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MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

November 13, 1967

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MEMORANDUM FOR

The President

It has been a year since I was last in Saigon. I am never much for military fun and games (I had my war) so I spent a good deal of time snooping in the Mission.

For whatever they may be worth, I would offer the following reflections:

1. Ambassador Bunker: Nothing needs to be said--a superb human being with a backbone of tempered steel.
2. Ambassador Locke: an able man without a job. Would he make a good Democratic Governor of Texas? He certainly is wasted in Saigon.
3. General Lansdale: essentially a public nuisance who has been waiting around in an alcoholic haze for the Second Coming of Magsaysay. Spends most of his time explaining to visiting firemen that if he had been listened to, the war would be over--and that he is responsible for whatever progress we have made. He should be kept in the United States and given a job that will keep him too busy to write a book.
4. CORDS: a really jumping outfit--a fine mesh of military and civilian talent with splendid morale. Komer has certainly put bounce and purpose into pacification--but for God's sake don't expect instant results. I think their efforts will snowball, but it will take at least another six months for visibility.

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White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983  
By jm NARA, Date 10-14-77

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5. JUSPAO: A year and a half ago I suggested to Bill Bundy that Zorro had been in the islands too long--he has been there a year and a half too longer.

6. AID: overstaffed with mediocrity. Its functions should largely be absorbed into CORDS but not its personnel--who should be distributed in a non-discriminatory fashion throughout Central Africa, or to the Veterans Administration, or some other institutional dust bin.

I was immensely impressed with the quality of our Missions in both Malaysia and Indonesia. Indeed, I think it is too bad to waste a man with Jim Bell's cohones in a playground like Malaysia. Have you considered him for Manila, where we need someone who will get his hands dirty and really lay the law down to that crew of blackmailers?

Forgive my candor--you can see why I never applied for the Foreign Service.

*SL*

John P. Roche

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