

File

February 18, 1970

O/FSI/VTC - Ogden Williams, Coordinator

John D. Isaacs, FSO-7, CORDS XXI

I had received word from the Language Division that Mr. Isaacs was not performing up to full capacity, and that his case was possibly linked with that of David Winn, although his attitude was not as bad as Winn's. I talked with him on February 16. He said that he was perhaps not the best but certainly not the worst student in his class, and that he did not object to learning Vietnamese and wanted to continue to do so. He said that he had had problems about US policy in Viet-Nam and perhaps some of this rubbed off on his general performance. I confirmed that he did have motivation for language and should continue in the program, and then talked to him a bit about Viet-Nam itself. I pointed out that people sometimes let their disagreement with past US policy or commitments, now largely historical, become confused with present practical alternatives. Our present policy was to withdraw and the only real question was how fast and in what manner. This was a question on which responsible people could differ. I pointed out to Isaacs that a CORDS officer serving in Viet-Nam had plenty of flexibility to support programs and activities which are undeniably constructive and that perhaps, as a professional Foreign Service Officer who had a duty to perform in any case, he was fretting unnecessarily about the past. Even if his present fears were confirmed, and the Viet-Nam assignment was not a happy one for him, he would obviously recognize that there will be many assignments in his Foreign Service career, some of which will be more congenial than others. He should therefore be able to take the thing in stride. He agreed and we parted company on a constructive and harmonious note.

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