

File

Personal

March 13, 1967

Mr. Richard Holbrooke
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dick:

The other day I prepared a brief wrap-up for Wade Latham on the measures being taken to cope with the actual and expected number of returnees including an arbitrary number of 50,000 over and above the 45,000, making for a total of 95,000 in 1967. The memorandum to Wade is a bit rambling, but it gets more interesting toward the end. This may satisfy Mr. Komer's request for a report on this. Please advise.

In a word, we can cope with food, shelter, bedding and temporary construction, but the GVN must ultimately cope with the resettlement and creative use of its returnees. All experience to date indicates that this will be a very difficult area, because it involves having the Vietnamese establishment, as well as the population in general, adopt new attitudes. The development of new attitudes is the hardest part of any foreign aid program, as you know. There will be no great problem with Col. Anh, and people like that, and Gen. Thieu talks a good game, but we must be realistic about what we may expect from the GVN as a whole when it comes to some of the ideas suggested in this paper.

Monta Osborne, my deputy, is leaving in June to take over the Field Division of JUSPAO. His first love is psyops, and there he would have the advantage of having his own organization. He will be very difficult to replace in any real sense, but we must do our best. I discussed with Len Maynard the possibility of having a first-class officer from some part of the establishment here in Saigon detailed to Chieu Hoi for this purpose, but it is apparent that priorities in terms of personnel are only meaningful if there is in fact no competition. His attitude is flatly that we must bring in new blood from Washington. In fact people here

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are unwilling to rob Peter to pay Paul even if Paul has a higher priority, allegedly.* Whatever happens, it would be extremely valuable for you to look out for a really first-class man for the No.2 job in Chieu Hoi here. I can handle the operations and particularly field guidance, but I really need someone not only to administer the office generally, but to take charge of the whole budgeting process, give high-level briefings, or share them with me, act in my absence, etc. Someone with a lot of drive and industry, who demands and produces results. We also have openings for two additional more junior personnel. One job we are holding for Peter Sturdevant who was a USAID summer intern in Phu Yen. Please see what happened to him.

Particularly if you locate an interesting individual for my deputy, but in any case to discuss many things, I would much appreciate being called back there for about five days consultation in May. Mr. Komer told me when I came out here that if I felt such a trip useful at any time to let him know. Conceivably I might interview a number of people and make my own selection right in Washington. This would be the most efficient way to do it, as I still believe that it is quality and not quantity that we need out here. On second thought, late April might be better in terms of lead time.

All the best, and please keep in touch.

Sincerely yours,

Ogden Williams

*I do not anticipate either Lee or Wade. They have
an absolute shortage of Prov Reps. Regional Directors
etc.*