The expression in very general terms was, as you previously testified, that you hoped to show some very visible progress within about 18 months?

A Yes, that you could hope that your support would stay really firm and strong if you could show that kind of a picture.

Q Now, 18 months would have been, from February of '66, roughly, until October of 1967. Did you participate in any discussions at all in the fall of 1967, and I'm not limiting it to October, at any time during the fall of 1967, at which time either you or other people in the administration expressed the view that your time was running out in terms of public support?

A I recall no such discussion.

Q Did you believe personally, in the fall of 1967, that your time was, in fact, running out in terms of how long the American people would continue to tolerate a war like the Vietnam War?

A Yes. I thought that there was, at some point, that the trend in the polls was self-evident. I don't recall exactly what the polls showed then. There certainly was a downward trend.
I had lived during the Korean War where the polls went down and were terribly low in the last year. I did think the country was still ready to support it, but again a lot would depend on whether you could see clear evidence of an upward trend at some point and that this would have an effect, but it would be a demonstrable upward trend.

I was not very sanguine about trying to put it over on the basis of statistical indicators and percentages, things of that sort. It would have to be something that was palpable.

Therefore, I was not all that sympathetic to the idea that you could stand up before the Congress or in whatever setting and say, "We are making progress." It was going to have to demonstrate itself more palpably.

Q When you say "an upward trend," you mean an improvement?
A Favorable.
Q Something favorable to the United States' position?
A That's correct.
Q When you say "something more palpable," do you mean something that's easily seen and demonstr-
Now, human nature is human nature. There are those who will always stress the upbeat side more on things. As an old intelligence officer, I tended to take a more reserved view personally and I would suspect this would show up if you would compare my briefings with the House Foreign Affairs Committee with some of those being said outside.

Q Were those written briefings?
A No, but they were recorded. I assume they made a written record of them.

Q Have you ever seen a written record of them?
A No, I haven't, but I think they would be an interesting source because those were genuinely off the record, I mean genuinely, if you will, secret situations and understood to be so and discussed matters that were necessarily secret like ongoing diplomatic negotiations, things of that sort.

That was a particularly interesting and frank committee under the chairman, Clement Zablocki, and I briefed them every three months or so, simply presenting the most honest picture I knew of what was happening.

Q In those briefings you were aware,
I take it, that Secretary Rusk from time to time appeared before Congress?

A Oh, indeed, of course.

Q In the briefings that you made before Congress, was there anything inconsistent in what you told the Congress as opposed to what Secretary Rusk told the Congress?

A I would not have thought so. His appearances were less frequent and, in fact, something of a breakdown in communications took place between the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in particular and the administration, including Secretary Rusk, after the Fulbright hearings of early 1966.

Fulbright himself progressively became so critical that he tended to set up such hearings as though they were going to be public baiting parties and Secretary Rusk had very little appetite for that.

The result was they seemed to break down in trying to arrange them from time to time. That was a general characteristic of the period.

But on those occasions when he did speak to the Congress, or indeed made any public speeches that in any sense described the situation,
I was always very much involved in the preparation of his testimony and the text of his speeches.

Q You were personally?
A Yes, I was, yes, very much so, because naturally he would turn to me to get raw material in the first instance and check it out.

I don't recall there were many such instances from roughly '66 onward where he was testifying that much.

A great deal of the testimony on where the situation was moving on the ground fell almost naturally, because the relevant appropriations were the leading place for it, before the Armed Services and the Appropriations Committees and were conducted largely by the Pentagon, that is to say, usually McNamara in the first instance.

Q Did you participate at all in the preparation of Mr. McNamara's statements?
A I think I would have been brought in very broadly but I did not clear his testimony. We were all wired up so that we generally knew what we thought the situation was but I don't recall participating directly.

Q Were you aware at the time of what
Secretary McNamara was telling the Congress?
A I don't think we did get transcripts of those. I may say transcripts were another of the problems with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee because they wouldn't let you see the transcripts in the State Department. Anybody that would testify before them, they wouldn't give you the transcript.

It was not a very happy chapter in our history. I don't recall seeing transcripts of Secretary McNamara's appearances.

Many of them, of course, were public and you could read the newspaper reports, but I just couldn't spend my time going back over every last bit of that.

Q I wasn't suggesting you would go over every last bit of it.
A I don't recall a case where I reviewed his testimony before he gave it or where I went over it with care. I don't recall even where I saw a transcript of it.

Q Were you generally familiar with what he was telling the Congress, and by "he," I mean Secretary McNamara?
A Oh, yes, indeed. There were some publicized
hearings, the Stennis hearings in August of '67 where he testified in public and so one where I was certainly familiar with what he said. But I don't recall, again, being brought in for preparation of it.

Q Do you recall statements that Secretary McNamara made to the Congress that you, at that time, disagreed with?
A No, I do not.

Q Did you discuss with Secretary Rusk any testimony that Secretary McNamara made before Congress?
A I recall no such discussion. It would be possible it could have come up in our very frequent contacts but I don't recall anything of that sort.

Q Were you involved in any discussions with Secretary Rusk or anyone else within the administration as to what information should and what information should not be made available to the public concerning the war in Vietnam?
A I can't recall anything that we thought or felt had to be withheld except, of course, we did not discuss -- and this was a great part of my own responsibility -- we did not discuss secret ongoing
negotiations.

Q I understand.

When did those negotiations start?

A They were absolutely intermittent. We must have had at one time or another from, oh, let's see, at least from August of '65 through to the time the Paris talks started, we must have had at one time or another 30 or 40 different approaches proposed to us or initiated by us.

There was almost always some ball in the air, but it usually was one we didn't think amounted to much. But there was a great deal of that going on all the time.

At least a rough picture of that can be gained by the recently published diplomatic volumes of the Pentagon papers which were published recently.

Q How many of those 40-odd contacts that you referred to resulted in actual negotiations between the United States and North Vietnam?

A Zero. That is, until Paris.

Q So until --

A Wait. I'll take that back.

There was one, and I'm sure I'm breaking no secrecy at this point, there was one where
a disavowable, to use the trade phrase, a disavowable
U.S. representative who was very clearly speaking
for the government talked directly to the North
Vietnamese in August 1965, which we thought rather
clearly reached a negative conclusion. That was
a head-to-head.

There was a brief one between Ambassador
Byroade and the North Vietnamese in Rangoon in early
1966, for a guess, that was equally sterile.

As far as taking the word "negotiations"
to mean serious exchanges, the answer is, effectively,
zero.

Q Were there any secret negotiations
prior to the Paris talks?
A No. I recall none other than the one I just
mentioned in August of '65 and the Rangoon discussion.

Q Just for the record, the Paris talks
we're referring to commenced when?
A They commenced in early May, '68.

Q Did you participate at all in the
preparation of President Johnson's speech in March
of 1968?
A I did.

Q In what capacity?
A Well, in the sense that I saw the successive drafts and commented on them. I think in the end there were 13 drafts of that speech. This is the April 1st or March 31st speech. In any event, it's the farewell speech.

Q Yes, I'm referring to the speech in which he states he won't run for reelection.

A We all say -- we, the very small group involved in this review -- saw the successive drafts and commented on them in terms of substance and analysis at all stages involved along the way and I couldn't begin to reconstruct it at this point and, of course, in the last week it was added, the text with a firm proposal for a partial halt of the bombing with a willingness to negotiate.

I was very much involved in that in the sense of having put up an alternate idea of a full stop of the bombing after six weeks and having, at Rusk's instruction, sought the advice of Ambassador Bunker as to whether the South Vietnamese would react adversely and to what degree, to either the partial or the full stop.

I was very much involved.

Q You indicated there were some 13 drafts
of the speech.
A    I think that was the final number somebody
mentioned to me.
Q    How far along in that process was
the portion that refers to the partial bombing halt?
A    I think it was put in about March 28th.
Q    When was the work on the initial draft
or drafts of the speech done?
A    I think the first draft must have appeared
early in March or maybe even late February and it
reflected the way minds changed from accepting the
significant part, at least, of Westmoreland's idea
to accepting the much lesser part, the emphasis
of Vietnamization, the position of the bombing halt,
the bombing program and all of those elements changed.

None of the drafts contained the closing
paragraphs about the President stepping down. That
was put in on Sunday by a different draftsman.
Q    Who put that in?
A    Horace Busby, legend has it.
Q    Who is he, for the record?
A    He was a former very close advisor to President
Johnson who retired from government but was brought
back for that particular job.
Q What caused the change that you described a few moments ago?

A I think progressively, as the discussions went on, and this was reported not always accurately but generally accurately, the feeling that throwing in a vast new influx of manpower was not the answer. I may say that has a bearing on the issues in this litigation because manpower was not the answer, we thought. Numbers of people were not the answer.

There were other things that were much more important. Progressively, we came to feel and to recommend to the President -- and the draft simply embodied the state of mind, in effect, of the participants -- that only a very, very, very small part of that recommendation in terms of force increase should be accepted, and I have no idea in time those drafts will be revealed.

Q Where are those drafts now?

A I assume in the LBJ Library.

Q You say we believed that manpower was not the answer. Obviously General Westmoreland believed that at least 200,000 additional troops was at least a partial answer.

MR. RIESE: Objection.
Bundy

A Yes, but there was a great deal more involved here. It's never been wholly clear to me, in hindsight, and I already said I treated the recommendation as entirely bona fide, whether there had been a suggestion to him -- you know, tell us what you would ideally like to have, or whether this was a serious recommendation of what he had to have. There's a little ambiguity on the record on that.

I think there were subsequent suggestions by him and by others. He felt Washington wanted to behold his ideal answer rather than what he thought absolutely had to be done to handle this situation.

As I say, we took this at face value. This is all historical speculation beyond that. We took it as a serious recommendation and that was how it was discussed.

Q Did you have any reason to doubt, at the time you received it, that this was anything more than a serious recommendation of General Westmoreland?
A No, I did not.

Q Subsequent to that time, have you ever received any information that that was other than a serious, bona fide recommendation by General
Westmoreland?

A I can only say I've only skimmed General Westmoreland's account of the war, but I think he implied there that Washington, through the Joint Chiefs, presumably, had indicated what they wanted, you know, what would you ideally like to have, that kind of recommendation.

I'm not going to take it a bit further than anything the historical records say. If they have a recommendation, and the historical records reflect it was a less firm recommendation than some of his earlier ones in hindsight, at the time we dealt with it entirely as though it was on the same basis as all the others up to that point.

Q When you say "we," who do you mean by "we" then?

A The group who had to deal with it and make a recommendation to the President, whose composition I described.

Q Had there been a similar group that evaluated General Westmoreland's recommendation for additional troops in 1966 and 1967?

A There most certainly was in 1965. In '66, we were very much in the play from the State Department.
point of view. '67 tended to be pretty much in the hands of the Pentagon.

Q Why was that?
A I don't really recall. It was partly because the issue or issues appeared to be increasingly involved in subjects of what the forces would do and the scale of the increase wasn't that enormous so it seemed to change the whole nature of our participation, as, for example, was clearly true with the July 28, 1965 force increase.

Q What was the July 28, 1965 increase?
A Off the top of my head, it was to go up by the end of that year to roughly 180, although not all of that was announced for immediate action in the way the President announced it, but it was very soon known that that in fact was what we were aiming at.

Q What was the force level prior to July 28, 1965?
A A rough guess would be 65, 70, something of that order. It's all in the Pentagon papers.

Q This increase was one that was initiated by General Westmoreland?
A Yes, initiated by General Westmoreland in
response to what all of us felt, on the basis of
the reports, was a rapid deterioration of the situation.

Q What was causing the deterioration
of the situation?

A Well, the Viet Cong by them were simply con-
ducting battalion-level attacks and having a devastating
effect on a weakened and demoralized Vietnamese
force. So the need for U.S. forces appeared acute.

Q At the time that a decision was being
made in 1965 as to whether or not to commit increased
American troops to South Vietnam, was there any
assessment made as to how long the commitment would
have to be?

A Only in general terms. That's perhaps one
of the periods where we, in so far as we had discussions
of it, that we ought to be able to turn the thing
in an upward course in a year to 18 months, something
of that sort. But just how long it would take to
get them to really back off, that I don't recall.
I don't recall that being specifically discussed.

It may well have been. I was not
present at all those discussions. I just don't
remember.

Q Was there any discussion or assessment
Bundy

MACV command in 1967 and 1968, did you believe that those estimates and assessments were being affected by public relations concerns and concern for political impact?

A No, I did not essentially. I think they recognized and we recognized that when you came in with a judgment that certain elements in the forces -- and this is particularly related to guerillas and special defense --

Q When you say special defense --

A I'm sorry, secret self defense.

When you came in and said, "We think they are now at -- and we'll just take and incorporate by reference the figures reached in the estimate --

Q Excuse me. My only problem with that is I want to know what estimate you are talking about.

A I'm talking about SNIE-14367.

Q Was there an estimate in SNIE-14367 in what you refer to as self defense or secret self defense forces?

A No, it was not quantified. I don't know the text there but it was saying "This force is substantial numerically. Here are its functions

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and here's the very limited military significance
and it's therefore not included in the military
order of battle.

Q Let me tell you my problem. A moment
ago you said, "Let's just take the numbers, whatever
they are, in SNIE-14367 for self defense and see
if they're self defense forces." Obviously I can't
take those numbers if there aren't any.
A Take the guerillas. The guerilla figure
was significantly higher than would have been arrived
at by the old method of computation, that the guerillas
were roughly a third of the broad category that
included all of these.

Q Who told you that?
A Well, I've forgotten, but it's in one of
the papers and is referred to but it's also my recol-
lection. I remember it broadly, that there was
a change in classification.

Q There was a change in classification.
That's not what I'm asking.
You just said something. You just
said that the guerillas were approximately one-
third of a particular category.
A That's my recollection and I simply don't
know where I got it. It's my recollection that
that was the way it had been computed previously.

Q First, what category were guerillas
one-third of?
A I think they were all called irregulars.

Now, I'm quoting from the release.

Q The press release?
A Yes. I'm referring to the Sidle briefing.
It may be that I'm quoting from something in the
program, I don't know.

MR. BOISE: Just for the record, the
Sidle briefing or the McVey briefing on enemy
order of battle in November of 1967 is JX
277, previously marked as Plaintiff's
Exhibit 93.

Q Let me ask you to try to separate
for a moment what is said in the MACV briefing
on enemy order of battle in November of 1967 or
what is said in the program.

Back in 1967 and 1968 did you have
an understanding that the guerilla category, and
I guess I ought to stick to 1967 because, as you're
quite right, this thing changed, in the first half
of 1967, prior to SNIE-14367, was it your under-
standing that the guerilla category represented about one-third of the irregulars?

A That would be a very broadbrush statement of what I thought was the case and that the irregulars—
I don't know at what point, and I said this earlier —
I'm categorical that I was well aware of the problem by late August, early September.

At what point I became aware that the evidence, particularly of captured documents, indicated a higher figure in all the components of what had been grouped as the irregulars and what you faced, and this gets back to your question about public relations, obviously we would have to make this clear to the public and to the Congress and to ourselves and in effect you first had to know exactly what you were talking about yourself.

It involved a revision in a sort of standing estimate that had been used over a period of time in which you would have to say we now believe that the strength and the elements of this particular category, this broad catch-all category of guerillas, self defense and secret self defense, that all the elements were bigger earlier than we had thought since we were initially going on Vietnamese estimates.
before we really had our own really independent
capabilities, and notoriously, Vietnamese estimates
were inaccurate. That was a given in the intelligence
business.

You would have to understand the figure
earlier was significantly higher than estimated.
This was a case of improved intelligence, not a
sudden jump up.

But from those, as now postulated --
the earlier high figures I'm referring to -- the
trend line was downward. It was to be presented
in a way where both halves were clear and people
didn't jump on the fact that the increases were
greater and that is the problem that was purely
perceived both in Saigon and Washington, and that
was the ultimate problem you would face when you
had got through forming the best and most honest
judgment you could of what the real strengths were
and what the roles were and who should be put where.

Q Was it your understanding in 1967
and 1968 that the people that were preparing these
estimates at McVey believed that they were doing
what you've just said, that is, preparing their
best, most honest estimates? Is that correct?
A I would certainly have supposed that. I think we had a checks and balances system in the intelligence business that had worked over and over again.

I recall vividly estimates in the late 1950s when the Air Force would come in with what seems to us, the Estimates Board, astronomical projections or where the Soviet Air Force or, latterly, the Missile Force was going and we would hack at it.

You had an adversary process. There are certain almost inherent tendencies to conduct, to want the figures in a certain way. The honesty of your own intelligence people, starting with the G-2, is a vital corrective on that.

I don't think there's any desire to misrepresent but you also have the checks and balances of a separate and independent agency armed with the same information as the Board of National Estimates and that was the process that was gone through here, and given the fact that the information available to all parties was the same, it was a pretty good process.

In fact, I can't recall -- I think
you would scratch vainly in history to find a nation at war that had a process of this sort.

Q Let me ask you a few questions about that process.

As I understand these checks and balances is the check that the Board of National Estimate places on the inclination of the field command, whether it's the Air Force in the fifties or McVey in the late sixties, to see things in perhaps a particular way..

A Right.

Q That is their inclination?

A Correct.

Q Now, in 1967, when was the decision made as to what SNIE-14367 would say?

A That I don't know. That is to say, when was the decision reached on the actual figures finally?

My understanding is that -- no, I just don't know. As I recall, I recall the feedback from the Saigon Conference in early September. We have worked it out so that we have figures that we believe are consistent with and indeed a best judgment from the evidence and a way of referring to these most controversial items, the special self
defense forces and the secret self defense forces, that adequately reflects that they are larger than we had hitherto thought but that their military function is limited.

They are not militarily insignificant but their military function is limited and therefore it was reasonable not to include them in the military order of battle.

Q Now, the dispute that you were aware of in August or September of 1967 between the CIA and MACV with respect to enemy strength estimates, was this a dispute that had at least two parts; the first part being what categories of the enemy should be quantified and the second, what that quantification should be?

A Yes.

Q Now, both of those decisions, or rather a decision as to both of those issues was made at the Saigon September 1967 Conference; correct?

A I'll take your word for it. I don't know whether there was any later adjustments in any respect. It was reported to me they reached essential agreement on the way the matter should be dealt with in the estimate which in turn would control what
was said in the briefing for the press, Saigon and, therefore, the public. But I'm not able to say that every last comma and zero or every figure in this thing was exactly what was agreed to in Saigon.

Q    Is it fair to say that certainly the essential elements of the decision with respect to the two disputed issues was reached in September in Saigon?

A    That certainly would have been my impression at the time.

Q    Were there any members of the Board of National Estimates present at that Saigon Conference in September of 1967?

A    I have no knowledge of that. To the best of my knowledge there were not but, you see, you are dealing here -- in this case perhaps more than in other cases, although it's always true in one way or another -- the agency had its own intelligence analysis capability in the form of Carver's shop.

    This was also true in the parallel cases I was citing where the scientific director of the CIA would have their own idea of what was technologically possible for them as opposed to our view.
But when the agency has their own assessment, it's natural to have the one that represents the director in the first instance. But the Board had to pass on that and the Board, I'm sure, was brought in before that as well as after it and what role the Board played, I just don't know.

Q Indeed, you don't know whether they played a role from personal knowledge.
A Indeed I don't, except the estimates habitually went that route and I find it hard to believe this one did anything different.

Q The people in Carver's shop that you referred to that had the responsibility of making the assessment for the CIA for the National Intelligence Estimate, do you know who they were?
A The only other one I knew personally was George Allen. I don't recall hearing any other names at the time.

Q Without focussing on the names at the present time, was it your understanding that the people in the CIA in Carver's shop who were responsible for the operation of the National Intelligence Estimate 14367 ultimately agreed with
what was contained in that estimate?

A I had no knowledge of attitudes of individuals.

It would have been a very common thing in the intelligence business, and I'm sure it would have been the case with certain of your people in the Air Force at the time the Air Force estimate on Soviet missiles was sharply beaten down in the fifties, it would be the most natural thing in the world for a man who sees his little piece of the puzzle to think it was not done justice to.

I would not have been amazed to be told that individuals below decks, so to speak, had that feeling. It was a very common thing in the intelligence business.

Q That was not really my question. My question was whether you knew --

A My answer was no, I did not. Had I been told, I would have been unsurprised to the nth degree.

Q Would you have been surprised to find there was no one in Mr. Carver's shop, as you describe it, who supported the assessment included in SNIE-14367?

MR. RIESE: Objection to form.

Q Would that have surprised you?
A I suppose it would have surprised me if there had been literally no one in any way, shape or form.

Q I just wanted to see if there was anything that would surprise you in that context. Would you have been surprised to find that George Allen believed that SNIE-14367 was misleading?

MR. RIESE: Objection to the form of the question.

Q I'm not suggesting that he did say that. I'm asking if you would be surprised.

A I wouldn't be really surprised. It would depend entirely on the degree of difference, what it pertained to. That everybody would agree with every syllable is not very likely in this kind of imprecise business.

Q Let me try to be clear. I wasn't asking you, and I thought my question was clear but perhaps it wasn't, I wasn't asking you whether George Allen agreed with every last syllable or comma. What I was asking you was whether you would find it surprising that George Allen found SNIE-14367 to be misleading.
MR. RIESE: Objection.

Q If it helps you, I'll say misleading in a significant way.

A I would have been mildly surprised, yes.

Q Mildly surprised?

A Mildly surprised. I would have said there were a great many others involved. There are questions of who had access to what in terms of certain very sensitive areas of intelligence. I don't know if those were entered into this or not. It would depend on the factors.

Q Mr. Bundy, do you know of anyone else involved in SNIE-14367 at the CIA other than George Allen?

A Well, I don't know them by name.

Q Do you know there was anybody else?

A Well, I'm assuming -- I did not follow the process in that sense, nor do I think I would have been reasonably expected to have followed it in that sense.

I would have assumed the Board of National Estimates had a good hard look at it. I would assume the director himself looked at it very hard indeed.
Q I'm trying to get away from what you assume and stick with what you know.

A I'm saying I don't know anybody, exactly what role anybody played in that estimate in any agency, Mr. Boise.

Q I'm not asking you whether you know exactly what role anybody played. You said, with respect to George Allen, you would have been mildly surprised because there were a great many other people involved. What I'm trying to find out is whether you know for a fact that there were a great many people involved.

A Well, I can only say that Carver was obviously acting on the basis of the evidence and the judgments of people who worked for him. We have discussed the voluminous evidence. Presumably he was taking judgments from all his subordinates.

I do not know these for facts, Mr. Boise. I cannot be expected to testify on the inner workings of another agency. I admit I'm making assumptions and I do not know who had the most crucial responsibilities or how many. I do not know that in the nature of things.

Q Let's begin with what I think is
probably an area of agreement, and that is that Carver's judgment would have to be based on what his subordinates presented to him. You've said that and I agree with that.

What I'm trying to get you to focus on is whether you know, first, who any of those subordinates were, and I think you said the only one you know is George Allen. Is that correct?
A That's correct.
Q Second, whether you know whether any of Mr. Carver's subordinates who were, by hypothesis, providing Mr. McCarver with this voluminous evidence and these judgments, whether anyone agreed with the decisions --
A I have no knowledge of that subject.
Q -- the decisions made in 14367.
A I have no knowledge of anything on that subject.
Q Just as there were people at the CIA that were providing information that was supposed to be the basis of 14367, there were people at McVey doing likewise, were there not, sir?
A I take it so.
Q I take it it's the case you do not
know the names of any of those individuals.
A I do not, but I know I have seen some of them in the program now but I didn't know them at the time.
Q At least back in '67 and '68 you did not know?
A That's correct.
Q Back in '67 and '68 did you know whether the people, regardless of whether they were at MACV or the CIA, believed that SNIE-14367 was accurate?
MR. RIESE: Objection to the form of the question.
A From the preceding questions, it follows logically I did not know the views of individuals since I didn't know who they were and had no contact with them.
Q Did you ever attempt to find that out, either back in 1967 or 1968 or in the last 18 months when you've been considering this issue?
A No, I did not. I figured that was the business of others.
Q Who?
A Well, General Westmoreland, if he decided to do it; CBS if it had to defend itself.
Q You know Mr. Carver?
A I do.

Q Are you still in contact with Mr. Carver?
A I've only had perhaps one phone call on a peripheral matter. I haven't discussed this matter at all with Mr. Carver in recent years.

Q When was the last time you spoke to him?
A I couldn't remember exactly. It was a stray phone call on another matter. About nine months ago would be a guess.

Q Did you ever try to contact either Mr. Carver or Mr. Allen to attempt to find out what the facts were with respect to the preparation --
A No, I didn't think that was my job.

Q (Continuing) -- preparation of SNIE-14367?
A No.

Q Did you have any responsibility for either dealing directly with the press or with furnishing information to people who dealt with the press with respect to Vietnam?
A Oh, indeed, constant responsibility regularly
for proposing replies on questions when we would
be asked, occasionally for preparation of statements.
I had a public affairs officer in the Bureau. I
forget who he may have been at different times but
he would regularly see me in the morning if there
was likely to be some question dealing with Vietnam
at the morning briefing. We would work over the
way the response might go, what possible follow-
up questions there would be, that sort of thing.
I had a great deal of responsibility for that.

I regularly met with Secretary Rusk
prior to his press conferences to go over questions
that might be raised at those press conferences.

It was absolutely a part of one's
job.

Q Within the administration during the
Vietnam conflict, and I include 1967 and 1968 but
I don't limit my question to those years, was there
a general, as you understood it, policy of the admini-
stration to be as accurate and as truthful in dealing
with the press and the public as you could be, con-
sistent with protecting classified sources?
A That was certainly the policy as I saw it.

Q Did there ever come a time when that
policy changed within the administration?
A Not that I was ever aware of and not that I discerned.

Q Was there a feeling within the administration that the best way in the long term to maintain public support for the war was to give the public accurate and truthful information that included both good news and bad news so that the public and the press did not have false expectations about the war.

MR. RIESE: Object to the form.
A Yes, that certainly would have been the policy and inevitably this war, perhaps more than, if not unlike any other war, there was a tendency to accentuate the negative in the media at different times and in different degrees.

We felt it was part of our job to say yes, perhaps this single thing happened but it was not the realistic picture of the trend line.

We were constantly trying to correct, sometimes, one or two cases very clearly, excessive optimism.

Mostly this was true in '67, what we thought was generally excessive pessimism. You
well speech, to take into account the effects on
on President Johnson's March 30th or April 1st fare-
There was there an attempt, when you were working-
to focus on 1967 immediately following the Tet offen-
was there, and I'm now going to try
as evidence that you thought would stand up.
If you tried to correct it but you had to do so by presentation
had to take account of that and you had to seek
official claims as in the case of Halberston. You
of fact. Representations were made by puncturing
There must be objective statements

at all these type projections and we were simply
time in '67 we found out later there hadn't been
one or two excessively optimistic statements. Some
There had been in the earlier period,

concern.

credibility in the government was of very great
order, you would tend to lose credibility, but
that would tend to be reflected by events in short
If you tried to correct it by information
information would stand up.
all others I dealt with I'm sure saw it, by whatever
could only do that, the way I saw it and the way
Bundy
and that was the one accepted in the fall of 1968.

The objectives were there but now you couldn't increase them by a large increase in the U. S. effort. If they were achieved now, and obviously the chances were reduced, it would obviously have to be through the Vietnamese becoming that much more effective and through the possibility, at any rate, that we would be able to beat back dramatically successive offenses and go on from there.

But in effect the slope up which you were pushing this peanut had become steeper.

Q When you left office at the close of the Johnson administration, what was the general assessment within the administration as to the extent to which American objectives in South Vietnam were going to be susceptible to achievement?

A That I really can't answer with any authority because I left the administration and I'll be just technical for a moment.

I didn't leave government service or leave my position as Assistant Secretary until May. I held over under President Nixon to permit my successor, a professional foreign service officer
Bundy

and, incidentally, an old friend, Marshall Greene, to disengage from his post as Ambassador for Australia or Indonesia, to make a tour of the area, refamiliarization, in effect.

So I stayed on during the Nixon administration but I was not in the main stream of the Nixon administration judgments or calculations and I understood why that is so.

They commissioned a wholesale reassessment in which a great many people participated. This was chiefly for Mr. Kissinger's office and I wasn't brought into that in a serious way and I don't have an accurate recollection --

Q I wasn't really asking you about the Nixon administration.

A Well, as far as the Johnson administration is concerned --

Q That's what I was asking you about.

A We knew we weren't going to be responsible after November 4th. We were too busy to do a hell of a lot of thinking before then on where do we end up. There wasn't a great deal of thinking.

That was a very tired administration and I was a very tired member of it.
Q Were you aware of any dispute, in late 1967 or early 1968, between MACV and the CIA with regard to the number of Viet Cong or North Vietnamese main force personnel that were in South Vietnam?

A Not in any significant degree. By that time you did have, of course, the element of the divisions, and I don't know how many there were, the North Vietnamese massing in the Khe Sanh area.

Q Do you know how many there were?

A I now forget. It was two or three divisions. I forget the exact figure.

Q Let me come back to that, but first let me ask you, were the Khe Sanh divisions in South Vietnam?

A They came into South Vietnam.

Q When?

A I would think about the turn of the year, in hindsight, and I think that's when we spotted them at the time.

Q That is late December, early January?

A Yes. That's when we became well aware that they were moving, and moving the first team in organized division-scale units into the Khe Sanh area, and
that in a sense distracted us from the possibility of a really strong nationwide offensive.

Khe Sanh is at sort of equivalent of Dien Bien Phu, perhaps, but in any case the answer is yes, we became aware of that along the way, possibly some time in December, and saw it materializing in force in early January is my recollection.

There's a lot more in the record on that.

Q My question is whether or not you were aware, in late 1967, the fall of 1967 or thereafter or in early 1968, of a dispute --

A No, I was not aware of a dispute on this subject.

Q -- with respect to enemy strength between MACV and the CIA that related to main force units, either Viet Cong or North Vietnamese.

A I recall no such dispute. In effect, that kind of difference existed all the time or tended to exist, but I'm not aware of any dispute of significance. I don't recall any.

Q Were you aware of it back then?

A I'm saying I don't recall that I was aware of it. I don't, in hindsight, recall it.
Q Were there significant differences between MACV and the CIA with respect to their estimates of enemy main force strength?

MR. RIESE: Objection to the form of the question.

Q -- at any time that you were aware of during the Vietnam war?

A I can't say that on a blanket basis. There certainly weren't during the incidents we're discussing during 1967.

I don't recall any significant differences in 1967 or 1968.

MR. BOISE: Off the record.

(Discussion off the record.)

(Time noted: 3:00 p.m.)

WILLIAM P. BUNDY

Subscribed and sworn to before me this day of , 1984.
CERTIFICATE

STATE OF NEW YORK )
COUNTY OF NEW YORK ) ss:

I, JOHN V. STEWART, a Registered Professional Reporter and a Notary Public within and for the State of New York, do hereby certify:

That WILLIAM P. BUNDY, the witness whose deposition is hereinabove set forth, was first duly sworn by me and that such deposition is a true record of the testimony given by said witness.

I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 16th day of July, 1984.

[Signature]

JOHN V. STEWART, R.P.R.

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