
Lieutenant Colonel

20 JUL 1967

Paragraph 2


WALLACE GREENE, JR.
Approved

Disapproved

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17 JUL 1967MEMORANDUM

From: Deputy Chief of Staff (Plans & Programs)
 To: Commandant of the Marine Corps

Subj: Vietnam Appraisal, 1967

1. At Tab A is a copy of the final draft of the subject appraisal. The following are my comments on this report:

a. Assets of the Appraisal

(1) The cover memorandum and resume of the report are sound.

(2) Marine Corps positions are highlighted throughout the cover memorandum and resume and supported by the analysis in the body of the report. Specifically, the following positions are emphasized:

(a) A reaffirmation/restatement of the US objective in SVN contained in NSAM 288 is required.

(b) A long range strategy is required (and proposed at Tab A of the report) that emphasizes;

A more productive air campaign in the North,

the requirement for population and resource control,

a balanced concept that eschews a war of attrition,

adoption of the CAC program throughout SVN, and

a long range plan (at least 5 years).

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 21 Feb 1979.

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17 JUL 1967

(c) A requirement for a long range estimate of the situation is stated.

(d) The requirement for additional ground forces in SVN is stated.

b. Liabilities of the Appraisal.

(1) The analysis of the air campaign in the body of the report does not adequately support the sound conclusions in the memorandum and resume. X

(2) The sections on R&D and analysis of intelligence requirements are weak. X

c. Summation.

(1) Despite the fact that we were able to incorporate all of the critical Marine Corps positions in this report, the appraisal, in its entirety, is not a good job.

(2) The principal weakness of the appraisal is the analysis.

(3) There are two principal reasons why the analysis is not as good as it should be.

(a) First, there is the short time frame given by SECNAV to ~~develop~~ the increments of the report. The section on the air campaign was developed in a week and presented to SECNAV through the medium of a briefing and transmittal of a rough digest of statistics. (In contrast, NIGHT SONG, a report of similar scope and urgency, required 2 months to complete.) The air portion of the analysis was developed by no more than 3 Navy officers of the OPNAV staff working on a part-time basis in Washington. (In contrast, the NIGHT SONG study was developed by 35-40 highly qualified officers who traveled to PACOM/WESTPAC to collect material and data.)

(b) Another weakness in the appraisal developed through ~~the~~ the frequent contact with and guidance ~~of~~

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17 JUL 1967

from the SECNAV. The appraisal group lost its flexibility to pursue independent courses and investigations and was reacting to SECNAV piecemeal requirements in questions relating to the air campaign.

2. Conclusions.

- a. We can support this appraisal for Mr. Nitze as an in-house response to his requirements -- the quality of the appraisal does not merit wide dissemination.
- b. The greatest value of the effort was in the education and involvement of the Navy Staff and Flag Officers in the War in Southeast Asia. As a result of this appraisal it is believed that the Marine Corps will receive more knowledgeable and stronger support for its positions in SEASIA.

3. Recommendation. It is recommended that the statement in the CNO memorandum that indicates CMC concurrence in the findings and recommendations of the report be approved.



R. K. ROTTET
LTGEN USMC

Paragraph 3

17 July

Approved

Disapproved

Same page:

① - I see nothing in this study re infiltration via Cambodia - impact and rec'd action.

② - Facility exists Page 20 Task III re import capability

WALTER R. GALLAGHER JR.

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17 JUL 1967

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R. K. R. C.
LTGFN CMC

Paragraph 4

ApprovedDisapproved~~TOP SECRET~~

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ATA16-gm

10 JUL 1967

MEMORANDUM

From: Deputy Chief of Staff (Plans & Programs)
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps

Subj: Vietnam Appraisal and Marine Corps Participation

1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this memorandum is to keep CMC informed on the Marine Corps participation in the subject SECNAV appraisal group.

2. STATUS. The formal written report of the appraisal for SECNAV is being drafted. It appears that Marine Corps positions on the critical aspects of the study will be incorporated into the final draft. One significant issue remaining is whether or not a long-range strategy for Vietnam will be proposed. The Marine Corps members of the group have taken the position that a strategy should be included in the report and have made a proposal (Tab A) pertinent portions of which are extracted below:

- a. "...the war must ultimately be won among the people and in the villages..."
- b. "...the fundamental bases of this strategy are the provision of adequate forces and the most economical application of these resources..."
- c. "There is no promise of an early resolution of this war. Concepts and programs to support this--strategy must be long range to accommodate planning in five year cycles."
- d. The air war against the North must be expanded.
- e. "Counter-infiltration measures--should not divert excessive manpower resources from the fundamental tasks--in the South."

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f. "Searching out and destroying main force units is not an objective in itself--it dictates a war of attrition in which the enemy ultimately enjoys the advantage."

g. "Extend the Combined Action Company advisory effort throughout--SVN."

h. "Integrate the US assistance to the RD programs at each level of command..."



R. K. ROTTET

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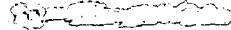
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R. K. ROTTET



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VIETNAM STRATEGY

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c. Pacification - RD. Support the GVN controlled RD program with all the military resources available. Intensify the civil action programs. Integrate the US assistance to the RD programs at each level of command within the US civil/military structure. Integrate the US/GVN political, economic and social programs at each level to provide the maximum encouragement and, where necessary, direction of the GVN effort.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY accordance with the provisions
Subj: "Vietnam Appraisal, June 1967" ^(U) of CNO ltr Ser 009D323/232095 of
Feb 1979

Encl: (1) Subject appraisal

----- Signature Date-----

1. (C) This memorandum forwards the subject appraisal. OPNAV, with Marine Corps assistance, was tasked to study Vietnam strategy with a view to developing a detailed series of objectives, linked to time, to place force levels in clear perspective.

2. (U) Three major aspects of the war in Vietnam were appraised: The U.S. air effort in North Vietnam (NVN), infiltration into South Vietnam (SVN), and the war in SVN. These three aspects were integrated and certain courses of action were examined.

3. (TS) In conducting the appraisal, the following were noted:

a. In accordance with the tasks, current statements of U.S. objectives were reviewed. The U.S. objective in Vietnam, as stated in NSAM 288 of 16 March 1964, is "We seek an independent, non-communist South Vietnam." The appraisal relied upon this statement of the U.S. national objective in the development of courses of action and findings. Within the U.S. Government, however, various attempts have been made to rephrase that objective. Such efforts have encouraged divergent positions within the government on the employment of military measures to attain the U.S. objective.

b. The military objectives stated in JCS 2339/255-3 were drafted to support the national objective stated in NSAM 288:

(1) To make it as difficult as possible for NVN to continue effective support of the VC and to cause NVN to cease direction of the Viet Cong (VC) insurgency.

(2) To defeat the Viet Cong and NVN forces in SVN and force the withdrawal of NVN forces.

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(3) To extend GVN dominion, direction, and control over SVN.

(4) To deter the CPR from direct intervention in SEA and elsewhere in the Western Pacific and to be prepared to defeat such intervention if it occurs.

In the review of military objectives for the air war in NVN, the following CINCPAC statement of tasks was deemed to be particularly significant and was examined by the appraisal group as a logical extension of the JCS military objectives for SEASIA.

TASK I - Harass, disrupt and impede movement of men and materials to Laos and South Vietnam.

TASK II - Disrupt and destroy in depth, those resources that contribute most to the support of aggression.

TASK III - Reduce or deny external assistance to North Vietnam.

c. The existence of a clear and concise statement of U.S. strategy in Vietnam could not be established. Such a statement of strategy is vital if the most effective employment of the full range of U.S. resources is to be realized in attaining U.S. objectives in Vietnam. The statement of such strategy must include provision for the air war in NVN, conventional air and ground operations in SVN, the pacification program which includes the provincial guerrilla war and revolutionary development, and U.S. actions in adjacent areas such as Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand as they impact on our efforts in SVN. A proposed statement of U.S. strategy for Vietnam is appended as Tab A of the enclosure.

d. There is no single long range, comprehensive, plan in existence which sets forth U.S. objectives, and provides for coordination of the efforts of all U.S. governmental activities in achievement of the established objectives. An estimate of the situation should be developed and projected for 5 years in the future. A five year plan for Vietnam should be developed from this estimate which includes objectives, forces, costs and losses, and milestones on which the progress of our efforts can be measured.

4. (S) Findings and recommendations, as summarized on pages v through x of the enclosure, necessarily were based only on information available to, or developed by, the appraisal group.

.00P.3

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I note a significant time lag in development of intelligence estimates, and specific and detailed intelligence and operational data. This fact, coupled with dispersal of the data throughout the Washington area, has resulted in an assessment of past, not current, activities. Therefore, the "Vietnam Appraisal, June 1967" does not purport to, and cannot, accurately reflect the situation as it exists today.

5. (U) The Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps concurs in the findings and recommendations of enclosure (1).

Copy to:
CMC

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ATA16-gws
5 June 1967

POINT PAPER

Subj: Vietnam Appraisal for SECNAV

1. On 21 April SECNAV tasked the Navy (with Marine Corps assistance) to develop an appraisal of the war in SVN.
2. SECNAV received progress briefings on 3, 12, 25, and 31 May from the appraisal group. He was much impressed by the 12 May briefing which implied that there was little prospect of intercepting the importation LOCs of NVN to a degree that it would affect the infiltration of men and materials into the South.
3. On 19 May 1967 the SecDef, at the invitation of SecNav, was briefed on the same subject. Mr. McNamara, Mr. Vance, Mr. Nitze and Mr. Baldwin were present, as was ACMC.
4. Marine Corps presentations have largely dealt with in-country operations based on our estimates, and have been useful in educating Navy Flag Officers who have little background or understanding of the problems involved. MajGen DuPuy gave a highly effective briefing (SecNav in attendance) on Wednesday, 24 May. His views supported Marine Corps concepts down the line -- mentioning that the only reason he didn't employ the CAC concept as a Division Commander was that he didn't have the personnel to spare. MajGen McChristian gave a briefing on MACV intelligence efforts (SecNav and Marine General Officers in attendance) on Monday, 5 June 1967.
5. General Walt is scheduled to brief the study group on 12 June 1967.
6. Whether any significant results occur from this "appraisal" is questionable. At the minimum, however, it is serving to educate many of the policy makers in OpNav on the diverse problems involved.

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ATA14-jfc

Addendum No. 1

1. On 2 June, a CNO Memorandum, enclosing a CNO prepared study, and a draft SecNav Memorandum for SecDef was received in this Headquarters with a request for oral concurrence. When SecNav's office was informed of the Marine Corps non-concurrence, JPG was told that SecNav had already signed out the memo for SecDef.
2. Although the Navy bucktag on the SecDef directive for the study contained a directive for CNO to prepare a coordinated CNO/CMC reply, and the Marine action officer had notified the Navy action officer of his readiness to participate, no notification or request was received and the Marine Corps therefor, had no opportunity to participate in the study.
3. The CNO study contains only minor problems which could have been resolved at the action officer level. The CNO letter of transmittal does not indicate he was even aware of the requirement for coordination and, therefor, CMC is not identified in any way with the study.
4. The SecNav evaluation presents serious problems in that it expresses views at variance with those consistently expressed by CMC. A Point Paper has been prepared for CMC use in discussing these areas of divergence with SecNav.

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29 May 1967POINT PAPER

Subj: Air Operations Against NVN

1. On 20 May 1967, SecDef requested that CIA, The Joint Staff and the Secretaries of the Navy and Air Force conduct independent studies of two alternative means for conducting the air campaign against NVN. He referred to JCSM 286-67, Operations Against NVN, which recommended a program to reduce imports into NVN, as the basis for one of his alternatives. The other is essentially the air campaign contained in the Draft Presidential Memorandum - restrict air operations to the area below 20°N. The following comments address SecDef's proposals:

a. SecDef First Alternative - A reduction or reorientation of the NVN air campaign to an interdiction campaign to be conducted south of 20° North.

(1) COMMENT - Such an air campaign would have the following disadvantages:

(a) Would weaken US determination in CONUS and have a serious deleterious effect on the morale of the Free World Fighting Forces.

(b) Would not reduce the importation of war-sustaining materiel into NVN.

(c) Would exact a lesser price from NVN for their participation in and support of operations in SVN.

(d) Would allow an unrestricted buildup in NVN's offensive and defensive capabilities to include concentration of their extensive and effective air defense system to our disadvantage.

(e) Could be construed as a victory over the US air campaign and further harden NVN resolve to prolong the war.

(f) Would probably not be able to restrict the flow of men and materiel to SVN to a degree sufficient to significantly effect operations.

b. SecDef Second Alternative - Redirect the air campaign against the LOC system throughout NVN, either including or excluding the major ports.

(1) COMMENT - The crucial action in an air campaign directed against NVN imports is closure of the NVN ports.

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ATA14-jfc

Unless all elements of the import system are taken under attack concurrently the campaign would not be effective, and would result only in diversion to elements not under attack. Thus only a program, such as that proposed in JCSM-286-67, directed at total import capability including sea, rail, road and air LOC's could be expected to have significant impact. Such a program would offer the following advantages:

(a) Would reduce the importation of war-sustaining materiel into NVN.

(b) Would limit the continuing build up in NVN offensive and defensive capabilities.

(c) Increase the pressure and penalties to NVN for continued support of operations in SVN.

(d) Provide a morale boost to our forces in SVN and serve to indicate a firm US resolve to achieve US objectives.

2. In view of the Secretary of Defense request for study of two alternative air campaigns against NVN, it is appropriate to review the alternatives against the background of the long standing CMC position of air operations in NVN.

3. CMC/JCS Concept (As recommended in 1964 and 1965) - Initial sharp blow against a significant group of POL facilities and electric power installations. Thereafter attack of military and war - supporting targets in the Hanoi/Haiphong area, followed by closure of the principal NVN ports.

a. COMMENT - These proposals recognized from the beginning that an effective air campaign against NVN must, as one of its major objectives, reduce the flow of war-sustaining materiel into NVN.

4. ROLLING THUNDER Concept (As approved) - Air campaign in NVN was introduced in a limited manner under various constraints and then gradually increased so as to impose steadily increasing pressure and penalties as NVN continued to provide direction and support to enemy operations in SVN.

a. COMMENT - The air campaign as approved left much to be desired as far as implementing CMC/JCS strategy. Establishment of sanctuaries, targeting restraints, and the graduated expansion of the air campaign have precluded attainment of objectives and have allowed NVN to continue to build their military capability and accomodate to the air campaign.

5. An air campaign against NVN, as proposed in JCSM-286-67, should be initiated immediately.

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* JCS Agenda
for Wed, 31 May

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ATA12-gws
24 May 1967
5 June 1967 (Update)

POINT PAPER

Subj: Future Actions, SVN and National Objectives

1. A new dimension in the decision making process has developed in the last few months. The Services participate with the Joint Staff in the preparation of JCS recommendations to SecDef. SecDef, now, instead of making a decision on the matter, refers the subject to the Service Secretaries, and often the Joint Staff, for further study. The subject matter bridges the gap between administrative control of the Services and the strategic control of the operating forces. Recent examples are:

a. JCSM 218-67, PACOM FY68 Force Requirements.

Recommended mobilization of the reserve to provide, on a timely basis, the forces (2 1/3 div, 5 TFS) requested by COMUSMACV. Stemming from this paper were the following.

(1) A request from Mr. Vance to CJCS for a Joint Staff study of Alternative Courses of action. (Worked with Service participation, considered by the JCS on 15 May, and forwarded by CM.

(2) A SecNav requirement for a joint CNO/CMC Study-Analysis of South Vietnam Strategy. (Still working)

(3) Various OASD(SA) analyses of Service capabilities to provide forces.

b. JCSM 286-67, Operations against North Vietnam of 19 May 1967. Recommended air action, as part of the overall program proposed in JCSM 218-67, to restrict import of war supporting material into NVN. Action against the port of Haiphong was the central theme. The following resulted:

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ATA12-gws
24 May 1967
5 June 1967 (Update)

(1) A request from SecDef for independent studies by CIA, the Joint Staff, and the Secretaries of the Navy and Air Force of two courses of action for the air campaign - going almost all-out, and restricting air attacks to the area south of 20° N.

(a) The Joint Staff study has been forwarded to SecDef.

(b) SecNav directed that CMC and CNO coordinate in preparation of the SecNav study. This study, without Marine Corps coordination, was forwarded by SecNav on 3 June 1967.

c. JCSM 288-67, World-Wide Military Posture of 19 May 1967.

(1) SecDef has referred this paper to the Service Secretaries and OASD(SA) for analysis of the force structure, force readiness, budgetary and other Service implications.

(2) The SecNav study was forwarded on 2 June 1967.

2. The recommendations provided by the JCS (particularly in the above papers) have been based on a comprehensive statement of the national objectives to be achieved in SEAsia, based on NSAM 288 of 17 March 1962 as modified by public statements of appropriate officials. The last such statement was in JCSM 218-67. The JCS have also recommended approval, on a number of occasions, of their concept for reaching these derived objectives. No approval or disapproval of JCS stated objectives or concepts has been received. The actions required to implement the recommended comprehensive concepts necessarily have been strong. If these actions are not acceptable, to the point of requiring extensive study to search for lesser means, it would appear that the JCS derived objectives may be out of line.

3. On 22 May, the JCS received for review a copy of a Draft Memorandum for the President under cover of JCS 2472/72. The Chairman provided the necessary factual changes by CM, and the JCS recommended that the DPM not be forwarded to the President.

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24 May 1967
5 June 1967 (Update)

4. The above sequence of events would tend to indicate that the JCS recommendations are not meeting the needs of the administration officials. This could be due to a variance between the US objectives deduced by the JCS and those apparently accepted by the administration. Alternatively, it may be that during this period of reappraisal, previously stated objectives have been abandoned without a firm concept of what is to replace them -- that is, that as of June, 1967, we have no finite US objective for Vietnam. Either state/condition could cause the confusion, duplication of effort and restudy cited above.

5. There appears to be a change in our national objective as interpreted by OSD. If such is the case the JCS should be informed of the change (real or interpreted) if they are to properly and effectively discharge their duties as military advisors.

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ATA16-jds

MAINE CORPS EYES ONLY

POINT PAPER

Subj: Differences Between USMC and Army Concepts on the Prosecution of the War in SVN

1. GENERAL STATEMENT. The differences between the Army and Marine Corps concepts for fighting the war in SVN can be summarized as follows:

a. The Army has visualized a war that will be fought in cycles; first, destroy NVA/VC main forces; next, concentrate on the guerrilla; next turn to civic action and other projects basic to a counter-guerrilla campaign.

b. The Marine Corps has advocated, and reiterated, that a balanced strategy was required; that the facets of the war, conventional, counter-guerrilla, control of population and resources must be fought concurrently.

2. ARMY RATIONALE. The rationale presented for the Army approach is that the NVA/VC main forces were the principal threat, and therefore must be given the priority effort.

3. USMC RATIONALE. The rationale for the Marine Corps approach is that the separately identifiable facets of the war are, in fact, interdependent; that progress or failure in one facet promotes progress or failure in all others; that neglect of any one facet could lose the war.

4. FUNDAMENTAL TASK. The Army has fostered attrition as the single most significant aspect of the war; the Marine Corps has contended that control of population and resources is fundamental.

5. WHY ARMY POSITION. Despite the fact that the Army has statutory responsibility for developing techniques for land warfare (and implicitly counterinsurgencies) and, despite the excellent techniques and philosophies developed and tested in Army special warfare centers, they have not exercised these philosophies in SVN. There are several reasons why they have not:

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MARINE CORPS EYES ONLY
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ATA16-jds

MARINE CORPS EYES ONLY

a. They have been victimized by the rigidity of their own large land Army convictions. Faced with the ubiquity of the guerrilla, and the frustrations in combatting him, they have retreated to the sanctuary of the conventional war.

b. They have been overly eager to test and prove their air-mobile forces and concepts in an area where the environment favors their employment, rather than concentrating on an area which promises the greatest return to the overall war effort.

c. MACV found that the NVA/VC main force units were the only statistically quantifiable entity that could be isolated to forecast force requirements. The 18 October 1965 MACV (BGen Dupuy) estimate of force requirements proposed a concept. This concept supported the estimate and therefore focused almost exclusively on attrition of the base of the estimate, main force units.

6. WHY USMC POSITION.

a. The Marine Corps was well disposed to understanding and orienting upon the insurgent by reason of:

(1) Historical precedence (Nicaragua/Haiti/Korea).

(2) Long standing emphasis on the importance of small unit actions which are inherent in counterinsurgency.

(3) A greater flexibility in command and staff thinking on concepts and doctrines.

(4) A battle-proved air mobility that did not encourage divergent testing adventures.

(5) Fortuitous commitment to, and a conviction for focusing upon--heavily-populated, resource-rich areas.

(6) Conviction to pursue a divergent philosophy notwithstanding impediments in both Washington and Saigon.

TOP SECRET**MARINE CORPS EYES ONLY**

~~TOP SECRET~~~~MARINE CORPS EYES ONLY~~ATA16-~~jids~~7. CITATION OF DIVERGENCIES.US Army

- a. First priority, total effort focus on NVA/VC main force. (Cyclic pattern of war).
- b. Pacification, RD, civic action purview of RVN civil/military forces (non-involvement).
- c. Guerrilla is not a principal target for US forces. (Guerrilla low-priority objective).
- d. Saturate areas of suspected NVA/VC activity with extended large-scale operations ("Fishing in dry holes")
- e. Attrit the enemy.
- f. Focus upon the highlands.

USMC

- a. Concurrently fight all facets of war, with principal objective population and resources. (Balanced concept)
- b. All forces must contribute to pacification and RD, and pursue civic action programs. US/FW military capacity to train, contribute and encourage, should be employed to maximum. (Maximum participation/coordination).
- c. Destruction/neutralization of the guerrilla is the most difficult task of the war and must be vigorously pursued by all forces. (Guerrilla high priority objectives).
- d. Launch long-range reconnaissance missions, acquire good targets prior to launching large-scale search and destroy operations against enemy main force units. (Economy of force).
- e. Control/win population and resources.
- f. Focus upon the populated, resource rich areas.

~~TOP SECRET~~~~MARINE CORPS EYES ONLY~~

ATA16-gsd
22 August 1966

TALKING PAPER

For use by the Commandant of the Marine Corps in discussion with the Secretary of the Navy

Subj: Message Relating to the Conduct of the War in Vietnam

1. Three very significant messages, two from Ambassador Lodge and one from General Westmoreland have surfaced during the past two weeks.

2. The overall import and significance of these messages is that an enthusiasm and commitment is developing for fighting this war from the grass roots up, as we have long advocated.

3. Ambassador Lodge's message to the President 131440Z Aug66 (TAB A). This message provides Mr. Lodge's comments on the pacification phase of revolutionary development as the main unfinished business in South Vietnam. The message praises the efforts of the Army 25th Division in its pacification efforts. The following quotes are believed to be significant:

a. "...many of the things which we used to hope for--and dream about--are taking place" (in Hau Nghia).

b. "The 25th Infantry Commander...sees that offensive military operations alone will not win the war...Revolutionary development offers the only hope to bring the conflict to a successful conclusions."

c. "Gen Weyand said that the American soldiers like pacification work better than they liked trying to fight the large units...they have something they can put their teeth into."

d. "Pacify where the people are. The people are the solid fact in this war."

e. "In Hau Nghia we have in Gen Weyand a man with a marked talent..."

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ATA16-gsd

f. "...if rpt if the same procedure is applied in Hue, Danang, Quang Ngai and Qui Nhon...the back of this whole thing will have been broken."

g. "The above is totally different from the so-called 'enclave' theory...it suggests extraterritoriality...the so-called 'enclave' concept suggested huddling in enclosures along the coast because they were good geographic places in which to be. What I have described is not that..."

4. Ambassador Lodge's weekly message to the President 3754 of 17 August (TAB B). This message reports on Mr. Lodge's fortuitous visit to I Corps and conversation with General Walt after his visit to the 25th Division.

a. General Walt obviously had a rare opportunity to speak of and show the results brought about by Marine Corps contributions to pacification in I Corps.

b. Mr. Lodge's comment on his interchange with General Walt is quoted: "I realize that honest men can differ as to precisely how much better the situation is and I know well informed men who think Gen. Walt is over optimistic. But I can find no one who does not believe that in both Quang Nam and Hau Nghia Provinces we are doing better. I also suspect that this condition does not exist in places where the Americans are not helping, as they are in these two Provinces, and, I believe, in the area of the First U.S. Infantry Division which I have not yet visited. End comment."

c. Mr. Lodge also quotes Sir Robert Thompson who headed the British Advisory Mission to SVN from '61 to '65:

(1) "The Americans must cease to be impatient for quick results. A winning strategy will mean a long war."

(2) "American Forces will have to get their feet on the ground and keep them there--in the villages to be held. The helicopter can help, but, if continually used in the present manner, it will merely prolong the strategic error and contribute to defeat."

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ATA16-gsd

(3) "The Viet Cong casualty graphs can be forgotten. Protect and regain the peasants and the graphs will look after themselves."

5. General Westmoreland's message to General Rossen, 160605Z Aug66 (TAB C). This message reports General Westmoreland's desires that his staff and forces immediately reorient their efforts in SVN to a balanced approach to include assisting the pacification effort. Manifest in this message is the stimulus provided by the President and General Westmoreland's desire to regain and maintain the initiative in formulating concepts for Vietnam. The following quotes are pertinent:

- a. "In other words, as far as practical, U.S. and V.N. troops in II, III and IV Corps should consider for the future the pattern that now obtains around Danang."
- b. "I am not suggesting that we reduce in any way our planned campaign against VC base area and main force units but on the other hand, with sufficient troops we should be able to do both..."
- c. "Secondly, I would like...the heat off this matter by filing a cable that will hopefully get to Komer and Kissinger which will review the bidding on the use of US and ARVN troops in support of RD."
- d. "As we project into the future...Total result to be measured in terms of population given security, territory cleared of enemy influence, V.C. bases eliminated, and guerrillas, local forces, and main force units destroyed."
- e. "...I believe we have learned the value of long range patrols which serve to avoid the commitment of large forces into quote dry holes unquote."
- f. "I believe that it is important...to make known to civilian and military authorities...during the period 1 May 1965 to 1 November 1965 our task was to build up...learn...gain confidence...protect our installations. ...1 November 1965 to 1 May 1966...extend to the frontiers; exercise our logistics...indoctrinate commanders...interdict lines of communications...disrupt enemy bases...deny the enemy rice...increase our surveillance along the coast...a program of patrolling certain inland waterways...1 May to 1 November 1966...our strategy is one of containment through...spoiling attacks. ...1 November 1966 to 1 May 1967..."

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ATA16-gsd

a general offensive. ...the availability of forces to support revolutionary development will be consistent with the requirement for adequate forces to attack enemy main force units and to invade his base areas."

6. Conclusions

a. The Secretary of the Navy's recent discussion with Mr. Lodge plus the fortunate encounter with General Walt is reaping dividends in orienting his thinking on how this war should be fought.

b. More and more we will see Army units prosecuting a balanced concept, to include participation in the revolutionary development effort, which may obscure the Marine Corps early contributions and convictions in this area.

22

CNS

1. Source of info. in TR 5 should be protected
(See Tab C).
2. Sec plan talked to Amb. Lodge on this
subject when in Saigon, I believe.
Suggest you ask him to debrief you

mf -

magnum