



Mr. James Howe, Chief, Program Office
Mr. Jack Murtha, Pub. Ad. and Finance Div.

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Records Management and Finance Administration

Mr. Murtha has solicited MSOG opinion on Mr. Dienes' former plan to obtain technicians in records management and finance administration areas. If I may speak for our group, I would suggest that it may be putting the cart before the horse to get such specialized technicians at the moment.

Ideally, the way to proceed would be to obtain the agreement of GVN on the designation of an agency charged with the across-the-board improvement of public administration. This would include such activities as records management, finance administration, organization and methods, etc. Probably all of us Americans are tempted to omit this step and bring in specialized technicians to effect improvement. Even if such technicians are effective it is likely that no permanent monument is left.

Would it be possible, therefore, for USOM to give priority to a request that GVN designate an agency to effect major improvements throughout the government of Vietnam? Especially if GVN contemplates a major reorganization of its agencies will there be a need for a staff agency that will continually and aggressively promote improvement in public administration processes. To stimulate such a designation, USOM might promise its full cooperation in obtaining technicians to assist the agency.

In any governmental system, the budget and personnel agencies are logically choices for such designation. In Vietnam, both of these agencies, for different reasons, present problems. The budget agency, though under an able and aggressive leader, is probably now over-extended. The personnel agency, on the other hand, has difficulty grasping even the essentials of a good personnel system. If, however, GVN is in earnest about government reorganization it may be possible to persuade GVN of the importance of assigning a top-notch leader and staff to this task of major improvement and to give the agency designated the discretion, the resources, and the time to accomplish its purposes.

If civil servants in all agencies could be rendered effective many obvious benefits would result. Not only would the substantive work of the agencies improve but the morale of the civil servants might be improved. As to the latter point, I have reference to the reputed fact that at present many civil servants put in far less than a day's work because work flow is faulty and directions are slow in filtering down to them.

cc: Mr. A. Z. Gardiner, Director, USOM

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