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CONCEPT FOR VICTORY
IN VIETNAM

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This is a concept for victory in Vietnam, a victory won by the free Vietnamese with American help.

The concept is based on the belief that the United States will remain determined to keep Vietnam free and that, for this purpose and as it did at the birth of an independent Vietnam, it finally will send there a "first team" of men who have proven their ability to defeat Asian Communist subversive insurgents, before it is altogether too late.

Such a team, augmented by other volunteers whose hearts are in the good fight and who can serve as true friends of the Vietnamese, will need a clear concept of its steps to victory. The concept, in turn, will require the team's unique skill and understanding to make the steps effective.

The concept, illustrative measures, and requirements follow:

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I. FUNDAMENTALS/CONCEPT

a. The now tragically critical situation in Vietnam dictates that the United States, as the champion of Vietnam's freedom, needs a way to focus its genius, energy, and material strength anew to help ensure a firm win in Vietnam. It is not a declared war. Thus, the provisions of the U.S. Constitution for the declaration and waging of war by the United States are really not in force, and without them being in force, the great "will to win" of the American people is still largely missing. Lacking a Constitutional or democratic way of "declaring a cold war," the Executive and Legislative branches of the U.S. government need to find a way of doing this, together, which is understood and accepted whole-heartedly by the American people.

One way of doing this would be for both Houses of Congress to appoint special "Cold War" committees, which could meet jointly, and meet with the Executive (the NSC). They would assist the Executive in keeping the American people informed of the stake, progress, and needs in Vietnam, as well as act as the Congressional focal points of all Legislative action required by the war in Vietnam.

b. In the final analysis, however, the war in Vietnam must be won by the Vietnamese themselves, not by foreigners including Americans. Thus, any victory plan must be so developed with Vietnamese participation that it becomes a Vietnamese plan, one that they believe in deeply and want to do themselves. Any plan will work only if the Vietnamese are given the "how to do it" in a way they understand and accept. Many American proposals in Vietnam have been very good, but have not been executed properly. It takes wise American friendship to guide the Vietnamese into realizing and using their own great character and strength.

c. The dominant factors of the Communist insurgency in Vietnam must be understood before they can be met and defeated. At this stage of the insurgency, certain factors leading to Communist success would still remain even if South Vietnam were isolated completely from North Vietnam or other outside Communist help. These factors are seen as:

- 1). The Communist insurgents have a firm political base which the Vietnamese people understand.
- 2). The Communist insurgents have a program to gain control of the people, which they implement diligently.
- 3). The Communist insurgents have a strong belief in eventual victory, giving them patient determination.
- 4). The Communist insurgents have totally committed forces, strengthened by "iron discipline."
- 5). The Communist insurgents have leadership skilled in subversive insurgency.

6). The Communist insurgents are facing our Vietnamese allies who presently lack all of the above essential prerequisites to victory.

d. A sound victory in Vietnam, true to the principles of free men, will require the following, at least:

1). The free Vietnamese must establish their own dynamic political base, to motivate and support all other actions. (This is seen as setting a heartfelt political goal and creating the political means to start achieving it, thus polarizing the forces of freedom, giving them something to which they willingly can pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.)

2). The forces of freedom must be committed totally to victory. (This is to be done the way free people do, by thorough imparting of the truth about the threat of tyranny in Vietnam and what each individual who loves liberty must do to help.)

3). The Armed Forces of Vietnam must become the protectors and helpful brothers of the people, not their oppressors.

4). Equally, Vietnamese civil officials must seek to attain the ideal of treating public office as a trust and of serving the people before themselves.

5). Leadership of the free Vietnamese must become stabilized, including immediately establishing the rule of orderly change instead of the rule of force, and energetically developing the means to create government by the consent of those governed; at the same time, ways must be found to encourage and help the advancement of Vietnamese demonstrating successful leadership in the current struggle, particularly at lower echelons.

6). Ways and means must be provided so that the people of Vietnam and the people of the United States, including Americans at home, can work together more strongly in brotherly good-will and real practicality to win this struggle.

7). Also, ways and means must be provided for acceptable volunteers, Vietnamese and others in the Free World, to serve in this good cause.

8). Americans (the "first team") of demonstrated skill in defeating Asian Communist subversive insurgents, in whom the Vietnamese have trust and confidence, must be positioned effectively in Vietnam to provide the sound guidance needed for victory; concurrently, since the number of such Americans is shockingly small, these Americans should be empowered to set their own standards in accepting and using American volunteers for disciplined service with the "first team" in Vietnam, to create a larger body of experienced, successful American counterinsurgents.

II. POLITICAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL

a. Hope. The critically urgent need in Vietnam today is a psychological one -- to create solid hope in a much brighter future for free Vietnam than is apparent now, including an ever-widening belief that the war can and will be won. Swift, showy actions may raise hope ephemerally as in the past, being replaced by deeper gloom, unless firmly supported from three bases: political, military, and foreign assistance. The political base is sine qua non. Without it, all other efforts become futile.

b. Political Base. The political base must be so conceived that it will be truly Vietnamese, even though Americans quietly help with the "know how." It is seen as including stabilizing Vietnam's leadership, sparking polarization by a Declaration of Liberty, developing Vietnam's political institutions, and broadening popular participation in the struggle for freedom.

c. Stabilizing Leadership. Vietnamese civilians have suggested a plan worthy of consideration for reorganizing their present government to permit orderly changes in leadership without changing the regime, and to allow the government to function effectively by clearly defining military and civilian roles within it. In essence, after initially establishing the government, the Military Council would limit its role to that of a watch-dog body. In the beginning, it would name the Chief of Staff.

who would be military, and the Prime Minister, who would be civilian (or retired military). The Prime Minister would appoint his own ministers who would be civilians, with the entire slate subject to the approval of the Military Council. The Minister of Defense's responsibilities would be limited to general administrative aspects, with the Chief of Staff (named by the Military Council) having full executive responsibility. A National Security Council would be created, headed by the Chief of State with the Chief of Staff and the Prime Minister as Vice Chairmen and the Ministers of Defense, Interior, Information and Rural Affairs as members. The Council would plan and direct the execution of the pacification campaign and would be ultimately responsible for approving troop dispositions and appointments of province chiefs and key commanders. It would have an executive secretary with a staff capable of handling the surrender program and support for the pacification campaign.

d. Polarization. Most instruments of political polarization have lost their meaning in South Vietnam by now. There have been too many meretricious oath ceremonies, temporary swearings of fealty, and unfulfilled promises. Yet, the need for a unifying political belief remains deep in the Vietnamese character. One possible way of codifying this would be through issuing a Declaration of Liberty, originally signed by the leaders of the present Vietnamese government, even signed in their blood if need be. The Declaration would outline briefly the principles of service to freedom and country essential for victory, with a pledge to uphold them or else suffer public shame. Signers will be bound to the pledge by all other signers. As notables, key executives, and volunteers accept responsible duties, they too must sign copies of the Declaration. Honoring the Declaration should be an essential criterion for being entrusted with authority. If they dishonor this pledge in carrying out their duties, it will be the signal for dismissal and shame.

e. Assembly of Notables. One means of promptly starting to develop broader political institutions, including practical democracy, would be to create an Assembly of Notables and task it with increasing political activities. Done properly, it could have a much sounder transition role in Vietnam, from Junta to Constitutional government, than present arbitrary and probably premature plans to hold elections

this Fall for representatives to a Constituent Assembly which will draft another Constitution. The creation of an Assembly of Notables would fill the void left by the abolition of the Council of Notables by the present government. The consultative Council of Notables provided an outlet and channel for the public opinions and for the energies of political leaders not included in the government. Such an institution is needed. A new Assembly of Notables should include representatives from all major patriotic political parties and groups.

When the military clear and hold a district, the Assembly would send a bipartisan or multipartisan committee to assess the freedom from Communist controls in the district. The committee would report its assessment to the Assembly who would evaluate it and forward recommendations to the National Security Council, which would evaluate it with a concurrent, separate report from the Province Chief. When conditions are deemed secure enough, the National Security Council would then order the election to be held. The Assembly of Notables would then organize and hold, with the help of the Province Chief a secret popular election in the hamlets and towns of the district, to elect the District Chief. (Note: This will not only tend to improve the quality of District Chiefs, but will also start giving the government a popular base and generate healthy growth of political parties.)

f. Decentralization. Effective governmental operations in Vietnam will require substantial decentralization of authority. Province chiefs must have the responsibility and authority for making decisions in pacification and civil government matters. This authority must, of course, be accompanied by clear policy guidelines. Many decisions might well require the concurrence of the provincial joint committee (composed of the province chief, the USOM provincial representative and the (U.S.) MAAG sector adviser), as is presently required in matters involving AID funds or materials. Advice of a provincial counterpart of the Assembly of Notables might well be mandatorily sought in some fields. With authority and responsibility must go the means for action.

Presently the need for decentralization seems to be generally realized. However, it is proposed to be sought by giving civilian governmental authority to (military) corps commanders. This can only result in proliferating the bureaucratic system already strangling

government, and increasing the ineffectiveness (and opportunities for alibis) of the province chiefs. This type decentralization must be firmly repressed. Corps (and division) commanders already over-control and have no place in, or taste for, civilian governmental matters.

g. National Complaints Office. This affords one of the best possible mechanisms for demonstrating government concern for the welfare of the governed. It is also, if properly handled, and this is difficult but not impossible, probably the best means for determining the extent of compliance, by lower government officials, military as well as civilians, with the announced policies of government. Finally, it can provide dramatic proof of the falsity of the Communist claim that the central government condones, if it does not actually support, the mal-practices of petty tyrants, all too common on the scene. This office, with an excellent adviser has been established. It requires emergency support if it is not to fail, as did the one established in 1954.

h. Military Political Action. The military forces have a critical role in political action. Until and unless they, usually the most visible and most felt component of government, behave in a way to give credence to the claims of government that it actually seeks the welfare of the people, the political base of government cannot grow fast enough to meet the Communist challenge. Military Civic Action is essentially political action, and it must be emphasized in that light. It must be a command responsibility and carried out by all military units and individuals in contact with the public.

i. Publicity. The Vietnamese are sick of government propaganda, they say. Those who have heard much of it (and they are perhaps one-half of the population) are assuredly most skeptical of any government claims. Those who have heard little or nothing of the claims are also skeptical. There must be greater propaganda coverage, and much greater credibility. Relatively conventional means, well implemented, can satisfactorily increase propaganda coverage, especially through the use of troop newspapers, widely distributed to civilians by the troops themselves. Credibility can be improved most quickly by better troop behavior, and by effective action by the National Complaints office. This should receive priority support. Specific government economic and social actions should certainly receive massive publicity by conventional means.

j. Foreign Assistance. Despite the vast quantity of men and materials sent to Vietnam as "assistance" and despite the seemingly firm assurances of continued support as necessary, the Vietnamese are still not entirely certain that they can count on U.S. aid. (Nor are all Americans sure that they can.) The best assurance which can be given the leaders (and they will quickly transmit it to all who are interested) will be the dispatch of the "first team." This will be augmented when visits from U.S. dignitaries (inevitably suspected of re-appraising the continuance of support and at times demonstrating lack of understanding of the problems) are sharply curtailed.

k. Chieu Hoi and Prisoner Programs. The Chieu Hoi (Surrender) program has demonstrated, as expected, a strong potential for demonstrating to the people the good intentions of their government, and for drawing personnel out of the Vietcong ranks. It has suffered from little or no command support, and atrocious administration. Fortunately, there have been no notorious cases of maltreatment of returnees. Existing plans are adequate, if implemented, which will require the strong top-level American guidance which has been lacking.

A comparable program for rehabilitation of detainees (who would be called prisoners of war if this were an admitted war) is also needed. This should be established separately from the criminal prison system (also in need of reform) and might well be similar to, but expanded beyond, the "honor platoon" system formerly used in U.S. Army disciplinary barracks. Partial plans for this effort already exist. There is much to be done in this field, not so much as a conventional "correction" effort, but as a counter-insurgency weapon.

l. Religion. Buddhism seems rapidly to be becoming a problem, with all actions against VC or criminals being denounced as renewal of the persecution of Buddhists (a persecution far more imaginary than real). Richard Gard, probably the most useful American in this field, is, or recently has been, in Vietnam. His advice on action in this field should be sought. Certainly an inter-faith committee is urgently needed.

m. Movies. Virtually all the ingredients for effective newsreel work exist in abundance in Vietnam. The problem, as with Chieu Hoi, is the lack of competent U.S. top-level support and guidance of necessary Vietnamese action. Mrs. Bucher (USOM Commedia) can do the job, given the backing.

n. Black Propaganda. There is no effective Vietnamese organization for white, black, or grey propaganda, except those controlled by the Vietcong. Until the existing organizations are made effective in white and grey, black should be handled under U.S. control.

The most apparent immediate large-scale action would be the publication of two "black" newspapers, for distribution to the Vietcong, each espousing one side in the apparent Sino-Soviet split. Much of their content should come directly from Radios Moscow, Peking, and Hanoi. Ample local material to supplement this could readily be made available, if the project had suitable leadership and backing. Such newspapers would also be most useful for disseminating embarrassing instructions in a way sure to reach the peasants.

Black radio probably could be usefully and readily employed. Insufficient data are presently available. Substantial help on this could be obtained from Father Hoa and the Chinese.

o. Montagnards. The entire Montagnard program needs re-examination and re-evaluation to determine how far the substantial reorientation required should go. Certainly a great deal more emphasis needs to be placed on developing and supporting Montagnard leaders. Against its will, U.S. Army Special Forces has neglected miserably its doctrinally primary duty to develop and guide indigenous leaders. They should be given this mission (in conjunction with knowledgeable civilians) and given the necessary top-level backing to enable them to accomplish it. This is requisite both to establishing the political base and to effective counter-Vietcong action in the mountainous areas of South Vietnam. It might be desirable to establish, unofficially, a U.S. Office of Montagnard Affairs, staffed jointly by USOM, Special Forces, and MAC-V, to coordinate all actions affecting these people.

p. Minorities (non-Montagnard). Both the Minh and Khanh governments have professed great interest in employing the knowledge and abilities of the sects and the ethnic Khmers. Some U.S. interest has been shown, but it has been sporadic and poorly coordinated, largely the additional duties of Americans personally interested. GVN activities have similarly been sporadic and ill-coordinated, with the additional factor of political and personal efforts to gain power. This problem also needs intelligent U.S. examination, policy determination, and guidance.

q. National Mobilization. The arguments for this are many, and seemly good. The psychological effects (critical to this war) are horrible. The exact measures to be taken to remedy this misstep must await on-the-spot determination, but will probably amount to the setting up of such broad criteria for exclusion, and their equitable enforcement, as largely to nullify the proclamation. Some measures to this end have already been announced.

r. Americans at home. One way of bringing the spirit and genius of the Americans at home into helping the Vietnamese gain strength against tyranny is to make practical and specific use of the people-to-people concept. Newburyport, Massachusetts, showed the way in 1961 when it "adopted" Binh Hung, Camau, after reading about this fighting hamlet in the Saturday Evening Post. Newburyport citizens voluntarily sent some of their own American spirit and material means to help sustain the embattled hamlet. Much more of this type of action needs doing. It could be done by USOM Rural Affairs officers listing the hamlets in Vietnam which richly deserve such American help. U.S. news media (such as Readers Digest, Time-Life, Newsweek, Saturday Evening Post, and TV Networks) could tell the intensely dramatic stories of individual hamlets and urge their "adoption" by U.S. small cities and towns. The rejuvenated American Friends of Vietnam, in New York City, could be tasked with coordinating and administering the U.S. end, while USOM Rural Affairs could be tasked similarly at the Vietnam end.

III. MILITARY

Military forces and equipment already in Vietnam should be more than sufficient to cope with most military aspects of the Vietcong insurgency. Better understanding of the role of the military, better action by them, more delegation of authority and insistence upon responsibility with more clearly defined guidelines, and far more insistence on effective action in consonance with those guidelines, are the critical needs. Following are suggestions on some of the needed and appropriate actions:

a. Separate Civilian and Military Functions.

(1). Get the military hierarchy out of the chain of command for civilian governmental affairs, even though civilian offices may be held by military men. Holders of civil offices owe a primary duty to the governed, not to their superiors.

(2). Recognize that the majority of the time and effort of the military in this war should be spent in support of the pacification effort. Give the Province Chiefs, who must be responsible for the pacification and development of their provinces the operational control of the forces necessary. Assign troops to them for fixed periods of time, long enough to do the job, and leave them assigned until the operation is completed, or abandoned. Retain at either Corps or Division only sufficient authority and troops for inter-provincial coordination of military matters, and for re-enforcements. Make of these headquarters primarily administrative and support commands, combined with the existing CALCs (Corps Area Logistic Commands).

b. Night Combat. ARVN needs a big, healthy morale boost, and needs to begin fighting the VC when it is most vulnerable, at night. One way to achieve both goals would be to select a regular ARVN battalion, give it a concentrated course of training in night patrols and combat, and then hand-pick one or more operations in which hard intelligence indicates the target is relatively easy to take. Proven by such combat operations, the battalion would then be assigned to a larger target, again using hard intelligence to plan the operation. With success, the squads of the battalion will then be assigned temporarily to other battalions, to instruct in night combat, including

changing reveille to evening and the duty day to the hours of the night. Awards, decorations, promotions, R&R leave should be awarded judiciously to encourage this effort. The reason a regular ARVN line battalion is selected is to show the remainder of ARVN that soldiers just like themselves can learn to win.

c. Unorthodox Operations. Special units of ARVN should be readied and used for more imaginative operations, stressing deception, deep penetrations, counter-ambushes as part of regular ARVN operations, and similar unconventional methods. Field study might well show that such units should be concentrated for operating against the most positively identified VC strongholds, so that they become experienced in a specific area against a specific enemy.

Airborne anti-guerrilla-guerrillas. Specially selected volunteers should be trained for maximum mobility and endurance for this work. The aim, with this type of small unit, supplied from the air, possessing superior fire power, would be for them to harass VC bases with VC grouping points and supply centers. Mode of operation should be flexible and always changing. For instance, sometimes they can be taken into an area by helicopters and taken out after a mission is accomplished. Other times they can be put in by helicopters but they have to fight their way to a friendly center and to be transported back from there. Still other times, they can infiltrate into enemy territory on foot to serve as vanguards for regular units to actually do the fighting. They should be flown out as soon as their mission is completed.

d. Command Action. Aggressive action against the Viet Cong, and positive action to help the people (which means, in effect, everyone not actually caught fighting with guns, words or deeds against the government) must be stressed in every way possible. An immediate step to this end could well be the issuance of the following orders:

1). Order, simultaneously issued by GVN and U.S. commands, military and civilian: The armed forces, and the civilian personnel of government, have a primary mission to protect the people of South Vietnam; their secondary mission is to help them. Failure to accomplish these missions will be punished by death, or such other punishment as the courtmartial may direct.

2). Order, both commands: Every commander will vigorously seek to bring the enemy to battle, and to destroy him; this is the best way to accomplish the primary mission. Failure to seek out and engage the enemy, failure to close with and seek to destroy the enemy, failure to reinforce by any available means and to the extent reasonably necessary those engaged in combat, will be punished by death, or such other punishment as the courtmartial may direct.

3). Order, both commands: Actual or apparent violations of orders 1 and 2 above will be reported through channels by the most expeditious means. Each echelon of command (regimental or sector, division, corps, JCS) shall be allowed a maximum of 24 hours in which to initiate and report appropriate action, and not more than 4 days in which to complete action, or report failure. Information copies of all reports concerning violations by military personnel shall be sent to the Joint Military Section of the Presidential Complaints and Actions Office; violations by civilians shall be similarly reported to the Joint Civilian Section of the same Office. Failure to report, or to take proper action on reports, whether by Vietnamese or Americans, shall be deemed to constitute action as accessory after the fact to the original offense.

4). Order, both commands: No ordnance shall be expended from aircraft or artillery, unless both the officers in charge and any U.S. advisers or personnel present are satisfied that the target does not include non-combatant women or children. Mistakes mean court-martial.

e. Troop Information. Effective troop information and indoctrination must be continuous and effective. The Psychological Warfare Directorate should be given the men and means to prepare and support an adequate program, and command emphasis placed on conscientious implementation by troop commanders. This emphasis must be underlined by requiring that the principle of command responsibility be invoked in punishment of any troop actions contrary to the concept that soldiers are the government's "ambassadors of good will" to the governed.

f. Weapons. In view of the tremendous number of individual weapons and ammunition available in Vietnam, their loss to the Vietcong is neither entirely a serious drain on the government, nor entirely a boon to the Vietcong. While their loss through cowardice, carelessness, or theft-sale should be sternly punished, it should be punishment for the reason for loss, rather than for the loss itself. Otherwise, the principle of issuing weapons to any who want, can and seemingly will use them appears wise. Many hamlets have gone over to the Vietcong in recent months, as many never truly supported the government, because the hamlet militia were disarmed, or never armed, for fear of weapons loss.

The situation is made to order for the introduction of contaminated ammunition, given a capable person with adequate authority in charge of the program. Anyone who has even the shadow of a legitimate reason for having ammunition should be able to get it in ample quantity from identified sources. (The sole exception is MAS-36 ammunition, which is being produced at 4/7ths capacity only, due to MAAG efforts to get these weapons withdrawn.) The effect of contaminated ammunition in Chinese or other Bloc weapons held by Vietcong can readily, and happily, be imagined.

Unquestionably, too, there should be an effective program of rewards for the capture in combat, of significant weapons (mortars, .50 calibre machine guns, etc.) of U.S. origin. Rewards might be paid for Bloc weapons of this nature, whether taken in combat or otherwise. No program for purchase of individual weapons should be undertaken at this time, although nominal rewards might be given to those defectors who bring in their arms.

g. Veterans. The immediate need is for compensation, quick and appropriate, for widows and orphans. Almost as immediate is the need for adequate provision for those disabled by wounds. Further in the future, a widespread veterans program will become essential. It should be planned for now, and announced as soon as firm, and will unquestionably have a morale value. Retirement is also a problem which must be faced (old soldiers know that an allowance for retirement has been deducted from their pay, but that this money has not been set aside for them). Also, given an operative retirement system, many "old fogies" could, as they should be, retired now.

h. Desertion. Deserters prior to 1 November were promised, by Minh and Khanh, forgiveness if they returned by 1 May. This may have been extended. Suggest that a program similar to that proposed for VC prisoners, but shorter, perhaps 3-months duration, should be instituted, well-publicized, and effectively implemented. Until the political base is built, the only effective answer to desertion would seem to be investigation, and, where appropriate, punishment of those responsible for conditions impelling desertion.

IV. ECONOMIC/SOCIAL

a. Goals. The U.S. has the personnel in Vietnam and the means readily available to help the Vietnamese achieve, within a relatively short period of time, a series of dynamic economic and social goals aimed at winning the support of the rural population. These goals would be announced with a time-table as the "progress and prosperity" part of a dramatic Vietnamese political platform for victory. To achieve maximum effort, however, economic and social actions must be an integral part of an overall political plan. Moreover, effective implementation depends entirely upon the creation of unified, motivated Vietnamese national leadership. Only a few achievable goals should be announced, such as:

1). A 25% increase in agricultural production and income in Free Areas in 1965, mainly through fertilizer, seed and insecticide distribution.

2). A school in every hamlet in Free Areas by expanding the existing Self-Help program.

3). Immediate Land Reform in Free Areas through newly created land commissions with the authority and funds to make equitable settlements on-the-spot. Chinese advisors from Taiwan are available to assist.

b. Volunteer Teams. An essential requirement for effective implementation of these goals are dedicated teams of civilians working with the rural population. Experience to date clearly demonstrates that forcing bureaucrats to go to the countryside or the crash training of recruits off-the-streets for this purpose has not worked. Instead of winning support, past teams have alienated the population by their aloofness, arrogance, dishonesty, or fear to remain in hamlets overnight.

Volunteers must replace this approach. Although future volunteer teams would in fact be working for the provincial government, they might be sponsored by an elected provincial council (or, initially, appointed), and at the national level a newly convened Assembly of Notables or some other form of joint private-government sponsorship could recruit and train them. Recruits would come initially from the students and members of the political and religious groupings, who have the enthusiasm but lack organization. Later, as the operation snow-balls, volunteers from the government Ministries would be permitted to join. Free World volunteer organizations such as Operation Brotherhood might be called in to assist.

c. Farmers Associations. The success of the piggery program (over 5,000 new families raising pigs within a year) and the fertilizer-seed program (a 40% increase in crop yields in Central Vietnam in one year) carried out mainly through farmers associations with the help of USOM Rural Affairs, indicates the potential for meeting the desired economic and social goals while creating means for staunch political expression in the countryside. This area of action could provide the single greatest motivation for popular defense against Communism at the grass-roots, if fully developed. The current U.S. increase in the fertilizer project is still far short of the dramatic goals which could be attained, given a sound political base and seeking to build a far more dynamic role for farmers associations.

d. Saigon-Cholon. There is a great security hazard existing in the many slums and the overcrowded refugee areas of Vietnam's capital city. Hundreds of thousands of people barely exist each day, within a block or two of U.S. headquarters and all major Vietnamese governmental offices. This human misery is wide open to Communist control and exploitation. As a matter of urgency, a vigorous start should be made to alleviate these conditions. It truly is a matter of life-or-death to Americans in Saigon, for these slums produce the throwers of bombs, the local terrorists. Equally, it could be a matter of life-or-death to the Vietnamese government, since these slums could spew forth boiling mobs which could make a real shambles of the capital city. One ready solution exists in the Food for Peace program, to start building better housing immediately through a Food for Work project. (In Taiwan, under Sec. 202, PL 480, 30,000 tons of rice met labor costs to build 8,000 high-rise apartment units.)

e. Denial. A special team, concentrating mainly on psychological warfare measures and operating directly under the Premier, composed of experts from several Ministries, Bureaus, and Commands, should be assigned the task of denying food, medicines, and other supplies to the VC from South Vietnamese sources. The special team also should run an intelligence estimate on smuggling to the North, and publicize any meaningful results to ascribe VC actions in SVN as being really motivated by agrarian failures in NVN and Communist China. "Piracy" rather than "liberation." Also, black "orders" to VC units could be introduced, stopping collection from peasants, announcing a new National Liberation Front supply program made possible by liberation of the routes from Laos and allies in Cambodia, and promising delivery of definite items by definite dates. A program such as outlined provides a meaningful alternative to scorched-earth operations or extensive controls which alienate the population whose support the government needs to win.

V. NORTH VIETNAM/LAOS/CAMBODIA

North Vietnam as a source of orders, personnel, and materiel for the Vietcong is important but not critical to their victory or defeat. Substantially the same may be said of the contribution made to their cause by the use of Laos and Cambodia as relatively secure routes of communication and base areas. Overt U.S. intervention against North Vietnam or Cambodia is neither necessary nor appropriate. Allowing the Communists or neutralists in these countries to believe that they are safe from the anti-communists whom they harm, that their actions can always be taken with impunity, is equally unnecessary and inappropriate. Appropriate action against North Vietnam, with obvious (although preferably not admitted) U.S. backing, will be strong evidence of U.S. determination and understanding, as well as grounds for renewed hope for victory by those (the misinformed majority) who believe North Vietnamese or Chinese support is essential to the Vietcong.

To be appropriate and useful, this action must take into account the fact that Communist subversive insurgency in South Vietnam was initiated from a political base, the Front for National Liberation. Actions against North Vietnam require a political base, also.

a. Notable leaders from North Vietnam now residing in Saigon should form a Council of Liberty and issue a liberation policy for NVN, perhaps including it in the Declaration of Liberty described above. However, the Council of Liberty should issue a basic platform of political aims for NVN. This platform should then be used as the basis for all psychological operations directed into North Vietnam, along with warnings to the people not to rise prematurely against their Communist masters.

b. Agent work in NVN initially should be the organizing of intelligence nets and then gradually recruiting resistance groups for more military actions. Popular sabotage, to harass the NVN regime just below the level of acts to bring reprisals, will be initiated. So also will be deception operations, designed to convince NVN authorities that subversive activist movements are well developed and strongly, if not skillfully, supported.

c. The very substantial potential for guerrilla operations in NVN by tribal and minority groups should be supported and exploited. Black Thai and other groups have already sent emissaries to Col Vang Pao, the Meo commander in Laos, asking for weapons and other support. At least one other large tribal group has well-advanced plans and obvious support of their people, for substantial, locally-based, harassing actions against North Vietnam. Every effort should be made to supply the necessary guidance and support to these movements.

d. In Laos, similar but more developed conditions and movements exist. There are many thousand mountain people who have left their homes and gone into semi-nomadic warfare because they trusted in the promises of U.S. support. The wraps should be removed from these operations and full, at least semi-overt, support given to them. As a nation professedly devoted to freedom, we can only strengthen our standing by helping those fighting for freedom from our enemies.

e. Consideration might be given, if dramatic, positive, acknowledged action seems required, to placing a military "interdiction" force across Laos, from the Thai to the Vietnamese borders, just below the 17th parallel. This might be done with either U.S., SEATO, or Freedom Company forces. Heralded as a "keep-the-peace" move, it probably would not escalate the war significantly, but would tremendously hearten our allies, and materially inconvenience our enemies.

f. Cambodia presents other problems and opportunities.

The desirable solution here, feasible if properly sought, would be a Cambodian government supporting U.S. aims. Short of this, since the U.S. is already convicted in the eyes of the Khmer public of timid ineffectual dabbling in the Khmer Serai movement, the use of other ethnic Khmer (numerous in the Mekong delta of South Vietnam) should be a first priority measure. An existing but moribund RKG-sponsored anti-Vietnamese group, the Khmer Kampuchea Krom could readily be used as a cover for para-military actions against Vietcong bases and supply routes in Cambodia. Given a useful intelligence system, the "international waterway" aspect of the Mekong as a Communist logistic route might be dealt with by "river pirates."

VI. ALLIES/FREEDOM COMPANY

If SEATO continues to show itself to be an impractical instrument for defending the Southeast Asia Treaty Area from Communist subversive insurgency, SEATO either should be changed drastically to meet the needs of the situation or else be clearly limited to its present role, while a substitute organization is created as a Free World Action arm in its place. It is doubtful that a changed SEATO, with a change such as dropping the negative and neutralist French from membership, would be able to do more than add conventional contributions to conflicts in Vietnam and Laos which have proven already that the conventional is not enough.

A far more practical and meaningful action arm would be international Freedom Company, under U.S. leadership, initiation, and sponsorship. This would be created along lines similar to the former Freedom Company of the Philippines, as a public corporation pledged to the cause of man's liberty. Through accords reached with several governments, Freedom Company would accept volunteers for service with it. Again, as the former Freedom Company did, it would contract with a beleaguered government, such as Vietnam's, to enter the country as advisors and technicians to help free the country. It is believed that, beyond the American volunteers, there would be a great sufficiency of volunteers from neighboring countries such as the Philippines, Nationalist China, and Thailand. It is possible also, whenever politically feasible to do so, to draw volunteers from Cambodia, Laos, and even North Vietnam.

A properly established and constituted Freedom Company in Vietnam would permit the orderly withdrawal of many of the U.S. official personnel in Vietnam. Also, Freedom Company could undertake the great military-economic projects awaiting doing in Vietnam, such as adequate, "deforestation" of Zone D through an armed-security force timbering operation or the Big Timber project of clearing a one kilometer wide strip down the Vietnamese border from the 17th Parallel. It is possible that commercial sales from such projects would be sufficient to underwrite much of the Freedom Company operations required to free Vietnam.

Part of the proper establishment of Freedom Company would be a U.S. board of directors selected from distinguished Americans thoroughly familiar with top policy needs (such names come to mind as Dean Acheson, A. A. Berle, Jr., Admiral Radford, Admiral Stump, Gen. "Iron Mike" O'Daniel, Gen. Tom White, Hugh Cumming, Jr., Roswell Gilpatric, James Douglas, and Allen Dulles). As the volunteering becomes international, the board of directors also should be broadened with similar distinguished members from other nations.

In the event the United States finds it impractical to send a "first team" to Vietnam, to operate within the strictures of official institutionalized missions, then consideration should be given to using the "first team" as a beginning hard core for establishing an international Freedom Company, and to sending this beginning hard core to Vietnam, where Freedom Company will be built directly in the area of conflict, progressively taking over the counterinsurgency role and relieving U.S. officials of such missions as quickly as it is able to do so. It seems logical that, once such an international force of free men is demonstrably a success in countering Communist subversive insurgency, then it can be used further in other areas to help people throw off Communist tyranny.

The Freedom Company idea, brought to life and applied in a meaningful way, might well supply the vital spark for freedom's cause in Vietnam and elsewhere now missing. It should give those who love liberty and who want to join the good fight a way to serve, just as much as the Communist "peace fighters."

VII. THE TEAM

The idea of the U.S. sending a small team of winners to Vietnam is not new. The U.S. did this, and got solid wins over Asian Communist subversive insurgency, in the Philippines 1950-53 and in Vietnam 1954-56. Most of the Americans who made up these small teams are not being used in Vietnam today and would volunteer for such duty, despite personal sacrifice, if it was assured that the team would be positioned in Vietnam so that it could work effectively and that it would have firm support at the top in Washington.

In these two previous U.S. wins in the Philippines and Vietnam (in which native genius was guided and supported to victory), Washington in effect placed a U.S. counterinsurgency leader and his small team in the country, gave them great freedom of action within U.S. policy limits, and backed them solidly. The team had its own communication channel to Washington. Top U.S. leaders of several Administrations who were knowledgeable of the team's actions subsequently remarked that it was the most disciplined yet spirited group known to them for carrying out U.S. policy abroad. Actions desired at the top in Washington were promptly accomplished in the field, in the spirit sought by U.S. leaders but which often is difficult or impossible to transmit through more conventional U.S. governmental institutions.

After 1956, the team split up. Members served in all critical areas of the world where the U.S. helped local governments and forces. Thus, they have reinforced their experience and knowledge with participation in operations which were less-than-successful because the team concept and the top backing were absent. Yet, where team members have operated they have created great reservoirs of good-will, respect, and lasting influence which serve as eloquent testimony of the approach.

If it is decided to accept the team concept for Vietnam today, its role needs to be clearly understood and backed at the top of the U.S. government. The leader of the team should go to Vietnam as the President's personal representative, to act as advisor to the U.S.

missions there and to the Vietnamese in accordance with the policies of the President. The team leader, of course, will have authority to communicate with the White House or other elements of the Executive, when required.

The team itself would be relatively small. About five members would form the immediate staff with the leader. About five other members would perform special operations missions not falling now precisely under the missions of U.S. agencies in Vietnam. The team would be assisted, as a priority effort, by about ten individuals acting as coordinators who already are serving in positions with U.S. missions and agencies in Vietnam.

It is imperative, to insure success, that the team leader have full authority to select all members of the team.

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