



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE
WASHINGTON

May 28, 1971

Honorable Lane Dwinell
Assistant Administrator for
Administration
Agency for International Development
Washington, D.C. 20523

Dear Governor Dwinell:

We recently observed the fourth anniversary of the Viet-Nam Training Center, and I take this occasion to summarize a little of what the Center has accomplished and where it presently stands. As you know, this activity is funded by A.I.D., and I believe you will be interested to receive these few brief comments on the operation of the Center over the past four years.

As of the present time, VTC has graduated or now has in school some 1645 officers of whom 535 have been from A.I.D. (including Public Safety); 284 from State; 216 from CIA; 488 from Defense, and 122 from USIA.

The present staff of the Center consists of 12 personnel from State; six from A.I.D.; six from Army (on a contributed basis); one from USIA (which has agreed to pick up the funding of this officer in FY 1972); and one from the Marine Corps (also on a contributed basis). Thus, the present staff totals 26 persons, which includes managerial, instructional and clerical staff.

The VTC budget over the years has been as follows:

Actual FY 1967	(3 months)	\$299,894
Actual FY 1968		963,650
Actual FY 1969		836,860
Actual FY 1970		903,444
Estimated FY 1971		675,408
Estimated FY 1972		646,750

The officers in charge of VTC, known as Coordinators, have been Leonard Maynard (A.I.D. -- 1967 - 1968); Clifford Nelson (State -- 1968 - 1969), and Ogden Williams (A.I.D. -- 1969 to present). At the present time there are 83 students enrolled at the Viet-Nam Training Center -- 30 from A.I.D., 13 from State, 37 from the Military, and three from USIA. CIA ceased sending students to this program more than a year ago. FY-72 projections show 275 students attending VTC, compared with 295 in FY-71.

Commenting on the meaning of what has been accomplished at the Viet-Nam Training Center is, of course, to become involved in intangibles and is inextricably woven into the entire Viet-Nam problem. Our policy in recent years has been to withdraw from Viet-Nam in such manner as to leave behind a viable South Viet-Nam. The CORDS organization certainly plays a key role in attempting to assure such ultimate viability, at least in the fields of local security, over-all GVN efficiency and specific field operations. The CORDS contribution is, of course, complemented by USAID's role in shoring up the Vietnamese economy as a whole and providing certain long-term support to them in their effort to build a viable nation. As far as CORDS is concerned, its key personnel have been the Province Senior Advisors, the District Senior Advisors and language officers, substantially all of whom have been trained at the Viet-Nam Training Center. Their quality and performance in the field have been universally praised by our senior U.S. representatives in Viet-Nam, both civilian and military. I personally checked into this during a visit to Viet-Nam in November of last year.

Since the subject of Viet-Nam has become such a controversial issue, we cannot expect that much credit will be given to the efforts of these VTC graduates, and still less to VTC itself, but it is not impossible that this contribution will be recognized at a later date, when historians will have had a chance to view Viet-Nam more dispassionately or objectively.

At the moment VTC is engaged in the conduct of what is in effect a rear guard operation, striving until further orders to make the best of an involvement which so many people deplore. Under such circumstances, I find it remarkable that the morale of the students, and indeed the staff, has been maintained as well as it has. In terms of curriculum and instructional content, there has been steady improvement since the beginning of the school,

while costs have been significantly reduced. I think it highly probable that the VTC graduates are the most thoroughly trained Americans who have ever gone overseas to engage in specific field operations. If this effort could have been begun in 1957 instead of 1967, we might have had such expertise on the ground as to prevent many of the major errors committed by U.S. in Viet-Nam over the years.

In any case, I thought you would be interested to note some of these aspects as the Viet-Nam Training Center enters upon its fifth year of operation.

Sincerely,



Howard E. Sollenberger
Director

*Same letter sent to
Mr. Macomber &
Mr. Sullivan*

cc: N. Guaid

O/FSI-OWilliams; d:cc