

Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, CORDS

MACCORDS-CH

20 November 1968

Mr. John E. Arthur
Associate Assistant Administrator
for National Development
Bureau for Vietnam
Agency for International Development
Washington, D. C. 20523

Dear John,

Please forgive my being very remiss in commenting on Earl Culp's idea about giving English language training to high-level returnees. The presumed purpose was to enable these people to get jobs with the Americans. I am not sure that is as useful an idea politically as getting them good jobs with the Vietnamese, and the latter is the line of direction we have been pursuing with steady, but very slow progress.

As you know, two returnees now occupy positions in the Chieu Hoi Ministry which an ordinary Vietnamese civil servant would only get after 30 years of seniority in the Government. The VC/NVA medical personnel have recently taken tests to qualify them for duty with the GVN as official medical doctors. The results of the tests are not yet in, but indications are that they will be asked to put in some months of internship in local hospitals before being finally certified. Announcements of similar tests have been put out, under which VC officers and NCO's would have a chance to get comparable commissions or appointments in the ARVN itself. Moreover, in recent months the high-level returnees have been almost entirely occupied in going around the country appearing before mixed groups to explain life in North Vietnam, Communist policy, etc. This campaign has been outstandingly successful. Just this last weekend nine of the highest-level returnees met with about 200 ARVN officers at the ARVN's Political Warfare Academy in Dalat for a four-day seminar. The confrontation was so successful and appreciated on both sides that, according to Minister An, the academy wishes to retain several returnees on its staff, giving them direct ARVN commissions equal to their former VC/NVA ranks.