

COMMENTS BY OGDEN WILLIAMS ON TOAID A-822, "DEFINITION
OF PACIFICATION", dated October 8, 1964

Whether one conceives of pacification as clear - secure - build, or build - secure - clear, it is apparent that different priorities are applicable to each phase. Since the oil-spot concept starts at the center of the oil-spot and works outward, there is in fact nothing new about preferring the build-secure-clear terminology. In some areas of Vietnam, however, the GVN has the choice of applying a clear-secure-build formula, in that order, or of deferring pacification entirely, since the VC control the real estate.

Commenting on the paper's discussion of the "build" phase, I agree with other readers that there is one potentially misleading proposition advanced, namely that such pacification can be measured in quantified terms (see top of page 2). It cannot be demonstrated by quantitative statistics exactly where the writ of the GVN runs, what people obey such writ, or even what communications routes are controlled. The use of quantified statistics, except for general planning purposes, can be mischievous because it encourages a bad mental habit - namely, the tendency to overlook the essence of the problem which is the feelings of the population in the area. Under Diem's strategic hamlet program, we had examples of quantified statistics showing GVN hamlets which were in fact VC hamlets surrounded by GVN barbed wire. In the last analysis, the

GVN writ only runs where the minds of the people have been won by the GVN.

Apparent control of bodies, resources or real estate, as expressed in quantified statistics, can be dangerously misleading and direct attention from the real issues. The paper recognizes this problem in part when it stresses the necessity for political and psychological action as a condition precedent to resources and population control.

My second major comment on the paper is to stress that more detail would have been useful regarding the proposal that USOM Provincial Representatives have "major responsibility" for helping in the reestablishment of civil government in areas being secured. Exactly how would they function? USOM can help train GVN civil servants in Saigon (as now happens). Its representatives can support provincial operations and provide the resources to carry them out, but I do not see Americans in the Provinces taking a very direct hand in shaping GVN civil administration, personnel procedures, administrative routines and the like. For one thing Americans are not well qualified by experience, training or language to do this. For another, this would be direct interference in the GVN governmental process which would be intolerable to the Vietnamese and lend credence to the VC charge that the GVN is the tool of the Americans. One can imagine a Vietnamese trying to reorganize the functioning of civil administration in any rural area of the United States. He would not know enough to do it, and he would be resented even if he did. Improvements in civil

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administration in Vietnam must be made by Vietnamese. Such improvements must flow from a common source of doctrine, namely Saigon - and if the USOM wishes to make a maximum contribution in this matter, it must do so at the source - namely Saigon. Conversely, at the Province level and below, USOM cannot develop administrative procedures and doctrine, but can help greatly in the program implementation area. The foregoing does not attack in any way the valuable concept of having temporary civil administration training teams from Saigon work in the Provinces. This is not a new idea, but not enough has been done in the past to carry it out.

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