

PIKE NOTES

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Vietnam Situation (Briefing)

1. DRV appears to sense that it may be able to make a knock-out blow in South Vietnam (Thieu is weaker; GVN problems greater; US support less determined).
  - a. DRV draft calls up
  - b. Training period shortened to six weeks
  - c. Increased troop movement south, including 2 of 6 strategic reserve divisions.
  - d. Stepped up propaganda line on U.S. impotence.

Vietnam/ 2

GVN moving towards new and drastically altered strategy: end the defense of all areas ~~with~~ combined with ~~an~~ offensive maneuvers, in favor of pull-back to more defensible ~~positions~~ with shorter defense lines. Defend population/resources rather than real estate.)

Probably will seek to defend lowland areas in southern half of the country, or below DaNang.

Change due primarily to fact that ARVN has been expending large amounts of ordnance and military supplies and considers that it faces the prospect of declining U.S. aid and must adjust accordingly.

## U.S. Policy in Vietnam

- Vietnamese (as well as other Asians) have grave doubts about U.S. steadfastness as supporter; U.S. determination to stand by Paris Agreements; willingness (and ability) to maintain a general mutual association. Most understand this is due to Hill constrictions, to U.S. economic scene and to a generally changing U.S. internal political scene.

- U.S. policy in Vietnam is to seek to do what it can to prevent the fighting from escalating; to fulfill its obligations; to seek a diminution in killing; to do this in as broad an Asian context as possible.

- Like it or not, deny it or not, U.S. credibility is at stake. Can we let down the people we worked with, to whom we gave specific promises. We promised GVN specific support if it would agree to the Paris Agreements.

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- Insideous thing about ~~the~~ credibility is that if you have it you don't need to do as much as if you do not have it. Many of our troubles ~~are~~ around the world are due to lessening of U.S. credibility.