

## FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE

November 3, 1969

Honorable William B. Macomber, Jr.  
Deputy Under Secretary for  
Administration  
Department of State  
Washington, D. C. 20520

Dear Bill:

Since, despite your present concerns with administration, you are inexorably wedded to substantive aspects of foreign policy, I am sending along a paper written by Guy Jones, whom you will recall having met here at VTC the other day. The paper is deliberately in draft form and is intended to block out the essential aspects of a fresher, newer, and more rational approach to Viet-Nam. As Guy points out, the present high "noise" level of protest here in this country may well obscure the existence of options infinitely preferable to variations of the "bug out" theme.

Pacification in Viet-Nam now has a "single manager"--the Commanding General of MACV. Many of us have long felt that the single manager concept should be preserved in Viet-Nam but that, as the thrust of the war proceeds from largely military to largely civil operations, the identity of the single manager should, in due course, reflect this change. Guy's paper, submitted herewith, represents an introduction to the practical aspects of this change. I concur in its general thrust and think it is a contribution to new policy-making in which you would be very interested, and of which the Department should take note in its own interest.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ogden Williams  
Coordinator  
Viet-Nam Training Center

Enclosure:  
A New Thrust in Vietnam -  
Broad Concept

cc: --  
O/FSI - Howard E. Sollenberger  
*Mr. Jones*  
O/FSI/VTC:OWilliams:pak

DEPARTMENT OF STATE REFERENCE SLIP				DATE 11/3/69		
TO:	Name or Title	Organ. Symbol	Room No.	Bldg.	Initials	Date
1.	Mr. Sollenberger,	O/FSI,	1200,	SA-3		
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<input type="checkbox"/> Comment		<input type="checkbox"/> Note and Forward		<input type="checkbox"/> See Me		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Your Information		<input type="checkbox"/> Note and Return		<input type="checkbox"/> Signature		
<p>REMARKS OR ADDITIONAL ROUTING</p> <p><i>forward,</i></p> <p><i>I think you'll be interested in this</i>  <i>report of Guy's in which I collaborated</i>  <i>and co-wrote. It is normally related</i>  <i>to its narrower questions which we</i>  <i>are due to discuss with you tomorrow</i>  <i>at 2:30.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>bydce</i></p>						
FROM: (Name and Org. Symbol)				ROOM NO. & BLDG.	PHONE NO.	
Ogden Williams, O/FSI/VTG				2701, SA-15	70700	

## A NEW THRUST IN VIETNAM - BROAD CONCEPT

The hour is highly propitious for a bold, new approach to Vietnam. De-escalation is a fact, as well as a policy objective. Intensity of violence has subsided. Security has increased by a relatively large factor. The NVA and main force units are depleted or in sanctuary. The returnee rate will almost double the previous highest year's total before 1 January 1970. Vietnamization is progressing. ARVN is apparently discharging its larger responsibilities with greater effectiveness.

In the United States, popular expression concerning a continuation of the "war" is reaching increasingly high levels of dissent. These facts notwithstanding, it would appear little short of catastrophic to yield to the popular clamor to abandon any kind of a reasonable approach to our objectives. Many of us would have subscribed to a bold, new approach some months and even years ago.

It can be hypothesized that a military "supremacy" has been achieved and maintained. An effective beginning and momentum in pacification exists. It is an appropriate cross-over point for a major shift in emphasis to "reconstruction" rather than "counter-insurgency."

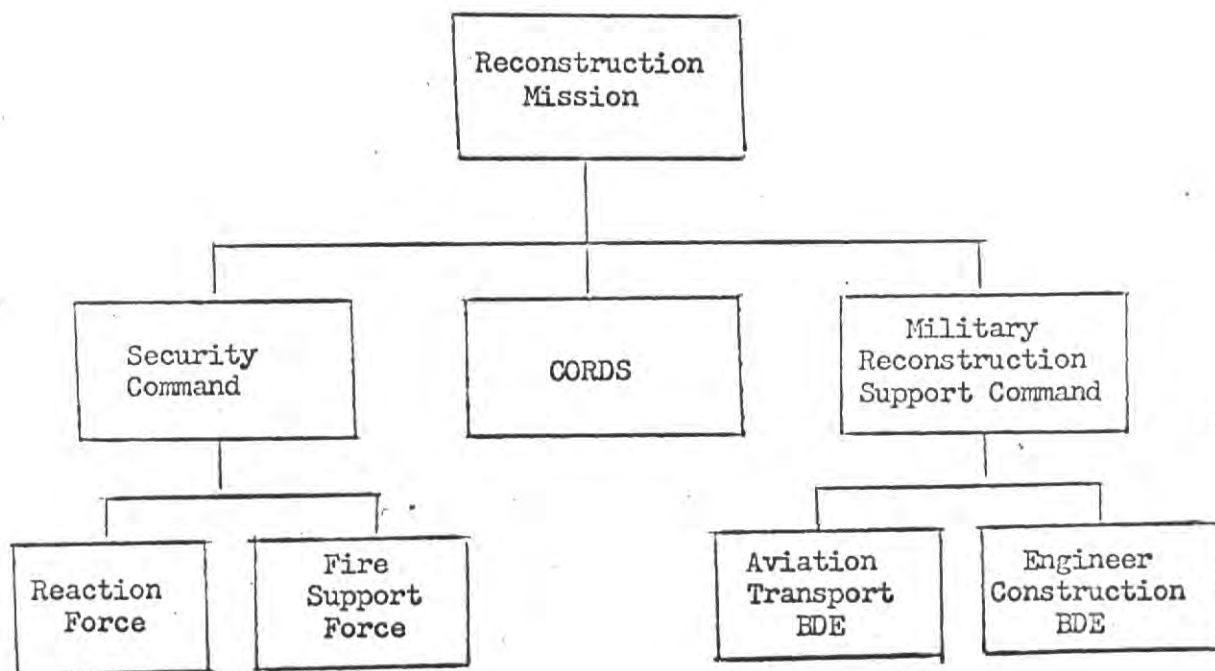
Not by design but in fact, a sort of "enclave" situation has developed in Vietnam. Military operations and war-necessitated transplantings of population both under GVN auspices and by uncontrolled rural-to-urban migration have resulted in a de-population of the countryside. Hamlets are destroyed, farm houses deserted, forests defoliated, roads in disrepair, and in some major areas a "no man's land" of B-52 strike craters is now the predominant terrain feature.

Since it is the "war" and the techniques with which we fought it which have resulted in these features, it would appear no less than right and proper that we, the U.S., should provide a major impetus to putting the unhappy country "back together again" — even if mostly in a material sense and certainly avoiding the "Americanizations" which unfortunately characterized the earlier phases of our effort.

On the domestic scene, it would be rather difficult for the "dissent" to focus on such a major and obviously commendable change in the basic thrust of our programs. We would move from destruction to reconstruction, we would reinforce the already successful reconciliation program, we would redirect military engineer support to roads, schools, markets and similar projects generally in such a poor state of repair at present. Our military transport aviation would be channeled into moving the raw materials, equipment and personnel for the reconstruction program — and for the stimulation of business and commerce as well.

A major and highly visible aspect of the new look would be the announcement of significant new personnel and organizational changes on the U.S. side. The primarily military part of MACV would be modified to become a Security Command which would co-ordinate further reduction of U.S. forces and would contain as its major element a highly flexible reaction force designed as a fire brigade to reinforce hard pressed ARVN units, reinforce the GVN general reserve or to pin down a major conventional invasion force from outside VN until our national leadership had reached a decision as to how best to meet the threat in its new and unambiguous form. Further, a military reserve of no mean capability exists in our long range, heavy bombardment capability which can, with limited ground assistance, bring a conventional invasion to a halt in short order. The calculated risk aspect of such an arrangement would be well within the limits of acceptability. A separate fire support command would provide artillery and air fire support to ARVN units in their operations against residual NVA or main force enemy primarily in the hinterlands and traditional secret areas: Zones C & D, U-Minh Forest, Doza, Ashau Valley, etc. Enemy in these areas can be systematically cleaned out at the government's convenience since they can have little influence on pacification and the population itself.

The Security Command described above would be one of three major subordinate elements of a Reconstruction Mission:



A second major element, the prime one, would be essentially the CORDS portion of MACV as it now exists with appropriate revision. We thereby perpetuate the proven effectiveness of the "single manager" approach to pacification and political development—as is also the case for the Reconstruction Mission in its broader context. Pacification and rural development would be the principal function.

Also of particular significance to the "Mission" concept would be a new name for CORDS province advisory teams. The appellation "advisor" is and has been objectionable to the Vietnamese and not apt from a U.S. viewpoint. "Province Reconstruction Assistance Teams" would be entirely appropriate. The "Advisors" could well be called reconstruction coordinators, or some other appropriate term.

The third element would be a Military Reconstruction Support Command which would include military engineer construction units whose full-time mission would be heavy building, road repair and similar tasks crucial to rebuilding the war-torn cities and countryside. The third element would also include an aviation transport brigade, which would consist basically of a pooling of Air Force and Army airlift for the first priority use in the movement of people, resources, equipment, etc., for the reconstruction effort.

The present MACV headquarters would constitute adequate space for the above-described organizational evolution. Certain present command, control facilities of MACV would be provided intact to the Reconstruction Mission: e.g., the Combat Operations Center with personnel would become a reconstruction situation and status facility.

Most important of all from the aspect of the domestic impact of this major re-orientation of effort would be the appointment of a prestigious civilian to head the mission, a Herbert Hoover type.

On the domestic scene, it is entirely fitting that leadership with respect to such a plan as outlined above come from State, and it can be seen as offering a prime opportunity to regain a position of leadership in the national security arena and in so doing to readjust the present imbalance between means and ends. The military contribution to this effort would be indeed a tool of our policy, and since the objectives of the U.S. effort in VN now involve mostly non-military programs, the predominant leadership and essentially civilian flavor would be proper.



It would be hoped that an understandable reluctance by the Department of State to "latch onto the tail of the tiger" at this rather touchy point would not result in a totally unreceptive attitude to such proposals as the above. It could be reasoned that the patient was "terminal" and little benefit would derive from an acceptance of leadership on the Vietnam situation within the U.S. interdepartmental family. The present unpopularity of the military, unfortunately, provides a horrible example which could well demotivate a more appropriate government agency from picking up the pieces. It would be hoped that the national interest in prosecuting these U.S. policies to a favorable conclusion which would be sufficiently critical to our future in SE Asia, and throughout the world for that matter, would override these recognized negative aspects and prevent rejection of "bold," new approaches. It could also be entirely possible that for a number of reasons, practical and political, Defense would welcome such an initiative. The "military" could then concentrate on its other serious problems. The soldier who is always the first to cite his dislike at being involved in essentially political matters would probably be so delighted to get "off the hook" that adequate military support (still most essential) in the furtherance of a new and well thought out program for Vietnam would be provided with the best of good will.

A further point is added almost as an after thought, but recent history cloaks the "Kennedy years" with the aura of great expectations. One is certainly not unmindful of the enhancement which the time element adds to such retrospection; nevertheless, their characterizations were of a definitely positive nature. They involved contributions and in many instances sacrifices by which the United States played a positive role in world affairs and which even today leave us with a meaningful image of our nation and what it stands for. The time for the rebirth of such a mystique has never been more propitious. It is indeed a magnificent opportunity for bold, imaginative leadership. —But on the other hand, perhaps we're just not going to coax a roar out of this mouse.