

Saigon, Vietnam

January 6, 1967

The Honorable
Robert Komer
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Komer:

I take this occasion to send to you three documents which will give some of the reasons for the optimism which we in Chieu Hoi feel as we go into 1967. The first is my New Year's message to our staff, the second is a captured VC document with translation which rather dramatically shows how this program is hurting the VC, and the third is a brief survey which we received from JUSPAO pointing out the importance of the role played by the Chieu Hoi program and Centers in accounting for the returnee rate.

Frankly speaking, this has been close to the most thankless job I have ever been connected with, but the recent reorganization which created OCO has made my working life vastly easier, since we are now located here together in one place. I am delighted by the record that our new Filipino Advisors have made for themselves thus far. The GVN Chieu Hoi Office has the right spirit - which is the basic essential - and is slowly groping towards more administrative efficiency. I have been doing substantially all the work being done here on National Reconciliation, and sent out a telegram on this today. We can get a Proclamation offering full political rights, and I think we can get it in the near future, but the comparable career offer to middle and high level VC presents difficult practical and psychological problems for the Vietnamese and will take a little longer. We will, however, push the providing of excellent jobs to middle level VC and then publicize each successful instance, even before any national policy is announced. We might even get more mileage this way because in Vietnam it is much more effective to do something solid and then crow about it, rather than make promises in advance which the Vietnamese have long since learned not to believe.

Although somewhat bloody and bludgeoned, I and this staff are very optimistic about 1967. We will not yield our target goal of 45,000 Hoi Chanh without a fight, particularly as we were able substantially

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Thompson
Lambs

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to make good on our first goal, which was to double 1965. Your budget support has been most useful to us, as has the sense of priority for this program which you have communicated to all the various bureaucrats involved and to the GVN. Chieu Hoi Saigon plus the substantive share of National Reconciliation sends you best wishes for 1967 and to your team also, with particular thanks to Dick Holbrooke and Bob Montague for their support.

Sincerely,



Ogden Williams

Enclosures: As stated.

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