

FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE

June 10, 1970

Mr. George D. Jacobson
Assistant Chief of Staff for CORDS
Headquarters, MACV
APO San Francisco 96222

Dear Jake:

You will recall the five Foreign Service Officers at the Viet-Nam Training Center who addressed a letter to the Secretary of State, and their subsequent conversation with Deputy Under Secretary Macomber and Director General Burns. I believe you also talked with the Director General when you were last in Washington concerning this subject.

I am informed that the young officers concerned were assured by Mr. Burns that they would be assigned to civilian-type duties in Viet-Nam. They state that they were also assured they would know, prior to their going to the field, what such assignments would be. Some of them feel that these assignments were to be indicated in very specific detail, such as Refugee Advisor in Province X, or an NLD Advisor in District Y. Mr. John Day of the Department states his belief that they were not in fact assured of such detailed advance knowledge of their assignments, particularly since CORDS is not set up to provide such precision in identifying assignments in advance of the individual's arriving in-country.

In any case, I have been asked by the students and by representatives of the Department to forward their assignment preferences to you, in order to fulfill Mr. Burns' assurance to them that they would be assigned to civilian-type duties, and also whatever other assurances he may or may not have given. Since you talked with him, you presumably have a clear picture of the whole situation.

As is normally the case with young FSO's, all of these officers are bright and could do a fine job in the field. They are all long-term language students. They all have, in one degree or another, the sense of concern which prompted them to write their letter to the Secretary of State. I do not think these concerns would prevent them from doing a good job in Viet-Nam once they get there. At the same time I do not feel they should be considered as a special group or be given privileges not accorded

to others similarly situated. In view of the Director General's assurances, however, they do require confirmation that they will be assigned to civilian-type duties, with some indication of what such duties might be.

Please give the foregoing problem your priority attention since this letter is written at the request of the Department of State. As I indicated to the students, I thought it might be possible for your office to respond to this letter within two weeks. It may be that Mr. Burns will be writing you directly, in any case.

With best regards.

Sincerely,

Ogden Williams
Coordinator
Viet-Nam Training Center

Enclosures

Preference Reports:
Raymond Francis Burghardt
Daniel Vincent Clark
Stephen William Faber
John David Isaacs
Susan Jean Walters

cc: O/FSI - Mr. John Day