

FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE

September 11, 1969

Honorable William H. Sullivan
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Bureau of East Asian and
Pacific Affairs
Department of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

Dear Bill:

Bill Colby told me last Saturday that he had discussed with Mr. Richardson the need for a number of medium level FSO's for duty as Province Senior Advisors in Viet-Nam. Bill also said that these officers should attend the Viet-Nam Training Center prior to going to the field. I am writing in support of Ambassador Colby's views.

I realize there has been resistance in the Department to assigning mid-career officers to CORDS duty in Viet-Nam for various reasons which are well-known to you, but I think there are several real counterarguments. From an over-all objective standpoint, it does not seem sound to turn over foreign political assignments--such as those of the Province Senior Advisors--almost exclusively to the military, which is what has been happening to an increasing degree in Viet-Nam. From a narrower point of view, I should think that there could be no better training for mid-career officers who might aspire to be future Ambassadors and senior executives than to have a tour in command of a combined military and civilian team in a Province in Viet-Nam. This kind of "interagency command time" which Viet-Nam service provides is virtually unique, and might help prepare, within the Department of State, stronger leaders of future country teams than we have sometimes had in the past.

Regarding training at the Viet-Nam Training Center, the other day one of our military Province Senior Advisor candidates--a Lieutenant Colonel--came to see me and asked why it was that he and his colleagues were receiving 33 weeks of training on all aspects of the Province Senior Advisor's job, which includes 650 hours of Vietnamese language training, while civilian Province Senior Advisor candidates were in some cases sent directly to Viet-Nam without any substantial

Honorable William H. Sullivan

2

training whatsoever. In this connection David McKillop, who recently attended our Basic Course on an informal basis, thought it most inappropriate that officers were being assigned to Viet-Nam without exposure to this course, and he included even those officers who would be serving in the Embassy rather than in CORDS.

I am leaving on September 15 for a few weeks in Saigon and will be returning on October 13. If such would meet with your approval, it would be a pleasure and a privilege to acquaint you more fully at that time with what is being done at the Viet-Nam Training Center and possibly discuss some of the problems noted above in greater detail.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

/s/

Ogden Williams
Coordinator
Viet-Nam Training Center

cc:

O/FSI - Howard E. Sollenberger
AID/VN/ADM - Donald Kidston

O/FSI/VTC:OWilliams:pak 9/11/69