

## FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE

January 28, 1970

Mr. Frank A. Osmanski  
Office of the Assistant  
Chief of Staff, CORDS  
MSD, MACCORDS  
APO San Francisco 96243

Dear Frank:

One of our staff members recently returned from a trip to Viet-Nam and said that you were concerned about Viet-Nam Training Center (VTC) trips to the area. He said you apparently felt that we should send only one or two of the senior management group, who would then brief all the course instructors as necessary.

Actually, there is considerable past history on this subject in which Len Maynard, George Jacobson, and Bill Colby have been personally involved. I believe it is the consensus of all of us that (1) it is vitally important to send well-trained people to Viet-Nam in advisory positions, particularly in the PSA and DSA jobs; (2) VTC is doing this to the satisfaction of CORDS; and (3) one reason for our ability to do this is that we have so far been able to maintain, and even improve, the quality of the instruction here, particularly in terms of realism. If we are to "tell our students the way it is," we either have constantly to bring in new faculty members fresh from the field as additions to our staff, or we have to send key staff members to the field every six months to keep them updated. For one example, in the District Operations Course we use Trang Bang District in Hau Nghia Province as a teaching scenario to describe everything that goes on in the district and specifically what the duties are of the various members of the district team. I think it no exaggeration to say that we have more detailed knowledge of this district right here in Washington than any American does in Viet-Nam, excepting only the DSA himself. This is because of periodic updating.

Another principle we maintain at this school is that no one is permitted to teach a course unless he himself has had actual field experience in that particular discipline in Viet-Nam. For that reason I, for example, do not qualify myself to instruct in the District Operations Course, even though I have spent six years in Viet-Nam, for the simple reason that I have never been a District

Senior Advisor. We do not run here a school which inculcates general principles of operations, or theoretical generalizations about Viet-Nam. We aim to produce officers, particularly in the PSA and DSA areas, who are able to commence functioning in Viet-Nam the day they arrive in their assigned stations. In the case of PSA's, we usually know which province the men will be assigned to, and one such PSA knew the name of every village in his province before he ever arrived in-country, for only one example.

As one who has observed incredible nonprofessionalism in the way we Americans have gone about the Viet-Nam problem over the years, including an enormous failure in the areas of training our people in all categories before we send them to Viet-Nam, I am particularly anxious to maintain whatever standards of professionalism we can here at this school. I am sure that Colby and Jacobson generally feel the same way, and I enclose a copy of a recent letter from Jake as evidence of MACV policy in this area. The \$1,200 round trip we pay to keep our faculty members realistically credible in the specific areas of their instruction here at this school is, in my opinion, a drop in the bucket when you consider that our military investment alone in Viet-Nam runs at \$80 million a day, quite apart from what AID and State spend.

We specifically do not wish to tie up the time of people in Viet-Nam unprofitably, and for this reason each visitor has a specified area of interest which does not significantly overlap with that of other key visitors from VTC. I did not suffer boondoggles gladly either in Chieu Hoi or as head of Rural Affairs in Viet-Nam in the old days, and I assure you we are not in the boondoggling business now. Perhaps my views are mistaken, but I do hope the foregoing has been of some reassurance to you and that our staff visits from VTC will not bring undue burdens.

Karl Mahler, Chairman of the Basic Course, is scheduled to spend two weeks in-country in the first half of March. In the latter part of that month, LTC Lorne Black, the new Chairman of the District Operations Course, hopes to visit different areas and study different things. Per my correspondence with Jake, we have undertaken here to assure that the request for concurrence goes out at least 30 days in advance of the proposed ETA. We will adhere faithfully to this procedure in the future, and regret the one instance of past failure in this area of which I am aware.

I hope you are still enjoying Viet-Nam after all your years of service there. I gather we are making good progress in most areas.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

15/

Ogden Williams  
Coordinator  
Viet-Nam Training Center

Enclosure:  
Letter

cc: MACCORDS - Leonard Maynard

O/FSI/VTC:OWilliams:pak 1/28/70

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no room

MACCORDS  
HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES MILITARY FORCE COMMAND, VIETNAM  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96222

Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, CORDS

MACCORDS

16 January 1970

Mr. Ogden Williams  
Coordinator  
Vietnam Training Center  
Foreign Service Institute  
Department of State  
Washington, D. C. 20520

Dear Ogden:

Thank you for your letter of January 2, 1970. Howard Levy is here and is planning an extensive tour in the countryside for a variety of reasons, but especially to pick up info on specific ways in which Vietnamese language speakers use the language. Any insights thus derived should be useful in improving your language course. I had a long talk with Mr. Levy and will also see him before he leaves.

Let me say again, that in principle, you and all of your staff members are more than welcome to visit us and may expect to receive all necessary support. As you realize, the failure to receive clearance from us arises generally because the request failed to reach us in time. Let us partially follow your suggested procedure for clearances, i.e. 30 days advance notice, etc., with cables slugged for me. Let us not, however, depend on the lack of a response. Rather, I will be sure to answer promptly, thus insuring that all concerned are notified. Let me here and now agree to LTC Lorne Black's trip. I also agree to your suggestion that VTC people check in with Len Maynard or with me. (You are aware of the few days of moderate anxiety we felt because Jim May had not done this. I hasten to add, however, that this wasn't Jim's fault.)

To your suggestion on checking-in procedures, let me add a refinement. CORDS/PER, as you may know, has been transferred to USAID for the most part, and checking in there doesn't necessarily mean that CORDS is informed of the arrival of one of your staff. Your people should check in not only with CORDS/USAID Personnel, but also with Byron Botts, CORDS Training Officer, as well as with Len Maynard.

I understand you have had some bitter cold weather in Washington. Keep warm. Happy Year of the Dog.

Warmly,



G. D. Jacobson  
ACofS, CORDS