

[REDACTED]

30 July, 1970

SUBJECT: New DSA Employment Scheme

TO: Commanding Officer

[REDACTED]

1. After a thorough review of the salient factors, I have come to the conclusion that we are missing the boat in our efforts as District Senior Advisors, per se, for the pacification of Vietnam. In a nutshell, an analysis of my advisory experiences (typical or atypical, take your choice) points to the inescapable conclusion that the DSA is being saddled with so many ancillary duties, chores, and responsibilities that the daily "span of usable time" is substantially diverted from advising into the running of an American unit. Ask yourself the following questions, "Why should an American Advisor to a Vietnamese District Chief worry about:

- a. POL supply for a team house?
- b. the maintenance of boats, outboard engines, crew served weapons and generators?
- c. getting a vehicle into [REDACTED] for maintenance?
- d. the health, morale and welfare, discipline, law and order of a group of subordinates who are not advisors, but who perform a support function?
- e. the effect on the Vietnamese caused by non-volunteers and subordinates whose one common characteristic seems to be a loathing for all things Vietnamese?
- f. operating a radio net from 0645 to 2300 so that he can be called upon to act as a radio relay?
- g. running an American mess and billet?
- h. property accountability for a team house full of, what is essentially, junk?

2. The single answer to these questions obviously is that, in spite of any advisory mission, the advisor is strapped with hidebound requirements to accomplish the tasks listed above for the sake and sole benefit of the

"Team". Strip away these requirements - if you can overcome that bureaucratic hurdle, the inevitable and logical result becomes clear. If the advisor doesn't take care of his team, then there won't be a team. Indisputably correct! Take the reasoning one step further - ask yourself, "Why must there be a team?" You can exhume myriad reasons, but they all boil down to the fact that the team exists, not for the advisory effort, but so that the advisor can have as close to an American standard of living as is possible under field conditions.

3. Let's assume that there are DSAs who would volunteer for a more definitive advisory role - who would be willing to live on the "economy". What, reasonably, would such a DSA ask for, in order to implement a "lean and mean" advisory effort? For openers, I suggest:

a. Funds, for these purposes,

(1) To hire:

(a) a cook-washwoman-housekeeper. This could become a problem area. The folkways and mores of rural Asia being what they are, the DSA may well be suspected of abusing this funding prerogative.

(b) 2 - 3 Nung bodyguards, cleared by the MSS, to provide 24 hour a day security.

(2) To contract for:

(a) Transportation, by sampan and other local means.

(b) Rental of living quarters inside or outside of the District Compound.

(3) Mileage fees for local transportation by Honda motorcycle. This would be given to any DSA who chose to rent or purchase his own form of local transportation.

b. A minimal reporting requirement, all of which would be authorized to be submitted in longhand, and minus such Team 56 refinements as "report not later than 0700 by radio, items of information due that same day by written report".

c. A minimal commlink requirement. There is no reason to be in daily radio contact. If three days go by without contact, then there may be cause for worry, but as long as the DSA is following the VN message traffic with his counterpart, he won't be caught short.

d. An absence of visiting firemen. Charts and briefings would be anathema. Visitors would receive a walk through of activities and not the current eyewash.

e. An assurance of the ultimate in support. If the DSA asks for something, he either gets the item or a reasonable answer. This, I grant you is revolutionary thinking around Team , but it would be a necessity.

f. Elimination of extraneous harassment. For example, no DSA would be the president of the board of governors, a member of any board or council, or a project officer.

g. A relatively guaranteed weekly delivery of supplies. This would include a supply of batteries for the radio, mail, toilet articles, etc. Notice that Class I resupply would be a thing of the past.

4. You may well ask what benefits would accrue from such a scheme. For a minute, consider these possibilities:

a. Extended contact with the counterpart.

b. A deeper advisory awareness of the undercurrents in the District.

c. A more valid assessment of the desires and aspirations of the people in the villages and hamlets.

d. An earlier insight into the activities of dissident elements.

e. A worm's eye view of the results of government efforts.

5. Conversely, the following difficulties should be reckoned with:

a. A scheme such as this smacks of the Peace Corps, and will be criticized by the military as such. The accusation of "going native" must be anticipated.

b. There is the very distinct possibility that the DSA could lose his objectivity in assessing the progress of the pacification program.

c. The DSA would be nowhere near as responsive to direction as he is now. He would be called upon to show vast initiative, and could expect even less support than he now gets.

d. It would be immensely easier for the VC to target the DSA.

e. There could be a certain amount of hankey-pankey with the funds. The mothers of America and GAO would be shocked if they realized that their tax dollars are supporting nubile young ladies under the guise of "cook-washwoman-housekeeper".

f. There may be difficulty in recruiting for such a program, since it does call for something of a non-conformist individual to make it work.

6. Assuming that you and the DepCORDS go along with the scheme, it will be relatively easy to stage a test of the whole concept. Take a DSA who has volunteered for the 18 month program, insure that he has been to the PHOENIX school, and explain to him that after a period of seasoning, his District team would, through normal attrition and inter-Team ~~_____~~ transfers be reduced until he alone would constitute the advisory effort. He would then be able to alter and modify his approach to the advisory task to allow an orderly transition. Your staff could be of invaluable assistance in expediting the turn-in of property and the issue of new gear. The thought here would be, "If it doesn't fit into a Bergen rucksack, it won't be issued!"

~~7. Assuming that this letter will not be immediately consigned to file #13, I would like, after your review and follow-on questions to send a copy to Ogden Williams at FSI/VTC.~~

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Major, FA
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