

cc: A.I.D. file
(with copy of
report)

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

January 6, 1971

SUBJECT: Comments on A.I.D. Study Group Report on the
Viet-Nam Training Center — December 28, 1970

Comments are keyed to paragraphing in Report.

Paragraph IV, Conclusions

Subparagraphs 1 and 2. Actually what is relevant here is that the mission of VTC is to train CORDS advisors. That so many are military is due to the fact that civilian agencies who contribute to the pacification effort in Viet-Nam have never been able to meet the personnel resource requirements for this essentially non-military program. Hence, military personnel have had to be used by default of other more appropriate categories. From its beginning, VTC has been funded by A.I.D. It would be equally acceptable in theory, and indeed more logical, to fund the VTC operation across the board on the basis of a pro rata share according to composition of student body. At this late juncture, however, there is reason to question carefully the wisdom of pushing too strongly for such a major revision of the support apparatus. It is felt rather strongly that the civilian aegis under which this training takes place is essential if a proper emphasis is to be retained on the vital non-military elements of pacification. VTC is at present uniquely equipped to do this, a fact recognized by military authorities to the extent that the U.S. Army is negotiating for the orientation by VTC of all General officers and Colonels to be assigned to duties in Viet-Nam. In spite of this it is conceivable in this time of fiscal retrenchment that elements in Defense would rebel at the prospect of increased costs and could initiate a change in attitude which would result in an expansion of in-house training by Defense to handle their requirements in this field — counter arguments notwithstanding.

Subparagraphs 3 and 4. VTC has no comment.

Subparagraph 5. This matter should be addressed by personnel of the Language Division/FSI.

Subparagraph 6. VTC feels that: (1) The Basic Course, after the departure of Mr. Mahler, Major Booker and Mr. Mahan, and the loss of the latter's authorized space, is staffed with only three instructors (Zimmerman, Yurchak and Stewart), which is considered to be an absolute minimum. Previously, at the same workload factor, this course was

handled by four and occasionally by five staff personnel. VTC definitely non-concurs in the conclusion because it has become out of date since the time of its writing. (2) The Extended Course has recently been overstaffed with three men due to a lowered input of civilian language trainees from A.I.D. and State. This input will rise again in early spring 1971. VTC concurs in a reduction of one space in its Extended Course staff.

Subparagraph 7. VTC concurs in this general observation and agrees to re-define and re-affirm this provision.

Subparagraph 8. We believe this paragraph misstates the situation. Actually, VTC trains both military and civilian PSA's together. During 1970 there were 27 military and 16 civilian PSA's graduated from the Center. The civilians do not receive the District Course or the language training because State has not been willing to spare them that long. This accounts for the longer military tour at VTC. The PSA Course, as explained above, is essentially a course for advisors in the political and pacification areas. Half of the incumbents in Viet-Nam are military, the other half are civilian. The civilian portion is expected to increase as the security problem subsides. Military schools would not be qualified to conduct such training. It must also be noted that Defense shares the cost of all their students by furnishing eight military personnel to the VTC staff and faculty without charge.

Subparagraph 9. No comment.

Paragraph V. Recommendations

A. Funding

1. A.I.D. should also continue to fund the operations portions of the PSA and Extended Courses as well, unless a complete renegotiation takes place which would put VTC funding on an all-agency pro rata basis.
2. No further comment (see above).
3. VTC agrees.
4. No comment.
5. This aspect covered by subparagraph 8 comment above. Such an action would be most inadvisable and would severely affect the PSA Course which is considered of priority interest by CORDS/Viet-Nam. The course reflects the predominant civil emphasis of the advisor's role. This

training should be retained at VTC. The recommendation as written probably would result in the withdrawal of military PSA's from VTC.

B. Staffing

1. Non-language. Within the past year A.I.D.-financed staff authorizations have been reduced by four. A further reduction of two slots has been suggested by AID/A/PM. VTC's position is that it can accept loss of one more slot, but not two.

It is the view of VTC that the need for a continuation of the VTC mission at the present level of effectiveness and quality is not only the desire of the user, CORDS/MACV, but is also the policy of the President and his NSC advisers. While all attempts to improve efficiency or streamline operations should be welcomed, any basic degradation of the VTC effort should not be effected unilaterally at the instance of any single participating agency, without concurrence of CORDS/Viet-Nam and the White House.

2. Language Training. VTC has no comment. Language Division to prepare a reply.

C. Other

1. No objection. This is partly an internal A.I.D. question.

2. Concur in the intended purpose, but note that A.I.D. has not been able to meet its quota of language candidates, even with lowered MLAT's. Needs of CORDS/Viet-Nam should not be overlooked.

3. VTC would agree to a reduction of one week.

4. VTC has reservations but agrees that the point should be discussed in detail between A/PM, VTC Basic Course and Language Division representatives.

5. VTC agrees strongly.

6. Civilian PSA students (as differentiated from long-term enrollees) do take an equivalent of the military PSA Course. Long-term language students do not require the same higher-level management emphasis which PSA students receive, since they will never be PSA's in the field. Language officers are FSR (FSO) 6-8. PSA candidates are FSR (FSO) 1-4.

7. This recommendation presumes, we believe, non-achievement in language learning by certain students. In such cases, VTC concurs in

a topping-out procedure. When the student is making good progress, he should continue to the S-3, R-3 level. CORDS/Viet-Nam has given no indication that it no longer needs S-3 officers.

8. While VTC concurs that such questions should be considered, it doubts that the Interagency Committee would in fact solve the problems raised, and supposes that decision at higher levels will be required.

9. The Two-Sided Political Wargame (Cacapon, West Virginia). This one-day exercise has received nearly universal endorsement from participating students. It has served as a model for a similar exercise conducted by the U.S. Army Institute for Military Assistance at Fort Bragg. It is conducted off-site, which has added to the cost factor, but this is more than compensated for by the benefits both direct and indirect which are derived from the exercise. The exercise is a significant element of the quality aspect which has underlain the success of the VTC training mission. VTC does not favor either the elimination of the exercise or its relocation. In the event of a severe shortage of funds for the training of CORDS advisors, the problem of the total VTC training budget would have to be reviewed again to determine if, in fact, the exercise should be restructured.

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