PROJECT
CHECO
SOUTHEAST ASIA
REPORT

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Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Counterinsurgency Operations
(Project CHECO)

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Part I

SUMMARY

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by

Donald F. Martin
Lt Col USAF

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Editor - Historian
Carl O. Clever

May 1964
PREFACE

CHECO - ITS ORIGIN AND AUTHORIZATION

A contemporary historical evaluation of counterinsurgency operations (CHECO) by the United States Air Force was conceived as a special project early in 1962. Lieutenant General Moorman, Vice Commander in Chief, PACAF, made formal proposal of the project to the Chief of Staff, USAF on 2 March 1962.

General Moorman stated, "... In Southeast Asia, we are experimenting with new forces, new tactics and techniques, new organizations, new policies, new materiel and new methods to combat a shrewd and elusive enemy ... . Currently, USAF efforts in Southeast Asia are being recorded through normal staff notation, conventional Office of Information briefs, photographic coverage and unit and other histories. However, no action has been taken to provide the very necessary formal compilation, presentation, analysis and documentation of this endeavor ... ."

The office of the Vice Chief of Staff, USAF approved General Moorman's proposal, and authorized the establishment of Project CHECO at Headquarters PACAF. The project was to be immediately responsive to specific guidance from Headquarters USAF, with continually close liaison being exercised on its behalf by the USAF Historical Division Liaison Office (APCHO).

Based upon the foregoing, and recommendations by Joseph W. Angell, Jr., Chief, USAF Historical Division Liaison Office, two officers and two civilian historians were assigned to the project. One officer and one civilian were located at Headquarters PACAF while the other officer and civilian had duty station with the Second Air Division in Saigon, Republic of Vietnam (RVN).

Subsequent to the establishment of Project CHECO, Under Secretary of Defense Gilpatric directed the separate services to produce documented histories of their respective experiences in the US counterinsurgency effort in RVN for the years 1962-63. The histories were to be submitted to OSD by 30 June 1964.
Project CHECO was directed by Headquarters (AFCHO) to produce a portion of the USAF record as a matter of first priority. The result appears as Project CHECO report, Parts I through VI.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Preparation of this report was aided immeasurably by the foresight of Lt Col John H. Thomas, Headquarters PACAF, in preserving historically significant documents, and the assistance of MSgt Calvin J. Bailey in making that material available.

Miss Hideko Shichida, Editorial Clerk to the Historical Division, Office of Information, Headquarters PACAF, devoted many tedious hours to the typing of the draft and final manuscripts, in addition to her regularly assigned duties. Her sustained competence, and her responsiveness to editorial and proofreading guidance, were invaluable.

MSgt Kenneth F. Reinig, NCOIC of the Historical Division, Headquarters PACAF, contributed measurably to the final product through his technical knowledge of pertinent regulations and USAF historical directives, and his untiring effort in the production of the reports.
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**APPENDIX 1-A** (Records of Sec Def Meetings - Copies 1 and 25 only)

**APPENDIX 1-B** (Records of Sec Def Meetings - Copies 1 and 25 only)
This "Summary - Part I" was prepared to consolidate under one cover some of the significant happenings and issues recorded in the separate documents comprising Parts II through VI of this series of Project CHECO reports. It compresses the contents of the more detailed reports (II-VI) on a ratio of approximately 1 to 8.

Thus, the author risks charges of oversimplifying admittedly complex and controversial issues, of not having presented sufficient documentation, and of having expressed personal value judgments. However, the material presented herein has its bases in Parts II through VI and their associated, detailed documentation.

THE THREAT (PART II)

In this guerrilla conflict, one of the more reliable indicators of victory, defeat, or stalemate for the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) was the numerical strength of the Viet Cong (VC) at a particular point in time. Enemy casualty statistics were impressive, particularly when reviewed collectively. Yet they were also disastrously misleading unless carefully correlated with the number of VC replacements from infiltration and recruitment.

Viet Cong Strength (Part II, ps. 1-5)

During the summer of 1961, the "hard core" VC strength
was estimated to be 12,000. In December 1961, after the Presidential decision to increase significantly US assistance to RVN, the estimate of VC jumped to 17,000--and by January 1962 had soared to 20-25,000.

Doubling the estimated size of the Communist force within six months prompted Secretary McNamara to question whether the VC had actually increased or whether we had been miscounting. He was informed by MAC-V that the increase resulted from different methods of estimating the unknowns.

By early summer 1962, estimates of the VC forces plummeted by one-third—to 16,400. This was the low point. In July 1962, the estimate had increased to 18,000 and by September had climbed once again to 20,000.

In mid-summer 1963, the official estimate climbed higher still to 23-26,000, while 1963 year-end estimate reflected 20-25,000 VC—the same estimate of insurgent strength which had obtained before we had provided the extensive additional aid.

Secretary McNamara put the situation into rather stark perspective when he pointed out that there were as many VC in November 1963 as there had been a year or two years ago. Moreover, the area surrounding the VC was weaker than it had been. This succinct statement summed up the—at best—indecisive nature of the conflict at the close of 1963.

The VC had maintained their overall hardcore strength in the face of having sustained an estimated 49,700 KIA/WIA during 1962 and 1963. This represented a loss rate of 68
By way of comparison, during the Korean War one American infantry division (of about 18,000 troops) produced battle casualties at the rate of 67 per day. In WWII, an infantry division averaged ten percent battle casualties per month. With a strength of 20,000, it appeared that the VC could sustain, indefinitely, their casualty rate of 2,000 per month.

VC External Support (Part II, ps. 5-12)

Cambodia, Laos, and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), all served as sanctuaries for the VC. The land boundary between RVN and these countries stretched for about 1,000 miles—much of which ran through dense jungle.

DRV conducted most "out of country" training of the VC. A special insurgent training center, with an estimated capacity of 12,000 graduates per year, was located at Xuan Mai, some 18 miles southwest of Hanoi. If this center operated at capacity, it could replace the entire VC hardcore force every two years.

VC Intelligence (Part II, ps. 13-14)

The VC received as much as three days warning of RVN ground and air operations. When large RVN operations were planned, the VC area headquarters was often notified by radio from VC "Strategic Intelligence in Saigon." An intelligence sub source, drawing on his own experience, rated the warnings accurate three out of four times.

Based upon a captured VC document, a senior RVN military
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officer believed the VC had been furnished information by sources within the highest levels of the GVN. In an event, VC intelligence was rated, by US intelligence, as greatly superior to that of the GVN.

VC Tactics/Strongholds (Part II, ps. 20-44)

From late 1961, when US aid to RVN was greatly enlarged, until the end of 1963, there had been little apparent deviation from the classic tenets of guerrilla warfare by the VC. The Phase I groundwork of cellular subversion and indoctrination had been firmly established. The hardcore insurgents, and the considerably larger paramilitary forces had launched Phase II in most areas.

The VC dominated large sections of South Vietnam. More importantly, there were smaller strongholds which were virtually under complete VC control.

The French, in the futile Indochina War, were frustrated by many of the same Viet Minh strongholds which the VC occupied in 1962-63. These strongholds weren't pacified by the French, nor had they been by the RVN troops after more than two years of substantial US aid and training.

Perhaps the best known VC redoubt was War Zone "D", north of Saigon. It was an integral, self-sufficient, community protected from aerial surveillance by dense jungle. The experience of the French indicated that the insurgency in RVN could not be successfully put down until such strongholds were taken. Even if this could be accomplished, the outcome
could remain in doubt. The extent and proximity of sanctuaries across the Cambodian, Laotian, and DRV borders could provide the VC an expedient alternative to complete defeat. This was illustrated by an axiom of Chinese Communist Marshal Lin Po-Cheng, derived from his experience in the Chinese Civil War:

When you keep men and lose land,  
The land can be retaken,  
If you keep land and lose soldiers,  
You lose both.

Inability to influence directly (or to substantively modify) selected courses of action of those motivating national powers external to the battle field (i.e., DRV, Laos, Cambodia, Communist China), had produced a protracted conflict. The proportions and duration of this conflict were, at the close of 1963, under the control of the external disruptive forces—not the defenders.

POLITICAL/POLICY INFLUENCES (PART III)

On 16 December 1961, the first of many top-echelon conferences on Vietnam took place at headquarters PACOM, Hawaii. The policies discussed at these "SecDef" meetings, and the decisions made, largely determined the scope and direction of our total military effort, and, more specifically, the scope and direction of the air war in RVN.

The role of the USAF in the counterinsurgency effort was played within the overall framework of US foreign policy, as supplemented by Department of Defense policies. RVN, as a
 pivotal part of Southeast Asia, had become the object of increased concern to the top planners and administrators within the Departments of State and Defense.

Chronology: 1954-1961 (Part III, ps. 1-6)

During the first six months of 1954, the USAF contributed 1,800 airlift sorties, comprising 13,000 flying hours in a futile US attempt to help reverse the course of events engulfing the French in Indochina. On 7 May 1954 Dien Bien Phu fell to the communist Viet Minh, followed, on 20 July, by the Geneva Convention on partition of Vietnam.

On 15 June 1954, Ngo Dinh Diem was appointed Premier of South Vietnam (SVN). The US decision to pledge increased aid to the SVN government was made by President Eisenhower and announced on 24 October 1954.

In October 1959, VC guerrilla activity was noted to be on the rise. By spring of 1960 the insurgency situation in RVN had obviously deteriorated. The plans, materiel and number of RVN forces were inadequate to the task.

There followed, on 5 May, a US announcement that military assistance to RVN would be increased at that government's request. And on 30 May, the first of US Special Forces Teams arrived in RVN to commence training the ARVN forces.

Vice President Johnson arrived in Saigon on 12 May 1961 to confer with President Diem. The war with the insurgents was not going well for Diem, and he had expressed a desire for US aid through MAAG-V. However, he specifically did not
want to introduce US combat troops into RVN. The next day, a joint communique was issued announcing a further increase in US military and economic aid.

The JCS on 14 November 1961 directed that the previously alerted JUNGLE JIM forces be deployed to RVN. The deployment consisted of the 1st Air Commando Group (formerly the 4400th CCTS), four SC-47's, four RB-26's, and eight T-28's—all carrying RVN Air Force (VNAF) markings. Within 48 hours, President Kennedy announced the decision to bolster RVN strength but not to commit US combat forces. On 11 December, two US Army helicopter companies arrived in RVN.

By the close of 1961, MAAG-V authorized strength had risen from 685 to over 4,000. The intensity of the conflict had increased. The VC had not been contained, yet the situation was not reviewed as hopeless. At the close of 1961, the prospect of success for the GVN in its struggle was equivocal.

**The Nature/Extent of US Aid (Part III, ps. 6-12)**

Prior to 1 January 1962, the US had, on four separate occasions, pledged increased assistance to the beleagued Republic of Vietnam. As the assistance increased, US prestige and principles, inevitably, became more deeply involved.

The overall US policy with regard to aid to RVN was to spare no material necessity. In December 1961, SecDef stated that money should not be a controlling consideration.

Thereafter, the Secretary was to make his position clear repeatedly in a variety of ways: the US should not try to cut corners too fine; it must be prepared to devote enough of
its resources to the task to be certain of winning, and not be content to hope to win. Commenting on a proposed increase in RVN Armed Forces (RVNAF), he said he would be receptive to any justifiable number of additional forces, and such expansion would be supported. At the SecDef Conference in January 1962, McNamara said he approved "right now" all CINCPAC requests for additional personnel for MAAG-V.

However, the Secretary's policy was far from a blank check on the resources of the US. For example, during the 8 October 1962 SecDef Conference, a decision had been made to establish a VNAF B-26 unit. Although the USAF could make the aircraft available, OSD insisted that any increase in MAP funding be offset by corresponding reductions.

**Long Term Program:** In late 1961 and early 1962, emphasis had been on short-term, stop-gap actions. The need was to get material and personnel into place in RVN quickly. At his July 1962 meeting, McNamara stated that the primary task was to consolidate the gains by "carefully conceived" long-range plans and programs to train and equip RVN forces and phase out "major US combat, advisory and logistical support activities."

In response to a query from Secretary McNamara, General Paul D. Harkins, COMUSMAC V, estimated about "one year" would be required to eliminate the VC "as a decisive force" after the RVN Armed Forces, Civil Guard, and Self Defense Corps were fully operational and pressing the VC in all areas. McNamara responded that a conservative view should be taken, and that
we should count on three years rather than one and lay our long-range plans accordingly. He anticipated the possibility that political pressure against aid to RVN would increase. Moreover, as US losses continued to occur, it would be difficult to retain public and Congressional support for operations in RVN.

**Political/Policy Constraints (Part II, ps. 12-59)**

The commitment, by the US, to a policy of maximum support of RVN, short of actual combat forces, was subject to restraining influences. In addition to the provisions of the Geneva Accords of 1954, which the US had undertaken to support, there were other considerations: the possible alienation of the Vietnamese people; relations with Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand; vulnerability to charges, by DRV and Communist China, of aggression in Southeast Asia; and, the risk of the Chicoms increasing their subversive activities throughout the area.

**RVN A Ground War:** It was made clear by Secretary McNamara, in December 1961, that in his opinion the war in South Vietnam should be considered a ground war. More pointedly, he believed that although "naval and air support operations are desirable, they won't be too effective . . . ."*

**The ICC/Geneva Accords Dilemma:** The US decision to increase substantially its aid to RVN ran head on into the Geneva

*See page 61. It was subsequently determined that during the first eight months of 1963 the USAF/VNAF strike force (exclusive of US Army Aviation) under TACS accounted for 38 percent of the VC killed although they represented only 3 percent of the RVN/US military strength.
Accords and the International Control Commission (ICC) estab-
lished to oversee adherence to its provisions. Despite
Chinese Communist aid to DRV and the capturing of both
Chinese Communist and DRV war material in RVN, the State
Department was, nonetheless, extremely sensitive to the
international political implications of increased US activity
in RVN.

It had been suggested that flood conditions in An Giang,
Kien Phong, and Kien Thong provinces during late October 1961,
could provide the cover for introducing US forces into the
delta area. Admiral Felt, CINCPAC, believed such a flimsy
excuse would soon evaporate. "In my opinion, decision should
be made primarily on basis of Viet Cong and DRV aggression
and not on a cover which will not stand up for any length of
time." President Kennedy's formal announcement, on 16 Novem-
ber, of the US decision to aid the GVN settled the issue—at-
least for the moment.

The controversy over introducing jets into RVN, in viola-
tion of the Geneva Accords, was of long standing. Admiral
Felt favored the introduction of jets since FY 61 and six
T-RT-33's had been funded since FY 62.

State recognized the need for reconnaissance and the
long-term policy of giving RVN increasing responsibility for
its own defense. "However, due to overriding political con-
siderations involving escalation from US-controlled to GVN-
controlled jets as this might affect RVN, Laos situation and
Cambodia, we cannot afford to take unnecessary international risks now."

SecDef advised the Chairman, JCS, of State's policy that jets, "would not shorten the war or materially reduce the American commitment, but would risk international repercussions that the US is anxious to avoid." McNamara continued, "aside from the political aspects, I have reservations ... on cost effectiveness grounds ..."

Other faits accompli overshadowed in scope this controversial issue. For example, the prohibition against jet aircraft did not apply to introduction of US Army helicopters which were armed and engaged in combat.

Also a matter of record was the massive, overt military aid program; establishment of MAC-V; the use of US Army Special Forces; arming of helicopters and OV-1A Mohawks marked with US insignia; and introduction of M-113 armored personnel carriers. All were violations of both the letter and spirit of the Geneva Accords.

Risks of certain violations were acceptable, while others were not. The basis for the value judgments involved were not always deducible.

Relations with Cambodia: There was one overriding constraint governing our actions with regard to the friction between Cambodia and Vietnam over border violations and the events which culminated in the termination of US aid to Cambodia in late 1963. This dominate constraint was expressed to Minister of Defense Thuan (GVN) by Ambassador Nolting,
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"... our deep concern reference RKG's [Royal Cambodia Government] threat to invite Chicoms into Cambodia ..."

Leading to a discussion concerning proper military tactics to defeat the VC, Secretary of State Rusk stated:

It remains that political significance at present of another RKG border incident certainly outweighs probable military advantages of air operations in border area ... Politically, count against us now two and three-quarters strikes. Militarily, there is general agreement that success lies not in drawing tight Cordon Sanitaire in Maginot manner ..."

The implicit concern reflected in those two messages was prompted by many charges of border violations lodged by Cambodia. The Cambodian (and Laotian) border was unmarked, ill-defined, and hotly in dispute. Investigation of an incident at Bathu disclosed maps with the village in three different locations.

In late summer 1962, Admiral Felt advised JCS:

We are again experiencing one of those storms and artificial crises cranked up by Sihanouk relating to border incidents with his neighbors. As usual, US is being held responsible by Sihanouk for not keeping Thailand and South Vietnam in line in accordance with Sihanouk's wishes.

In the meantime, Viet Cong cadres are using the Cambodian border areas for entrance into South Vietnam. Safe areas on the Cambodian side are available to VC for training and as supply source for units operating in SVN. In fact Viet Cong may be deliberately manufacturing border incidents in order to exacerbate frictions between Cambodia and Vietnam. If our hopes for growing GVN pressure against Viet Cong materialize, we can expect use of Cambodian territory as a safe haven by Viet Cong to increase.

By the end of 1963, Cambodia had skillfully exploited

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border incidents to justify the breaking off of diplomatic relations with RVN, the termination of US military assistance, the call to neutralize RVN and finally, the instigation of overt, aggressive psywar actions against RVN proper.

**US Military Strength--Ceiling/Withdrawal:** In late April 1963, SecDef stated that he was considering the withdrawal of up to 1,000 US forces from RVN to alleviate the concern of President Diem for RVN national predominance in the war effort. The withdrawal would demonstrate that the RVN was directing the war and that the US recognized that fact. Secretary McNamara indicated willingness to return the 1,000 men if necessary.

By mid-August 1963, there existed a tight ceiling in US military personnel in RVN. Admiral Felt advised his commanders that approved "... US military strength will not be exceeded unless COMUSMAC-V recommends for my approval compensating reductions elsewhere."

**Chinese Nationalist Assistance:** During the first SecDef meeting (Dec 1961) Ambassador Nolting mentioned that the GVN had wanted to use Chinese trainers for the SDC. Assistant SecDef W. P. Bundy interjected the fact that the State Department had "vetoed" that proposal.

On 24 December 1963, the Chinese Nationalist Ambassador Yuen called on Ambassador Lodge to discuss a suggestion he had made to General Kim that the GVN institute a "program of land reform, believing that the people are tired of war and
want to have some hopeful vision of the future." Yuen stated that the Chinats had many experts on land reform, "which is a very complicated thing to do," and would be willing to send some of them to RVN to aid in establishing such a program.

Lodge concluded his report of the discussion with the observation that, "I believe the Chinese experts could do a big job in administering land reform and other rural and technical assistance programs and should be deserving of our support—assuming the GVN is willing to have it." He asked State for guidance on approaching GVN in favor of the proposal. The State reply was not available at this level.

**Overview of Political/Policy Constraints:** On 27 December 1963, the JCS received a memorandum from Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric requesting "... an estimate of the proportion of the US Armed Forces assigned to the Pacific Command which are required solely to meet the threat from Communist China and her satellites such as North Korea, North Vietnam and possibly Indonesia." Gilpatric was concerned with the "... possibility of the US achieving some form of detente with the USSR in which event it might be possible to reduce force levels in the Pacific Command ... leaving there only those forces justified by the threat from Communist China and her satellites."

Admiral Felt responded with a candid and penetrating analysis which provided the backdrop for the US effort in
Southeast Asia. "So long as we remain committed to a policy of involvement in the security of Asia, Australia, and New Zealand, armed conflict with the Chicoms is a possibility if not in some form a likelihood."

After discussing Korea, Felt turned to Southeast Asia:

... Analysis of problems incident to supporting sufficient non-nuclear US/Allied forces, logistically, to oppose Chicom invasion of Southeast Asia reveals that use of nuclear weapons is necessary to maintain tactical integrity of friendly forces. Without nuclear weapons, tasks of obtaining and maintaining air superiority, delaying enemy advance, and interdicting his lines of communication would require an air effort and air logistics support of magnitude which would severely tax the capacity of available operating bases in Southeast Asia, and, in addition, could require commitment of majority of aircraft immediately available to Seventh Fleet. Further, US Army force structure currently scheduled for contingency operations in Southeast Asia, which is based upon limited use of tactical nuclear weapons, represents close to the maximum force level which can be introduced into Southeast Asia and logistically supported during first six months of operation.

CINCPAC stated that on the order of 16 Chicom divisions were readily available plus the eight DRV infantry divisions for a total threat in SEA of 24 Communist divisions. The Chicom/DRV air threat would be comprised of "... approximately 535 aircraft assumed to be dispersed on 19 jet capable airfields." In addition, 20 or more secondary airfields would be available for transport operations and pre- and post-strike bases but not capable of supporting sustained operations.

These were the sobering realities of US conventional military power in the Pacific. Admiral Felt had made
clear the alternative decisions available in the event of massive Chicom intervention in Southeast Asia—suffer probable defeat, or, use tactical nuclear weapons. The necessity to consider the latter alternative, if the US had opted to apply additional and decisive military pressure against the Communists in defense of RVN, appear to have reduced the number of courses of action deemed acceptable by US policymakers.

According to the record, the US appeared unwilling to accept the risks associated with certain measures which, conceivably, could have provoked some measure of increased Chinese Communist intervention in Southeast Asia or elsewhere in Asia.

Given the preponderance of Chicom conventional military strength, with its import for Korea and Taiwan as well as Southeast Asia, the political/military constraints imposed by the US upon RVN/US military operations may have been sound. They may have been sound because: in the absence of a pre-decision to employ that portion of total US military superiority required to coerce the Chinese Communists from open intervention—or negating their military efforts should coercion fail—Red China had the capability to seize the military initiative, to retain it in the face of quantitatively inferior RVN/US conventional forces, to subjugate Southeast Asia and to drive US forces from the Asian mainland.
Internal Influences (Part III, pp. 60-135)

Buddhist Controversy: Dissension among the Buddhists reached significant proportions when about 3,000 of all ages and classes gathered in Hue on 8 May 1963. They demonstrated against alleged religious restrictions. The banning of processions and the display of pictures of Buddha on his birthday, were compared with the lack of interference by the government on Catholic days of special observance.

The kaleidoscopic nature of the events which occurred throughout RVN during a crucial four-day period in August 1963 can best be illustrated by some excerpts from messages of the day.

16 August, Hue placed under martial law... 1,200 ARVN troops scattered throughout the city... barricades erected... little traffic and few people abroad.

16 August, Nha Trang... situation tense... curfew in force... ARVN restricted to barracks... US personnel restricted from 1800 to 0600... attempted demonstration dispersed.

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Da Nang, 18 August... 3,000-4,000 Buddhists demonstrate... march on City Hall... ARVN captain and two soldiers attempt to disperse demonstration... two Buddhists shot and wounded... ARVN stoned by demonstrators.

Saigon, 20 August... martial law declared... American dependents restricted to quarters... Xa Loi Pagoda raided, bonzes and nuns removed... foreign Press copy refused transmission... military in control of telephone and telegraph... troops secure radio stations, National Assembly building and key intersections... morning traffic in city normal and moving freely.

Throughout all large cities of RVN on 20 August, the military had taken similar measures--and no incidents had
At 0930 Washington time, 21 August, State over the signature of Undersecretary Ball, officially issued the following statement:

On the basis of information from Saigon, it appears that government of the Republic of Vietnam has instituted repressive measures against Vietnamese Buddhist leaders. The action represents a direct violation by the Vietnamese government of assurances that it was pursuing a policy of reconciliation with the Buddhists. The US deprecates repressive actions of this nature.

The important aspect of the official US statement was that it had virtually convicted RVN of religious persecution. The nature, tone, and wording were rather rigid and not readily susceptible to subsequent modification should more comprehensive information become available.

Examination of the report of the United Nations Mission sent to RVN to elicit the facts reveals conflicting testimony regarding the nature and extent of the alleged persecution. However, the evidence invited the tentative conclusion that such instances of religious persecution as may have occurred would have been primarily at province and district levels of the government.

There were many sources of intelligence available upon which to base US policy decisions. At least four of these were within RVN; Embassy traffic with State; the various attaches' submissions to DIA and their Departments; COMUSMAC-V dispatches to CINCPAC; and the covert sources of US intelligence not covered in this report. In addition, information was continually received in Washington from US Embassies in
Asia, Europe (notably Paris and London), our UN Embassy and the Washington diplomatic corps.

Yet even the three sources of information available to Project CHECO (Embassy, Air Attache and COMUSMAC-V) expressed markedly differing opinions as to the possible/probable course of events following the imposition of martial law on 20 August 1963. COMUSMAC-V was rather conservative in the information reported and in his speculations; the Embassy evidenced a heightened, but constrained, apprehension toward the evolving situation; while the Air Attache tended to dwell on the more radical views of intelligence sources and speculated upon more extreme eventualities.

All of which pointed up the need—and absence—of an accurate appraisal of SVN policies and intentions and of a high confidence assessment of the probable course of events in RVN. Moreover, when higher levels within the US government integrated inputs from diverse sources ever further removed from the RVN scene, the complexities of meaningful correlations were increased, and further obfuscation resulted.

The Coup: Although references to a planned coup had been persistent since mid-summer, the general tenor of the situation in RVN during the latter days of October tended to discount their authenticity. Thus, it came as a surprise to COMUSMAC-V when JCS, late on the evening of 27 October 1963, directed CINCPAC to:

... Sail one afloat BLT and a covering attack carrier task group to same op areas off

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RVN as were designated for possible evacuation operations in early September. Movement is to be made ASAP, but as quietly and inconspicuously as possible... movement is precautionary in nature and is being directed now in order to reduce reaction time should developments in RVN require evacuation of American civilians.

General Harkins said he was surprised because there had been no obvious indications of unrest in RVN.

At 1350 local time on 1 November, the Air Attache, Saigon, informed DIA of "extensive artillery, machine gun, and rifle fire spreading throughout entire city." The long forecast coup had begun.

Moreover, the remarkable and fortuitous coincidence of the JCS decision--made just 50-odd hours previously--to prepare for the possibility of trouble in RVN had proven to be prophetic indeed.

Diem Deposed: At 1345 local* time, 1 November, General Don's aide, "informed CAS that the coup is in progress."

Troops with red neckerchiefs were pouring into Saigon from the direction of Bien Hoa. The police compound and Ministry of Defense had been taken as had the telecommunications center.

In the very early morning hours of 2 November, Saigon time, Secretary McNamara announced movement of US military forces toward the area of South Vietnam as a precautionary measure should it become necessary to protect American

* Saigon local time is seven hours later than GMT, i.e., 0800Z is (+7:00) 1400L Saigon time.
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lives. Since the order positioning US units had gone out from JCS almost three days previously, US forces were well poised.

COMUSMAC-V fixed the time of surrender as 0600L on 2 November, adding that, "the Diem regime has fallen and the President and counsellor are in the custody of the General Committee at an undisclosed location." General Harkins reported that while the outcome had been fairly clear late the preceding night (1 November), it took a heavy assault on the Palace the following morning to bring about capitulation. "Diem was stubborn to the end; in fact when Dinh, as tactical commander, got the President on the telephone at 0600L, Diem demanded the immediate surrender of the coup forces."

Initially, the feeling in RVN and in the US had been one of almost unrestrained optimism. That feeling was short lived. Less than three weeks after the coup, Secretary McNamara held a "Special Meeting on RVN" at Headquarters CINCPAC and expressed fear that, "... a certain euphoria has settled over us since the coup." He cautioned that, "... the generals head a very fragile government."

The crucial question remained unanswered at the end of 1963. Would this radical procedure for effecting governmental change correct the debilitating disease which had afflicted RVN's prosecution of the war--or would it merely exchange one syndrome for another, leaving the disease unchecked.
Neutralism: Elements in RVN were fearful of the US attitude toward neutrality, and they were equally concerned about those within their own country who, for various reasons, might steer the nation toward a transitional accommodation with communism which would eventually lead to a complete communist takeover.

Early in 1963, the Embassy was furnished a copy of a captured VC document, dated 1962, which "appears to be genuine." The document stressed that the VC be prepared to capitalize on many favorable opportunities "which will arise during the course of the struggle":

The enemy may stop the war; he may get bogged down, or he may be compelled to negotiate and compromise. If negotiations and temporary compromises take place, we shall have made an important step toward victory, as was the case in Laos, where there is now a very important transitional step in the Laos revolution.

The OSI Counterintelligence Digest of March 1964 reported the following:

January 1964 ushered in continued dissension among MRC officials, but of more significance, witnessed growing speculation and concern for the threat of neutralism. On 13 January 1964, Major General Le Van Ngheim, Commander of the Vietnamese Special Forces, claimed that the MRC was dominated by pro-French elements who desired the 'De Gaulle solution' of neutralism for South Vietnam. Ngheim cited Major Generals Tran Van Don, Le Van Kim and Brigadier General Nguyen Van Vy as being in very close contact with French cultural affairs officers. Ngheim also indicated that the first step in implementing this policy would be the visit to Saigon of General Nguyen Van Hinh, a French Army officer of Vietnamese extraction. On 17 January, General Ngheim told an American observer that Generals Don, Kim, Vy and Brigadier General Duong Van Duc were definitely working with the French
on a neutralist solution for South Vietnam. At that time, there were also indications that General Don was negotiating with one Jean Basdevant, a French intelligence agent who was on an official diplomatic mission to Saigon.

On 24 January 1964, Colonel Tran Dinh Lan, a well-known French intelligence officer of Vietnamese extraction, was tendered a most cordial welcome to Saigon by Defense Minister Major General Tran Van Don. When Lan departed Vietnam for France in 1954, he held the position of Chief of French Counterintelligence Service and had been instrumental in the arrest and liquidation of numerous persons who had fought against the French.

According to a reliable Vietnamese intelligence officer, Lan and at least a score more French intelligence agents currently operating in Saigon represented the vanguard of a newly formed French intelligence network operating under the guise of 'cultural' and 'intellectual' organizations. It was the opinion of this source that the MRC was highly vulnerable to pro-French attitudes and it was the mission of these French agents to negotiate with selected MRC officials for the neutralization of South Vietnam.

* * * * * * *

... It was also learned at this time that General Duong Van Ngoc Minh's brother, Duong Van Thach, was a VC general in command of Zone '5' and that the VC had sent the younger brother of Prime Minister Nguyen Ngoe Tho to Tay Minh Province, where Tho had made indirect contact with him.

In the meantime, French-inspired neutralist propaganda was being fostered by French-trained professors among university students in Saigon . . . .

Press (Part III, ps. 140-167)

On 5 February 1963, the Saigon Task Force sent a message, signed by Molting, to State evaluating the quality of Press

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reporting in RVN:

The quality of reporting by US newsmen here is probably as good as average reporting of Stateside story like earthquake or Hollywood divorce. Difference between Vietnam and that kind of story is not only that accurate information is more difficult to come by (and accuracy far more important) but also that balanced judgment in extraordinarily complex and mixed situation in this country is inherently difficult to reach. Latter is in fact perhaps too much to hope for from young reporters with limited facilities for coverage and research.

Nolting did not suggest that there was any malice in an early agency report that a US Army captain was killed at Ap Bac "trying futilely to get the Vietnamese to fight." The newsman had gotten the story from American advisors who believed it true themselves. The apparently "incendiary" impact upon the US public was irreparable even when the correct version was made available the next day.

The Ambassador continued:

Withholding angle like this to major highly competitive story to take time for difficult double-checking requires very high degree of reportorial restraint and judgment—which it is not realistic to expect from average agency reporter... this rests in fact that major US news organizations like UPI, AP and NY Times use men (average age 27) with approximately same experience to cover Vietnam as they do routine stateside police beat. These three, furthermore, are only US organizations that consider story important enough at that time to station full-time staff correspondent in Saigon. Other outfits use part-time stringers and sporadic visits by staffers stationed elsewhere...

... Older more experienced correspondents are not stationed here because editors apparently cannot persuade such men to live in Saigon, and in fact often have difficulty finding anyone at all who will agree to come for essentially same reasons
that US agencies in Saigon have chronic recruiting problems. Visiting editors and reporters repeatedly said that the US public [at that time] was uninterested. This attitude, coupled, 'perhaps' as they claim, by routine optimistic statements from American visitors here, has meant that so-called 'positive' stories get relatively little play, if they make the papers at all, while bad news often hits page one. Same time, correspondents deliberately searched for 'angle' to dress up story . . . .

The first apparent case of censorship by the GVN, after martial law was lifted following the 1 November 1963 coup, was the stamping of copies of the 23 December issue of the International edition of the New York Times, "For Personal Use Only." This stamp had been used frequently by the Diem government. It meant that the particular publication so stamped could not be made available to the Vietnamese public; for example, through the USIS library.

The Minister of Information's reply to an informal Embassy query stated that that issue of the Times had not been delivered, except for those going to foreign officials. One article in the censored issue reported on rivalries within the MRC. Another, by Jack Raymond and datelined Washington, reported that US officials were becoming less patient and more critical toward RVN's counterinsurgency efforts. Moreover, the issue contained an Associated Press photo depicting a peasant woman with two small children as they "flee from a village sacked by Rangers of South Vietnam."

At his March 1962 SecDef Conference, Mr. McNamara had been cautiously optimistic: "... it appears we are beginning to make progress." By July 1962, General Harkins
commented to the Secretary that "... there is no doubt that we are on the winning side." In May 1963, Harkins reported to McNamara that the GVN controlled areas were continuing to expand, while the VC controlled areas were becoming smaller. He stated that the GVN controlled the mass of the population.

On 22 October, the Department of State issued a research memorandum which evaluated the military posture of GVN vis-a-vis the Viet Cong:

Statistics on the insurgency in South Vietnam, although neither thoroughly trustworthy nor entirely satisfactory as criteria, indicate an unfavorable shift in the military balance. Since July 1963, the trend in Viet Cong casualties, weapons losses, and defections has been downward while the number of Viet Cong armed attacks and other incidents has been upward. Comparison with earlier periods suggests that the military position of the government of Vietnam may have been set back to the point it occupied six months to a year ago. These trends coincide in time with the sharp deterioration of the political situation. At the same time, even without the Buddhist issue and the attending government crisis, it is possible that the Diem regime would have been unable to maintain the favorable trends of previous periods in the face of the accelerated Viet Cong effort.

During the same period, the CIA had seen the RVN military situation in a somewhat different, yet "disturbing" light:

There has been no dramatic change in the basic military situation over the past few weeks. Certain statistical trends however--weapons losses, Viet Cong activity and GVN casualties, especially 'missing in action'--are becoming disturbing, and various indications suggest lowering of morale in the Vietnamese Armed Forces.
Late in December, Secretary McNamara and General Taylor again visited RVN. The visit confirmed that the military situation had indeed, been reassessed. The new evaluation deflated the previously optimistic outlook. All of the principals at the conference acknowledged that the situation at the end of October was actually much worse than thought to be at that time.

By the end of November 1963, it had become public knowledge that progress in Vietnam had not been as good as it had been represented officially. It was clear that the issue between RVN and the VC was still very much in doubt.

At this point, the Press became persistently speculative about two points:

1. What had caused the widely-held impression that the RVN/US had been winning the war against the VC hands down?
2. Why were US forces being withdrawn when it seemed that the military situation might be going against us?

Answers which would satisfy the Press and public--and could be made public--were not in evidence at year's end.

RVN - Importunity (Part III, ps. 167-168)

Countering the Communist insurgency in RVN had proven to be extremely difficult, complex, and vexing. A composite of diverse influences existed--political, psychological, sociological, and military.

The interaction of these variables had determined the relative effectiveness, or ineffectiveness, of joint RVN/US efforts. Not all of the policy dictates involving Southeast
Asia had enhanced the attainment of purely military objectives. In fact, some political/policy influences had acted as constraints on the military prosecution of the war.

This is not to depreciate the validity of such constraints. On the contrary, their existence points up the trade-offs implicit in the diversity of efforts expended in an attempt to achieve a single national objective. Efforts to achieve one, apparently single and forthright, national objective are, only too often in the real world, encumbered by many diverse, and sometimes conflicting considerations.

Whether eventually, the VC could be defeated, in the light of the political/policy influences existent at year's end was uncertain. Some of the constraints were, perhaps, not even susceptible to US control. Moreover, the conflict had reached a very serious stage.

Nevertheless, the importance attached to the outcome of the struggle in RVN by the United States had not diminished over the two-year period of this report. President Johnson expressed the import of the conflict in a memorandum to General Taylor, dated 2 December 1963, in which he stated, "The more I look at it, the more it is clear to me that South Vietnam is our most critical military area . . . ."

AREA COMMAND--STRUCTURE/RELATIONSHIPS (PART IV)

Shortly after the Presidential decision of late 1961 to expand US aid to RVN, a unified US military command was
designated. The unified staff, with headquarters in Saigon, was to provide central direction for all US military efforts in RVN.

The structure of the US command reflected an awareness of Secretary McNamara's views that "... while ... naval and air support operations are desirable, they won't be too effective and we should not think they will win the war." The intra-command relationships were, in turn, influenced by the predominately US Army organizational structure.

Requisite to Historical Evaluation: The utilization of air vehicles for military conflict had evolved during the course of a half-century of experience. This evolution had progressed from the performance of single missions, such as observation or courier service, to the effective performance of multiple missions.

With regard to combating guerrilla insurgency, examples of missions performed by air vehicles are: close air support, interdiction, escort, armed reconnaissance, airborne FAC, combat support liaison/observation, airborne/airland assault, and airborne/airland resupply. A single type of air vehicle could be expected to effectively perform several different missions.

Requirements for support of air vehicles are: ordnance (offensive air vehicle), crews, ground servicing and maintenance personnel/facilities, POL, communications.
systems, navigational aids, and, command and control systems. These are requisite irrespective of which service may own or operate particular air vehicles.

Likewise, the versatile nature of vehicles constructed to function in the atmosphere, coupled with the three dimensional medium in which they operate, make it virtually inevitable that air vehicles belonging to one service will essentially duplicate (with varying degrees of effectiveness in the performance of singular design parameters) the capabilities of air vehicles belonging to other services. However, attempting to assess the merit of controlled duplication among the services is not within the purview of this report.

The command lines to US forces in RVN ran from the Secretary of Defense to:

- JCS
- CINCPAC
- COMUSMAC-V

The commander, who alone is tasked by higher authority with specific responsibilities, must also be expected to exercise commensurate and decisive authority in discharging those responsibilities. To ease this burden of responsibility, USAF officers experienced in tactical air warfare were available at each echelon of command.

In the light of the foregoing, the military structure and relationships in RVN were particularly significant to the professional airman.
During the 27 months of counterinsurgency effort covered by this report, there were four air organizations operating in RVN simultaneously: the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF); the USAF; US Army aviation; and, USMC aviation. For these four organizations, there were three individual, independent, chains of command.

The VNAF command line extended through the Army of Vietnam (ARVN) to the Joint General Staff; the USAF line through the commander of the Second Air Division to the Commander, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (COMUSMAC-V); and the US Army aviation and USMC aviation command line through the US senior corps advisors to COMUSMAC-V.

Two separate control systems were developed for the use of air power. The VNAF and the USAF were controlled by the Air Operations Center (AOC) of the Tactical Air Control System (TACS), while the US Army aviation units, and that of the USMC, were under the Army Air Request Net (AARN). These systems were employed essentially independently, even though they were complementary as used in joint US military service doctrine.

Operational control over all US air resources in RVN was not exercised by the senior USAF officer. COMUSMAC-V had designated himself as the air component commander, who, in accordance with this same joint doctrine, was responsible for such control. In RVN, therefore, the air component
commander controlled two US air organizations, with two unilateral air control systems: USAF and US Army/USMC aviation.

Gemini -- US Air Force and US Army Air Force: The Commander in Chief, Pacific Command (CINCPAC), had recommended, even prior to the actual deployment of US forces, that not only USAF, but US Army aviation elements be sent to RVN. On 11 May 1961, JCS had outlined a plan to deploy US military units to RVN. CINCPAC responded, on 12 May, that:

... If troops were sent to South Vietnam, the ground forces should consist of a US Army infantry division reinforced with Army aviation units. ... For air forces, CINCPAC considered 8 B-57's for border surveillance, close support and counter-Viet Cong operations; 4 F-102's for possible air defense and counter air operations, and possibly two or three reconnaissance aircraft. ...

In mid-November 1961, JCS had directed Army aviation units to deploy to RVN:

... The mission of the US Army helicopter units was to fly support missions for the RVNAF for which the South Vietnamese pilots were not yet qualified and to help in training the RVNAF. 

* * * * * * *

The mission of this element USAF 4400 CCTS/ would be to train the Vietnamese Air Force. ... CINCPAC informed CHNAAC Vietnam that the primary mission of the detachment USAF 4400 CCTS/ was to conduct tactical training for the RVNAF. 

By December 1961, two US Army helicopter companies had arrived in RVN, and another had been scheduled for deployment. The USAF had deployed 16 aircraft to RVN, while 40
**US MILITARY STRENGTH**

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<th>31 Dec 61</th>
<th>31 Dec 62</th>
<th>31 Dec 63</th>
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Source, Msg, 2AD to PACAF, DTG 271045Z, Apr 64 (CONFIDENTIAL).

**Excluding MAAC, Source, Ltr, Hq PACAF (PFPPL) to PFCOI-H, 27 Apr 64 (SECRET).**

* CINCPAC Comm Hist, 1962, Fig. 4, (TOP SECRET), states 9,422 total.

**RVN STRENGTH RESOURCES**

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<td>RVN Armed Forces</td>
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Source, Mag, 2AD to PACAF, DTG 271045Z, Apr 64 (CONFIDENTIAL).
had been deployed by the US Army.

**Designation of USMAC-V:** On 8 February 1962, by order of the JCS, a sub-unified command, reporting through CINCPAC, was established as of 1600 hours GMT. It was designated United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. General Paul D. Harkins was named commander, with a short title of COMUSMAC-V, and headquarters in Saigon.

COMUSMAC-V had direct responsibility for all US military policy, operations, and assistance. He was given authority to discuss US and RVN military operations with the President of RVN, and to furnish advice to the government of RVN on all matters relating to the maintenance of internal security and the organization and employment of the RVNAF, counter-insurgency, and other paramilitary forces.

**Area Manning:** By the end of 1963, MAC-V military strength had risen to almost 16,000. However, prior to the withdrawal of forces in December 1963, there had been nearly 17,000 US military personnel in RVN.

The Vietnamese regular military forces in December 1963 numbered 212,308, supplemented by 181,385 paramilitary personnel. (see CHART I-1)

**Aircraft in RVN:** By the end of 1963, there were approximately 680 air vehicles in RVN. Included in this figure were 117 USAF aircraft, 219 Vietnamese Air Force aircraft, 325 US Army aircraft, and 20 USMC aircraft.

Numerically, these air resources were comparable to
such countries as Grand Republic of China, with 617; Indonesia, with 556; or the North Korean Air Force, with 525.*

This five-fold increase in air vehicles, in little more than two years, magnified the problems normally associated with positive control of air operations. (see CHART 1-2)

Control of Air Operations: At the outset, General Emmett O'Donnell, Jr., CINCPACAF, had emphasized the need for a joint operations center (JOC) and a tactical air control system (TACS). Secretary McNamara agreed that they were immediate problems and critical to a successful military effort in RVN, and gave his approval to proceed with them immediately.

In the ensuing discussion of control of VN and US air operations, it was decided that parallel national channels for commitment and control of forces would be set up, with, "all air operations being coordinated and directed through the JOC." The official CINCPAC record of this first SecDef conference set forth, "DECISIONS MADE AND ACTIONS TAKEN . . .

2. Set up PACAF version of tactical control system in SVN . . . ."

At the third SecDef conference, General O'Donnell expressed the requirement for, "law and order in the air," by means of centralized coordination and control of all air operations "regardless of by whom conducted." The official

* Source, PACAF AC/7S, Intelligence.
### MILITARY AIRCRAFT IN RVN

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<th>Dec 61</th>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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* Approximate

** Source, Rpt, Army Aviation Section, MAAG-V, to Chief, MAAG, Dec 62 (CONFIDENTIAL).

*** Source, Hist of US Army Build-Up and Operation in RVN, Hq USARPAC, 1 Feb-31 Dec 63, p 79, Table 3.
record of the conference signed by CINCPAC, Admiral Felt, stated, "... The discussion which ensued indicated that all were in agreement that all air operations, to include helicopter combat support operations should be closely coordinated by the JOC."* [emphasis added]

The instruction by Secretary McNamara, in December 1961, to establish the "PACAF version of tactical control system" in RVN did not include specific allusion to an Army Air Ground System (AAGS). Yet, joint doctrine as then practiced by the US Strike Command, and as taught in the USAF Air Ground Operations School (AGOS), was predicated upon an air/ground system comprised of the Tactical Air Control System (TACS) of the USAF and the Army Air Ground System. The practicability of a joint air/ground system, with centralized control of air resources by a joint operations center, was dependent upon the existence and integration of these component elements.**

Combat Development and Test Center in RVN: By mid-1961, discussions between Vietnamese, OSD, and MAAG-V officials had produced agreement that a center to study equipment, techniques and doctrine would be set up in RVN. It was to be located at RVNAF headquarters under the supervision of the RVN JGS.

* Approved doctrine in US Strike Command during the period of this report.
** The source noted here, the USAFAGOS, was jointly staffed, and the curriculi supported by the commanders of TAC and CONARC.
At the January 1962 SecDef conference, Secretary McNamara pointed out President Kennedy's personal interest in increasing the counterinsurgency capabilities of the Armed Services. Toward that end, McNamara expressed the "hope" to make RVN a "... proving ground, training ground, or laboratory for tactics-techniques and weapons."

Joint Operational Evaluation Group, Vietnam (JOEG-V):
Within six months, CINCPAC, by authority of JCS, directed COMUSMAC-V to create, "... under his immediate operational control ...", a Joint Operational Evaluation Group in Vietnam (JOEG-V). Such a unit was activated on 1 August 1962:

The purpose of the new agency was to take advantage of the combat environment in Vietnam for testing and experimenting with new concepts, tactics, techniques and materiel that could not be tested satisfactorily in an area where there was no combat. As described by the JCS, the JOEG-V was not intended to replace existing procedures whereby the Services were authorized to conduct in the Republic of Vietnam their own tests to support their own programs. Rather, the agency was to provide a means by which operational evaluations could be coordinated and conducted to give the greatest return to all Services or commands having interest. Test projects could be initiated by the JCS, the Services, CINCPAC, COMUSMAC-V, or other commands, but the JOEG-V was to be allowed to determine the extent to which the tests could be conducted appropriately in Vietnam.

Harkins believed that as a "basic concept" JOEG-V tests and activities, "... should be generally confined to military operational evaluation of new concepts, doctrine, tactics, techniques and materiel." [emphasis added] Further, he proposed limiting ARPA's CDTC-V tests and activities,
"... to the development, procurement, serviceability and pre-operational testing and evaluation of new or modified hardware items, which offer promise of application military or paramilitary and item use in the short range period."

Thus, COMUSMAC-V had apparently wanted to reserve to himself the evaluation of operational concepts, tactics, and doctrine within the combat theater while eliminating possible infringement by ARPA on areas of military controversy.

Army Concept Team in Vietnam (ACTIV): On 4 October 1962, JCS informed CINCPAC that the SecDef had approved an Army request to establish an Army Concept Team in Vietnam (ACTIV) to test Army, "concepts, tactics, techniques and materiel..." At the same time, the Department of the Army prepared a "Table of Distribution" which called for 97 personnel to be assigned to ACTIV.

Almost two months after Secretary McNamara had approved the establishment of ACTIV in RVN, Headquarters PACAF proposed to CINCPAC that the Second Air Division staff be increased...
by 12 people in order to conduct tests for the Air Force similar to those being conducted by ACTIV, but on a much smaller scale. The Air Force Test Unit (AFTU) was approved on 13 December 1962, with authorized strength of 12 people.

2nd ADVON: On 17 October 1961, the decision was made to deploy an element of the Tactical Air Command's 4400th Combat Crew Training Squadron (Project JUNGLE JIM) with MAAG Vietnam. Shortly thereafter, 2nd ADVON was established in support of the JUNGLE JIM elements and several TAC and PACAF TDY units.

The Commander, 2ADVON, Brig Gen Rollen H. Anthis, had also been designated chief of the Air Section, MAAG. As ADVON commander, he reported directly to COMUSMAC-V on theater operational matters, and to Thirteenth Air Force on unilateral service support matters. As MAGAF, Anthis was responsible to the Chief, MAAG-V, Maj Gen C. J. Timmes, US Army.

Command and Operations: CHART I-3, depicts the organization for command and operational control of US military forces in RVN as of 31 December 1963. Secretary McNamara's comment at the December 1961 SecDef conference concerning the primacy of ground warfare in this war was reflected by the command and operational structure for the employment of US forces. Senior USAF officers occupied few positions from which command authority could be exercised.
CHART I-4, reflects the assignment/control of US air resources available to COMUSMAC-V. Control of USAF air resources had been vested in the commander of the Second Air Division; however, US Army air resources had been allocated to the four Corps, to be employed, through the US Army Senior Corps advisors, as organic air elements by the Corps commanders.

Thus, total US air resources had been placed in two separate packages. One was a small package of centrally controlled air; the other, a much larger force of Army/USMC organic air. To this discordant organization of air power were added the resources of the VNAF as a third entity.

Command Relationships (Part IV, ps. 26-66)

Evolving Organization: On 2 December 1961, Lieutenant General McGarr, US Army Chief of MAAG-V, informed CINCPAC (with information to OSD, JCS, DA and several other Army organizations) of a "thorough survey" which had, "... established immediate urgent requirement for marked increase Army type aviation support." He then outlined the following:

... I have urged RVNAF JGS to reorganize Army type aviation units into four composite VNAF squadrons, three of which will be located at the three Corps field headquarters and under strict operational control of Corps CG's. Fourth squadron will be in general support and under control of Field Command CG. With this reorganization each Corps will have an organic capability for adequate L-19 reconnaissance/observation; sufficient helicopter lift to move combat patrols of platoon or company size and to effect critical re-supply and casualty evacuation; and a means for accomplishing staff and command liaison.
On 13 December, General McGarr stated in a message to CINCPAC, that it seemed certain that the RVNAF would reorganize its Army-type aviation assets as he had reported previously.

Aircraft maintenance will certainly be a problem in the beginning. However, US Army aircraft maintenance company is needed over here anyway to support our Army aviation buildup . . . . It will be available to lend a hand to VNAF support squadrons . . . pilot checkouts . . . will pose no major problem. We can do this with US Army aviators now in country and others incoming. Army aviation advisors 'already/ requested . . . will solve virtually all remaining immediate problems.

What will be required is a major input of Vietnamese students into US Army aviation flight training and aircraft maintenance courses beginning /as/ soon as RVNAF and my Army aviation staff can work out all the essential details of requirements and programming.

In August 1962, the Department of the Army messaged CINCUSARPAC, with information to CINCPAC:

. . . Chief of Staff, US Army, considers that additional emphasis needs to be placed on developing aviation capability within Vietnam Army . . . . Specifically, suggest consideration be given to creation of appropriate aviation capability within (repeat within) Vietnamese /Army/. . . consisting of US Army types /fixed wing/ and rotary wing aircraft . . . . Believe experience in Vietnam verifies the utility and effectiveness of fully integrated Army aviation in the Army's combined arms counterinsurgency operations, since the counterinsurgency force commander must have instantaneous authority and capability to utilize any element of his force, including aircraft and crews, without going through interservice coordination machinery. Consideration should include appropriate Vietnam Army aviation training and logistical bases, developed concurrently to support these Army aviation elements.
By 1 November 1962, there were 458 aircraft operating within RVN--276 of these were US, while the remaining 182 belonged to the Government of Vietnam. CINCPAC commented to General Harkins:

... A sizeable air support capability which poses many problems of control, base loading and logistics. ... As a general rule, we are striving for unity of effort as we proceed with our assistance to GVN. There needs to be better coordination of the overall air effort with the Tactical Air Control System. ... we must not embark on programs which would result in two separate air wars being conducted simultaneously. Strike missions must be closely coordinated and centrally controlled. [emphasis added]

General Harkins gave his views as to how the duties of US advisors to the VNAF should be allocated between USAF and US Army:

I have again reviewed advisory responsibilities and have concluded that the US Army aviation advisors should be responsible for advising the ARVN commanders on the employment of VNAF Army type aviation and that the US Air Force advisors should be responsible for advising the VNAF on the technical training, aircraft operation and maintenance of VNAF Army type aviation. ... [emphasis added]

Perhaps unmindful of CINCPAC's explicit policy of November 1962, previously cited, in March 1963 General Harkins sent a letter to Lieutenant General Ty, Chief of the VN Joint General Staff in which he stated:

... The present system of centralized control whereby supported ground commanders must depend on intermediate agencies, both in and outside the chain of command, to grant final approval /for VNAF helicopter missions/ is a primary restriction...
I recommend that consideration be given toward employing VNAF helicopter elements in direct support of ARVN tactical ground units. I further recommend that the 211th Helicopter Squadron be placed in direct support of III Corps and the 213th Helicopter Squadron be placed in direct support of the 25th Division... Such mission assignment should parallel the support structure presently employed by US [Army] helicopter units in RVN.

On 8 July 1963, COMUSMAC-V issued Directive Number 44 entitled, "Task Organization and Management USMC/USA Aviation Resources in RVN." One of its purposes was "to enhance coordination of the total VN/US air effort." Concept:

a. An aviation headquarters will be positioned in each of the four Corps Tactical Zones to plan, direct and control the employment of all US Army and Marine Corps Aviation units and aircraft operating in direct support of a given Corps. To this end, the aviation headquarters will exercise operational control of all non-organic elements allocated to the Corps. The aviation headquarters will, in turn, be under the operational control of the Corps Senior Advisor/US Army as the senior representative of COMUSMAC-V in the Corps Tactical Zone.

(Operational control comprises those functions of command involving the composition of subordinate forces, assignment of tasks, designation of objectives and the authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission. As regards employment of aviation units it includes determination of priorities, methods, and prescription of restrictions and limitations.)

* * * * * * * * *

c. The Commander of an aviation headquarters is ex officio, the principal aviation staff officer of the Corps Senior Advisor and the advisor to the Corps for matters within his professional competence [i.e., air]... [emphasis added]
In the MAC-V recap of the SecDef visit of October 1963 which was sent to CINCPAC, Harkins reported McNamara's guidance as, "... D. We should feel free to use the Mohawk aircraft to the full extent of their capability. This in particular reference to use this aircraft for the delivery of munitions. Up to now Mohawks have been limited to defensive role only."

CINCPAC passed the COMUSMAC-V message to Headquarters PACAF for comment. That portion of the PACAF reply which concerned the arming of Mohawks is quoted:

While we recognize the increased firepower capabilities which would accrue to the Mohawk by addition of 2.75" rockets, we seriously question the validity of unilateral US employment of the Mohawk for offensive purposes in RVN--if this interpretation of SecDef guidance by MACV is correct.

The VNAF is being trained to become combat capable and self-sufficient in the employment of aircraft which they currently possess or will receive, thus permitting a phased withdrawal of USAF personnel at an appropriate time. The Mohawk, on the other hand, is not programmed for introduction into RVN through MAP. This aircraft was placed in RVN for unilateral test and evaluation purposes in a surveillance role. As such, it has been restricted by CINCPAC, and appropriately so, from employment in armed reconnaissance, interdiction or close air missions. Past utilization of Mohawks in RVN in a reconnaissance and self-defense role has posed coordination of air and safety problems resulting from operations outside the Tactical Air Control System and frequently without any knowledge of the air commander. Despite CINCPAC instructions for the coordinated employment of all air resources in RVN, Mohawks continue to operate in violation of these instructions. The seriousness of such a situation--particularly if the offense capabilities of the Mohawk are enhanced--need not be elaborated.
upon here. Should the rules be changed to permit use of the Mohawk in the delivery of ordnance, PACAF urges positive measures be taken to assure mission control by MACV's Air Component Commander and employment under direction of the TACS.

Test Activities: On 4 October 1962, JCS authorized establishment of a US Army test unit (ACTIV) in RVN and indicated that it would initially consist of six officers. Four days later the Department of the Army advised CINCPAC that it had approved a table of distribution for ACTIV with a total strength of 97 personnel.

On 27 November, CINCPAC sent a message to JCS citing the fact that he had questioned the assignment of a large Army staff to ACTIV:

I am becoming concerned that desire to use SVN as a US test bed is beclouding CINCPAC and COMUSMAC-V primary objective of advising GVN how to fight and assisting them to win their war.

COIN Air Polemic* (Part IV, ps. 61-105)

Between March and June 1963, several exchanges of correspondence between General O'Donnell, General Harkins, and Admiral Felt revealed the extent to which the doctrinal polemic had progressed. The cleavage had gone beyond the conceptual--it had become detrimental to effective combat operations. (See Part V, "Air Operations")

On 8 March 1963, General O'Donnell wrote General Harkins concerning a recent visit O'Donnell had made to RVN.

* The full text of the correspondence is quoted in Part IV, "Area Command, Structure/Relationships."
The USAF facilities at Tan Son Nhut, particularly the Air Operations Center, reflected vast improvement. We now have a professional facility with real capacity for handling the operational tasks. Again, this is good progress.

The same progress has not yet been realized, in my opinion, in assuring utilization of the facility. After my visit and my discussions, it is clear that we still do not have unity in the air effort in Vietnam. True, there has been some progress, but it has been minimal and, in my judgment, by no means adequate.

Solving this problem is complicated for you by the doctrinal issues that should be left in Washington and should not be introduced into Vietnam. General Rowny is not helping in this area.

I have had opportunity to see Rowny's report on the test program with the armed helicopters (reference ACTIV-AM Report No. 3, Operational Evaluation of Armed Helicopters, dated 31 January 1963). There are portions of his report which I believe are subject to factual challenge, but beyond that, I believe he is completely out of line in several areas, one of which I have extracted and attach herewith. In this extract, there is no pretense that facts are being presented. Opinion seems to have taken over and in this purported progress report of testing activity, propaganda is being peddled. I think that this is irresponsible action. The insinuations in this document are a reflection on the way CINCPAC, you and I--among others--have assured that we have a discriminating air operation. I must tell you frankly that judging Rowny's effort by this one paper, he is adding to our problems--and I mean yours and mine--in this theater.

It is interesting to note that when I met with Minister Thuan, he pointedly raised two issues which bear upon the problem which this sort of action by Rowny is compounding. Thuan talked about irresponsible allegations of indiscriminate bombing. He described these allegations as doing great disservice to the RVNAF and the US military. He reflected his deep concern as to the corrosive influence.
and ultimate impact on our military effort of such allegations. He followed these comments with statements to the effect that he appreciated that there were interservice problems as between the US Army and the US Air Force which were reflected within the RVN and he expressed regret that this was the case. In my judgment, this is a shameful situation.

* * * * * * *

In the overall, Paul, I believe that you can lay claim to an improved capability and an improved outlook in Vietnam. I sense a more encouraging and confident atmosphere than I have during any previous visit. I don't for a minute believe that this means that our problems will be solved on any accelerated timetable, but I do believe that there is better basis to count on their being solved our way. I deplore the interservice battle that is being conducted around you. I regret the necessity to be personal about this aspect of the problem, but Rowny's irresponsible paper leaves no alternative.

* * * * * * *

MAR 11 1963

FM CINCPAC CP HM SMITH HAW
TO RUMSMA/COMUSMACV
INFO RUFLEM/PACAF HICKAM

CONFIDENTIAL

EXCLUSIVE FOR GENERAL HARKINS INFO GENERAL O'DONNELL FROM FELT

AIR EFFORT IN RVN
A. O'DONNELL'S PERSONAL LTR TO YOU DATED 8 MAR.
B. ACTIV MONTHLY REPORT NO. 3 ON OP EVALUATION OF ARMED HELOS.

1. I HAVE READ COPY OF REF A. MY STAFF AND I HAVE REVIEWED REF B, WHICH WAS MAILED TO US IN ADVANCE OF YOUR OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT.

2. WE ARE DEALING WITH A SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS. OBJECTIVITY IS BEING SACRIFICED. FOR WHAT . . . ?

On 22 March, General Harkins replied to General
As concerns the control of air operations in support of the local ground effort. The hard fact is that the geographical extent of this country unequivocally rules out any concept of direct centralized control of the total air effort from the JAOC. Air strike teams must, are, and, as additional resources permit to an even greater extent, will be deployed to outlying air fields in close proximity to the operational areas where their strike potential is required. These deployed strike teams must be responsive to the support requirements of the Corps in whose area they are positioned. To accomplish this they must be assigned the mission of direct support of the Corps and they must be under the direct control of the ASOC's of which we now have four, one in each Corps area, and in direct response to the requirements established by the supported commander. ASOC's can and should keep the JAOC informed of actions planned if time permits, but after the fact if time is too short. The JAOC cannot effectively exercise centralized control. The main effort of the JAOC should be in the redistribution of strike potential among the several Corps areas in response to the known or anticipated tempo of operations in the several Corps areas and in consonance with the priorities established by the JOC.

A matter which you no doubt had in mind when you said . . . 'until the Army Air effort joins the team' . . . is that the TACS does not 'frag' or play a role in the mission assignment of all Army aircraft, particularly the helicopters and the Army liaison/reconnaissance aircraft. This point is inevitably raised by all of our Air Force visitors as well as our 2d Air Division compatriots out here. In this regard, I think they completely lose sight of, or choose to disregard, CINCPAC INST 003120.3 which fully recognized situations in which there are, or may be, aircraft contributing to the cause and operating in the same area, which are not part of the organizational assets of the Air Force component commander. The recognition of this fact as made in CINCPAC INST 003120.3 is, to my thinking, fundamentally sound.
This brings me to the matter of the question of service doctrinal issues, and I agree wholeheartedly with you that such should be left in Washington and not introduced into Vietnam. I do not favor or encourage such discussions. They all seem to stem from one or another of our visitors.

I agree with you one hundred percent when you say that the permeation of our US inter-service problems into the RVNAF structure does nothing but hamper that which we all are trying our utmost to do out here. I assure you that anything that you or any others can do to stem the tide in this regard will be appreciated from this end.

On 27 April in commenting to Felt on the letter he had received from Harkins, O'Donnell observed:

. . . There are serious basic problems established by Harkins' letter. He and I are not on common ground at all. His letter reflects new—and incorrect—understandings of capabilities and systems. This is surprising because he and I have been participants in hours of discussions on these problems and in other exchanges of correspondence; in these actions, this lack of understanding and agreement has never previously been established. Under these circumstances, it is difficult for me to see how any really useful purpose would be served by trying to achieve improved understanding through more correspondence. While discussion might be a more helpful vehicle, it is now clear to me that something more than discussion or debate through the mail is required.

Briefly, I think there is a requirement for some clarification within the PACOM family concerning air operations in RVN . . .

* * * * * * *

. . . There never has been any question about the usefulness of deploying force for decentralized execution; however, these deployed forces continue to respond to the centralized control of an Air Force Component Commander who has a control structure—the
As one element--through which he controls air operations. Because the Air Force Component Commander operates the overall air effort within a relatively small theater, he must have before-the-fact control of resources. He does not surrender his operational authority to a control room or to a supported commander. As you know, this is the combat tested and accepted way of running air in joint air/ground operations.

This is, in fact, the system that Harkins has today in RVN. He has it because of our efforts to give him a responsive, effective, singly-controlled air operation. To this end, forces are located strategically and the essential communications are established which permit application of available air strength most effectively, diversion and reorientation of the effort in response to the demands of the tactical situation, coordination of efforts that may be physically separated, etc.

* * * * * * *

Within the RVNAF there is--for good reason in their situation--one Air Force. This is or was a Vietnamese determination but it is one which Secretary McNamara has specifically validated and which the JCS have just reiterated (SECRET JCS 9405, DTG 082124Z Apr). Harkins knows this. If he will consider national capabilities and the bill the US pays, I think he will conclude--all doctrinal theses notwithstanding--that for the Vietnamese this is the only rational arrangement.

When the preceding dialogue was suspended--in June 1963--MAC-V had been constituted and operational for almost a year and one-half. The record had clearly disclosed the existence in RVN of two competing apparati for the control and employment of air power: centralized versus Army organic.

The availability of two sources of air support had provided the ground commander with a choice. He could either use the air resources under his direct control, or, he could
call upon the air resources controlled by the Tactical Air Control System. If he chose the latter, his request for support would be considered, along with similar requests from other ground commanders, and measured against the theater commander's order of priorities. This could not have been expected to be attractive to a local ground commander.

The record also revealed that this polemic was known, in detail, to the RVN military and civilian authorities. Moreover, it had had a deleterious effect upon the RVN Armed Forces.

At the close of 1963 and the beginning of 1964, resolution of the unfortunate doctrinal controversy seemed as remote as the successful culmination of the struggle against communist insurgency in Vietnam.

AIR OPERATIONS (PART V)

The air operations in RVN against the Viet Cong (see Part II) were conducted under the constraints covered in Part III and with the military structure and relationships treated in Part IV. With the preceding as background, it was the intent in writing Part V "Air Operations" to avoid repetition. Thus, broader issues, although impinging upon air operations, may be found among the other monographs. For example: the topic of indiscriminate bombing was treated in Part III; border violations and restrictions to tactical air operations are also treated in Part III;
the doctrinal polemic involving air operations was discussed at some length in Part IV; training of the Vietnam Air Force (VNAF) is to be found in Part VI.

Test activity in RVN was extensive. The implications of unilateral and joint testing were referenced in Part III and Part IV. Because test results have been documented in separate unilateral and joint reports, Part V treats the subject of air operations only, as differentiated from operational tests and evaluations.

**Concept for Military Operations**

On 6 December 1961, Admiral Felt sent his draft of an outline plan for RVN military action against the Viet Cong to the Chief, Military Assistance Advisory Group, Vietnam (CMAG-V). The objective of the plan was, "to conduct a timely, aggressive, coordinated field campaign to defeat the communist insurgents and restore order in South Vietnam."

Felt acknowledged that the communist insurgency in South Vietnam had grown to such proportions that immediate response by the RVNAF was required initially to contain and then to defeat the communists. The counterinsurgency plan (CIP) was the primary instrument for coordinating US/GVN governmental level efforts directed toward achieving internal security in RVN.

CINCPAC directed that emphasis be placed on attacking VC support bases; severing VC "lifelines" by attacking and harassing VC land infiltration routes; stopping communist seaborne infiltration; and, providing close air support to
friendly forces by the establishment of simple but effective air/ground support techniques. Operations were to be conducted to destroy the VC in the most heavily populated areas of RVN in order to gain, and then maintain, tight military control of those areas.

With regard to air operations, Felt stressed:

(a) Close air support to include timely strikes against enemy targets located by operating forces and the employment of rotary and fixed-wing aircraft for tactical troop lift, supply and evacuation.

(b) Photo reconnaissance and air intelligence in support of (a) above.

(c) Air surveillance of coastal regions in support of operations to prevent infiltration by sea.

Concept for Employment of FARM GATE:* Admiral Felt had been anxious to deploy the JUNGLE JIM unit to RVN. On 27 October 1961, after a trip to Thirteenth Air Force during which he had discussions with Major General Maddux, Felt advised his office that the 1 December (1961) deadline for having JUNGLE JIM in place was unsatisfactory and must be expedited. "Draft my recommendation to CSAF without further ado which should be to the effect that we are ready to move JUNGLE JIM unit and it should get underway immediately provided there are no major logistics impediments."

* TAB "A" to monograph V is a working paper prepared by Second Air Division for COMUSMAC-V. Ambassador Nolting had been queried by the State Department concerning the use of air power in RVN. Nolting requested MAC-V to assist in formulating a reply, and the input from Second Air Division was in response to MAC-V's request. TAB "A" represents a comprehensive document which places in perspective many of the uses and effects of USAF air resources in RVN.
Subsequently, Headquarters PACAF proposed to CINCPAC a concept of employment of FARM GATE (JUNGLE JIM) in covert operations. Utilizing the function of training the VNAF as a cover, the aircraft and personnel of Detachment 2, 4400th CCTS would be used in support of RVNAF actions against the Viet Cong within the borders of RVN. The concept envisioned, "all feasible operational activity," overt and covert, and would be in addition to the advisory and training functions.

In the proposal, C-47's were to conduct aerial resupply, air drops of ARVN paratroopers, tactical intelligence collection and psychological warfare. The T-28's were to conduct close support operations, visual armed reconnaissance and interdiction. B-26's were to conduct close support operations, photo and armed reconnaissance, interdiction and shipping surveillance. "A control environment (TACS), and improved point-to-point and air-ground communications will be required to compress reaction time and to permit full utilization of aircraft available."

CINCPAC agreed with the PACAF proposal:

... In addition to operational tests and combat support flights previously authorized by JCS and CINCPAC to train the VNAF7, as decided at the Sec Def meeting 16 December, all kinds of conventional combat and combat support flights can be flown in SVN by Detachment 2, 4400th CCTS provided a Vietnamese is on board for purpose of receiving combat support training.

FARM GATE deployment to Bien Hoa had begun on 5 November 1961. The first local familiarization and orientation flights in RVN started immediately upon arrival and the
first assigned mission was flown in December 1961.

Rules of Engagement: MAC-V Directive Number 62, 24 November 1962, established operational restrictions on US aircraft to be employed on combat support missions. FARM GATE aircraft could operate only with a combined US and Vietnamese crew. The aircraft were to have VNAF markings. C-123's were to have US markings, and be operated with a combined US and Vietnamese crew.

Armament was permitted to be installed in and utilized from US Army CH-21C's and USMC UH-34D's; however, Directive 62 specified, "... for defensive purposes only. Armament in such aircraft will not be utilized to initiate fires upon any target; however, if the aircraft is fired upon, it may return the fire. Aircraft will be US marked and manned."

US Army armed UH-1's were to be used defensively only. They were not to initiate fires upon any target; however, if they, or any aircraft they were escorting, were fired upon, they could return the fire. These aircraft were to bear US markings and be manned by a combined US-Vietnamese crew.

The US Army Mohawks were to be utilized in an armed configuration for combat support missions when specifically directed by COMUSMAC-V. The armament was to be used only defensively. "These aircraft will not be utilized as strike aircraft." They were to bear US markings and be manned with a US-Vietnamese crew.
Thus, there were aircraft operating within the Republic of Vietnam which had VNAF markings and Vietnamese crews; VNAF markings and US-Vietnamese crews, US markings and US-Vietnamese crews, and US markings with US crews.

JCS stated that during a visit of their team to RVN it was found that the JCS message of September 1962 concerning rules of engagement for armed Army helicopters had been erroneously interpreted to mean that the helicopter must wait to be fired upon before initiating return fire. "Such interpretation is more restrictive than was the intent . . . ." COMUSMAC-V amended his rules of engagement accordingly.

At this point in time, OV-1A's (Mohawks) according to the rules of engagement, could be utilized only defensively. On 9 December 1963, General Harkins, referring to a test plan for the Mohawk proposed by the Department of the Army, advised Admiral Felt that the rules of engagement would have to be changed to permit the test:

1. To be effective in escort role, Mohawks must operate within same rules of engagement as other escort aircraft, i.e., armed helicopters.

2. Expanding role of Mohawk to include escort of transport helicopters will add another resource to support available to ground commanders.

3. If test is approved, Mohawks will be used in escort of helicopters when desired by ground commanders.

a. On operations where Mohawk performed initial recon of operational area and/or landing zones.
b. On quick reaction type airmobile operations.

5. Testing and evaluation will be accomplished during operational missions and no missions will be conducted solely for purpose of test.

The Mohawk test in the role of an armed escort for transport aircraft was subsequently approved.

Intelligence: It was recognized at the outset that great improvement in the military intelligence system in RVN was essential to successful operations. At the first Sec Def conference it was agreed to expand our intelligence effort and to seek integration of the US intelligence effort with that of GVN.

At the fifth Sec Def conference in May 1962, the intelligence net was reported to have 92% of the required people and 98% of the equipment. However, the complete US intelligence net was not yet functioning.

On 23 July 1962, Secretary McNamara observed that intelligence reports received in Washington did not always reflect all that he wanted to know and were not what he expected in the light of the US effort in intelligence. Mr. Richardson (US Embassy, Saigon) expressed the opinion that there was more tactical intelligence available than could be acted upon by the RVNAF.

McNamara suggested that tactical intelligence might not be the problem. "... At the Washington level, US agencies have a feeling of insecurity as to what is happening in SVN. In brief, they need to know present trends
and the outlook for the future."

In March 1963, COMUSMAC-V observed:

... The political conditions in Southeast Asia point toward an increase and not a decrease of Communist influence. In consonance with Communist global objectives the external threat to the Republic of Vietnam will exist and would increase unless solutions external to Vietnam are found ... Valid and timely information concerning Communist preparations in countries contiguous to the Republic of Vietnam is not available to this command in sufficient quantity or detail to permit formulation of reliable estimates of the political or military threat.*

TACS** (Part V, ps. 13-20)

In USAF and joint doctrine, the Tactical Air Control System (TACS) was the instrument through which tactical airpower was controlled and employed. Thus, TACS was a substantive point of focus in the COIN airpower polemic, which involved organic vs centralized air. (See Part IV)

Precisely because TACS was a focus of contention, it had entered, directly or indirectly, into many other actions, problems, and decisions treated elsewhere in monograph V, and in Parts III, IV, and VI as well. Treatment of TACS in this section has therefore been truncated to avoid repetition.***

* See Part III, ps. 80-95.
** See TAB "A", p. 26A, B.
On 13 November 1961, General O'Donnell advised Admiral Felt that:

... the most pressing requirement to permit effective and responsive VNAF tactical air operations is for a limited Tactical Air Control System (TACS). Such a system does not now exist. The Vietnamese cannot provide it. If the system is to be useful in the present situation, it must be US manned and operated.

* * * * * * *

The proposal should be evaluated in the context of three important objectives:

a. To provide a structure to apply VN air capability - and when directed, any other available air capability.

b. To teach the VN how such a system operates and to train VN personnel to operate it.

c. To establish a framework for control of US air capability, anticipating the possible need for fast US intervention at a later time.

* * * * * * *

O'Donnell's letter included 14 attachments detailing such items as a proposed organization for TACS and JOC; a chart depicting UHF/VHF communications; a JOC/ASOC communications net, and communications equipment for JOC, ASOC's, CRC and CRP.

Admiral Felt, in a message of 9 December 1961 to Lt Gen Lionel C. McGarr, CHMAAG-V stated:

... General O'Donnell's letter of 13 November 1961 proposed the installation of a US manned and operated limited TACS in SVN to permit improved reporting, more timely allocation of air effort, more precise application and faster response. I certainly agree with these objectives.

TOP SECRET-NOFORN
Felt commented that the system proposed by McGarr was "rudimentary" by US standards and appeared to be inadequate to handle combined VNAF-US air resources. "The system proposed by PACAF has adequate capacity to handle both."

At his Sec Def conference of 16 December 1961, McNamara made the decision to, "... set up PACAF version of tactical control system in SVN ... " [See pages 11 and 14, Part IV,]

Admiral Felt advised Headquarters PACAF on 31 December that Ambassador Nolting and the GVN had approved putting the TACS into RVN "soonest." Felt directed deployment of PACAF elements.

Deployment began on 1 January 1962. The system began operation just 14 days later.

By April 1962, Air Liaison Officers (ALO's) had been assigned to Corps and Division level. By May 1962, the Commander 2ADVON and the Chief Army Section MAAG-V had made joint inspections and visits to ARVN Field Command units down to battalion level to encourage and assist in speeding reaction time within the ARVN request net.

As a result of these trips the Commander 2ADVON pointed out that the US Army supplied equipment, as well as the procedures taught by US Army signal advisors, needed revision and updating for counterinsurgency warfare.

Moreover, the point of doctrine regarding the mating of communications equipment between ground and air units
had apparently been overlooked. The US Army had supplied ARVN with over 10,000 PRC-10's—although the USAF had no FM capability.

On 30 July 1962, General Anthis, in a letter to Chief, MAAG-V, took the position that the ALO's should directly advise ARVN commanders on tactical air operations:

* * * * * * *

The Joint Air-Ground Operations Manual, CONARC TT 110-100-1, 15 September 1957, states the primary duty of the ALO is to 'act as principal advisor to the Army unit commander and staff for matters pertaining to tactical air operations.' In SVN, due to the non-availability of VNAF pilots, the USAF ALO is the only advisor available to the ARVN Commander who has experience in the application and capabilities of tactical air support. Therefore, the primary duty of the ALO in SVN is to advise the ARVN Commander on the use of air to best support his mission.

On 16 August 1962, Major General Timmes, USA, CHMAAG-V replied:

It is recognized that CONARC TT 110-100-1 of 15 September 57 prescribes that the duty of the ALO is to act as the principal advisor to the Army unit commander in matters concerning tactical air operations. However, this doctrine is intended for application in a US division and not in an ARVN division where a staff of US advisors is provided.

In order to provide unified, coordinated advisory effort so vital to the successful operation of an ARVN division, it is of prime importance that the advisors act as a team. Therefore the principal duty of the USAF ALO, until such time as an ALO is provided by VNAF, must be to act as principal advisor to the US Senior Division Advisor in matters of tactical air support.

This controversy gained momentum and increased service
feeling, and continued throughout the remainder of 1962 and 1963. It resulted in a series of letters and memoranda exchanged between COMUSMAC-V, his Chief of Staff, CHMAAG-V and Commander 2ADVON.

MAC-V sent a message to its subordinate units on 22 April 1963 which stated:

Discrepancies in the coordination of air activities between Tactical Operations Centers (TOC) and ASOC's have been repeatedly reported to this headquarters. To assist toward resolution of this problem, ALO's will monitor air activities within TOC's and keep ASOC's fully informed.

The 2ADVON replied to MAC-V J-3:

As referenced in your message, numerous reports of lack of coordination of air activities have been brought to the attention of your headquarters by 2nd Air Division. These incidents range from apparent lack of knowledge of proper coordination procedures by aircraft operating outside the TACS to reported incidents of information being refused to TACS representatives.

Charging ALO's with responsibility of monitoring air activities in TOC's does not appear to be proper solution. Air activities are necessarily monitored in the ASOC, not the TOC. ALO's are assigned to be available to Corps and Division Commanders as representatives of Air Component Commander.

Air Operations (Part V, ps. 20-87)

Air Forces under TACS represented less than three percent of the total number of military forces in RVN during the first eight months of 1963--yet accounted for 38 percent of the Viet Cong KIA (see CHART 1-5). Expressed in different terms, .420 VC was KIA for every man assigned to air forces under TACS--compared to .021 per man for all other military forces (see CHART 1-6).
COMPARATIVE STRENGTH & EFFECTIVENESS

**All Other Military Forces**

- Strength
  - 401,391
  - 11,965

- VC KIA
  - 8,273
  - 5,029
  - VC KIA per man (1st 8 mos of 63)

- Air Forces under TACS

**Source:** Appendix K, Page 9, "Final Report Operational Test & Evaluation TACS in KVN," HQ USAF APO 143
**SECRET**

**MILITARY STRENGTH**

**Friendly Forces**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Vietnamese</th>
<th>Total Air Force:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARVN</td>
<td>VNAF 7,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>USAF 4,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marines</td>
<td>Total: 11,965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regular Surface Forces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 209,581</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Guard Self Defense Corps</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Total: 413,356</td>
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<td>389,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL FORCES:</td>
<td>397,380</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| US                      |                 |
| US Army                | 10,508          |
| US Marines             | 556             |
| Other                  | 658             |
| Total: 11,722           |                 |
| USAF                   | 4,254           |
| TOTAL: 15,976           |                 |

**Enemy**

| VC (Hardcore)          | 26,000          |
| VC Militia             | 100,000         |
| TOTAL: 126,000         |                 |

Source: "Final Report Operational Test & Evaluation TACS in RVN," Hq 2AD

**SECRET**

**CHART I-6**
A multitude of records describing air operations in RVN were available. The record included individual missions at the two extremes of effectiveness—from successful beyond expectation to poor or nil. Nevertheless, the statistics presented above were significant—on a man-for-man basis, air resources employed under TACS (3% of military) killed 20 times the number of VC (.420 vs .021 per man) as the rest of the military combined.

Pages 23 through 87 of Part V, "Air Operations" describe in some detail the various types of operational missions flown during the period reported upon i.e., close support, interdiction, resupply, reconnaissance, night flare/strike, etc. Such subjects as helicopter escort, tactics and ordnance are also treated briefly.

Non-Use of Available Airpower (Part V, ps. 93-105)

On 10 September 1962, Admiral Felt sent the following message to General Harkins:

1. I have read with interest and some concern Capt Treadway, US Special Forces, report dated 10 August describing encounter on 9 August with VC near Camp Du Tho. He radioed for helo support but apparently did not think of requesting AD or T-28 support. This is another incident where VC effect a successful withdrawal. It was unfortunate that helos did not arrive with reserve troops. However, the outstanding feature of the action is that because no air cover was planned or called for, VC moved across 2000 meters of open terrain and escaped in platoon size groups.

2. The job of indoctrinating personnel is never ending.

Operation BACH PHUONG II, on 27 April 1963, was
a heliborne operation conducted in I Corps area. The operation called for Marine helicopters transporting ARVN troops to be escorted by five UH-1B's. The UH-1B also gave fire support during the landing phase. The Air Force provided pre-strike and air cover throughout the operation.

At H minus 15 minutes, two T-28's started prelanding strikes at the landing zone. At H plus 10 minutes all ordnance except .50 caliber had been expended by the T-28's. At H plus 20 minutes the transport helicopters, escorted by UH-1B's, arrived. At H plus 22 minutes, one Marine H-34 was shot down in the Landing Zone. A total of six H-34's were hit by Viet Cong ground fire during the landing phase.

The escorting UH-1B's were providing suppressive fire. Throughout this phase of the operation, the friendly fighters orbited overhead at 4000 feet with their fire power neither utilized nor requested.

Any time lapse between prelanding strikes and the actual landing of transport helicopters had proven to be disastrous, as was the 10 minute interval in this case.

At the close of the period of this CHECO report, 31 December 1963, Operation DAIPHONG 35 took place. Ambassador Lodge, in a message to the Department of State, submitted the report of an Embassy official, S. B. Thomsen, which was based upon conversation with US advisors to the ARVN 5th Division.

Thomsen reported that on the afternoon of 31 December, the 32nd Ranger Battalion was engaged by an estimated two
VC battalion force approximately 10 miles west of Ben Cat and 8 miles southeast of Dau Tieng. An intense fire fight occurred during which the 32nd Ranger Battalion was reported to have fought hard and well:

Although two battalions of the 8th ARVN regiment were close (one battalion at Dau Tieng and one battalion at Ben Cat) 5th Division did not relieve Rangers until about noon January 1. By that time Ranger defense had disintegrated into disconnected small unit action. Rescue unit did not join fight but positioned itself defensively short distance away. 32nd thereupon retreated to defense perimeter. After VC broke off, ARVN units merely moved back to home base. ARVN casualties were 6 KIA, 12 WIA and 31 MIA; one American advisor also wounded. Large number of MIA was result of the disintegration during later stages of battle; many of those reported missing have appeared in small groups at neighboring villages.

By reacting immediately with additional forces available (the 9th regiment in neighboring Tay Ninh province and airborne forces in Saigon), the 5th Division could have given the VC terrific beating. Instead, by delaying more than 18 hours, ARVN forces suffered defeat.

American advisors feel the acting Division Commander almost criminally negligent in refusal to send immediate help. This for them just one more example, albeit one of most striking, of Vietnamese failure to take advantage of superiority in firepower which can be obtained by rapid reaction to Viet Cong troop concentrations.

Second Air Division reported that there had been, on a preplanned basis, two A-1H's over this operation throughout the day from 0730 to 1800 hours. The aircraft were armed with twelve 100 pound bombs and 800 rounds of 20 mm ammunition each, for a total of ninety-six 100 pound bombs and 6400 rounds of 20 mm ammunition committed and immediately...
available throughout the day. Moreover, additional re-
resources were available at Bien Hoa (39 miles away) and Tan
Son Nhut (35 miles away). This airpower was not called into
the battle.

General Maddux expressed to General Stillwell, J-3,
MAC-V, his concern, "... about the failure to make use
of resources so readily available which, if used, might
have resulted in a major victory instead of a defeat."

Paralogy (Part V, pp. 105-108)

The MAC-V military structure, as reflected in its tacti-
cal relationships, had proven to be pseudo-syllogistic inso-
far as airpower was concerned. The COIN airpower polemic had
unquestionably contributed to the creation of duplicate US
military air resources within RVN. Moreover, the controversy
had had its effect upon the RVNAF (see Part IV).

The vitiating nature of the dual structure upon the effec-
tiveness of airpower was subject to far more exhaustive docu-
mentation than that which has been provided in this series
of reports. Nevertheless, the existence of two essentially
separate and complete air entities and their performance of
many of the very same missions exemplified the paralogism.

Effectiveness of Centralized Control: Of the 680 air-
craft in RVN at the close of 1963, approximately half be-
longed to the US Army/USMC and the other half to the USAF/
VNAF.* The latter were operated under TACS.

* See page 9, Part IV, CHECO Report.
The USAF/VNAF aircraft, operating under centralized control, accounted for nearly four out of every ten VC killed during the first eight months of 1963. Six out of ten VC were killed by US Army aviation and RVN ground forces, which together accounted for 97 percent of the total US/GVN military strength.*

**Outmoded Equipment:** This significant accomplishment of the TACS controlled forces had been achieved with outmoded strike aircraft. The first line USAF counterparts to the obsolescent strike aircraft used in RVN were all jet powered and had been for some years. Even the C-130, designed for paratroop delivery, was turbo-jet powered.

While the USAF had been constrained from employing its more effective weapon systems for various reasons, some of which were examined in Part III of the CHECO Report, the Army was more fortunate in that respect. The Mohawk, Caribou, and UH-1A's and B's (turbo-jet powered), were first line aircraft designed to perform the task of air support as the Army envisioned it, and to enhance the concept of organic air power. Thus, the existence of two virtually separate and independent air forces remained the focus of contention.

**Two Air Wars:** Major General Anthis, in a personal letter to General Smart, dated 25 November 1963, neatly summed up the paralogy:

* See page 20, Part V, CHECO Report.
The duplication of roles generates many tactical problems. The lack of control of parallel organization which is, in effect, prosecuting a second air war is extremely serious, and time after time has significantly reduced the effectiveness of operations. In addition to the cost in effectiveness, we must consider the large investment costs of this duplication of roles in terms of men, materiel and money. We do not want a single man or piece of equipment that we do not need. However, we have always operated in RVN in an austere posture that never has afforded us all the men and machines that we could optimally utilize. I find it very difficult to rationalize our austerity side by side with this very expensive duplicate organization.

SUPPORT ACTIVITIES (PART VI)

Materiel resources in quantity and a superior industrial capacity were prime determinants of the outcome of the Civil War. The experience of World Wars I and II reinforced the belief that technology and abundant materiel were decisive in armed conflict. Thus, it was with an air of confidence and optimism that the US broadened its aid program to RVN in 1961.

At the very first Sec Def conference in December 1961, McNamara was recorded as stating:

US policy is not to introduce US combat troops at present time; otherwise, anything we need. SVN has number one priority. Money should not be a controlling consideration.

Secretary McNamara voiced this position repeatedly at subsequent conferences. In July 1962, he stated that our Gold Flow problems would not be solved by reducing aid to RVN.
The record of that conference also stated:

... Sec Def said he wished the Subcommittee on plasters to think about PL 480: that there is no limit on the amount of goods that the United States will supply.

In May of 1963, McNamara was recorded as stating:

... we were not going to let money keep the GVN from winning the war. We have over $50 billion in the US defense effort and we cannot allow the limited availability of MAP funds to keep us from supporting the counter-insurgency war in Vietnam.

It was evident from the record that Secretary McNamara had made available the full resources of the DOD—short of combat forces. It was with these repeated assurances that monograph VI addressed the support activities of the United States Air Force in RVN.

**Airlift (Part VI, ps. 4-17)**

Throughout the period of this report, inland surface transportation in the RVN was extremely limited because of Viet Cong operations. Thus, increased reliance was placed on airlift. Parachute and air landing of supplies and personnel was difficult because of primitive air strips and small, inaccessible drop zones.

With the deployment of FARM GATE and the rapid buildup of other US units, it became necessary to augment the 'NAF airlift capability. Sixteen C-123's of TAC's 346th TCS were deployed to RVN with the first four aircraft arriving on 2 January 1962. The operation code name was MULE TRAIN. The first mission was flown on 3 January and the entire squadron was in place by 27 January.
TOP SECRET-NOFORN

All MULE TRAIN personnel were on TDY status and were replaced periodically. Before his return to the US in May 1962 upon completion of his TDY, the first commander of MULE TRAIN, Lt Col Floyd E. Shofner, briefed the Commander, 2ADVON, on some problem areas. Shofner held that approval for improvements or expansion of facilities was difficult to obtain; that the transportation furnished the squadron was inadequate; that personnel who were forced to miss regularly scheduled meals were not fed; and that there was not enough aircraft parking space. He stated that any improvement in MULE TRAIN operations would have to be accompanied by improved base support, to include other than normal duty hours.

Colonel Shofner recommended an increase in the crew to aircraft ratio from 1 - 1 to 1.25 - 1. Because of sickness, leave and squadron duties, there had been occasions when more aircraft were operationally ready than crews.

Shofner also pointed out that the policy of rotating one-fourth (four) of the aircrews with no overlap was detrimental to MULE TRAIN operations. The departing crews flew out on the same aircraft which brought in their replacements. Processing, briefing and route checking of the new crews resulted in a shortage of operational crews for an average of ten days per month. He recommended a seven-day overlap for rotating crews.

Additional Augmentation of Airlift: Increasing tactical operations by ARVN, combined with expanding logistical
Airlift requirements, had generated a requirement for more flying hours and sorties than could be obtained from the original 16 C-123's of MULE TRAIN. On 11 June, 16 C-123's of the 777th TCS were deployed under the code name SAW BUCK II.

On 17 April 1963, a third squadron, the 776th TCS, was deployed to RVN. By the close of 1963, there were 48 USAF assault airlift aircraft in SEA.

Southeast Asia Airlift System: All airlift vehicles had been introduced into SEA with the proviso that they be incorporated into the established and approved airlift system. The Joint Airlift Allocation Board (JAAB) established priorities for tactical assault and logistical airlift, and the AOC of the TACS exercised operations control.

US Army CV-2B (Caribou) aircraft were introduced into RVN for purposes of test. They were retained in RVN after completion of testing and a second Caribou company deployed to RVN.

Controversy developed concerning decentralization of control of the Caribou and their unilateral assignment to the operational command and control of the US Army Senior Advisor at each Corps.*

No Place to Land: Early in 1962, CHMAAG-V advised

* See CHECO Report, Part IV, pp. 51-54; also see Hist., 315th Troop Carrier Group (Assault), 1 Jan-30 Jun 63, pp. 16-22, SECRET, Sup Doc 4 of CHECO Report, Part VI.
CINCPAC that the Caribou was the only aircraft in RVN which could carry bulk loads into "L-19" strips. Upon being queried by Headquarters PACAF as to his evaluation of the charge, the Commander 2ADVON responded:

... 2ADVON has never refused any requirement for delivery of bulk loads by MULE TRAIN or C-47 aircraft. No request for airlift by MULE TRAIN for any purpose has ever been refused ... for C-123 operations ... The minimum acceptable runway length was established at 1000 feet for altitude up to 1000 feet. Since the landing distance is not the critical factor regardless of payload, the above figure was based on maximum power takeoff, using data from the C-123 Flight Manual. Factors used were: (1) average temperature, dew point and pressure altitude at airfield concerned for this time of year in SVN; (2) expected torque; (3) maximum performance and takeoff using water injection; (4) no wind condition ...

In the fall of 1962, the US Army released information that the Caribou could land at 147 airfields in RVN while the C-123 could land at only 79 of the 147 airfields. In response to a directive from Headquarters PACAF, Second Air Division made an evaluation based upon: a 315th Air Division Airfield Survey conducted in April 1962; a Directory of Useable Airfields in South Vietnam distributed by Second Air Division, April 1962; and the USMAC-V Airfield Directory for South Vietnam.

According to Second Air Division, this composite review listed 83 airfields suitable for C-123 operations. Many airfields had been found unsuitable for both the C-123 and the Caribou due to inadequate load-bearing capacity, overgrown vegetation, and/or lack of security from VC attack.
However, since the US Army comparison had used the criterion of length of airstrip only, a similar computation was made for the C-123. It revealed that the C-123 could be landed at 145 of the 153 RVN airfields listed. This calculation, it was recognized by the USAF, not only assumed unrestricted combat conditions, but ignored flying safety precautions, disregarded probable damage to the aircraft, and assumed dry surface conditions.

Training (Part VI. ps. 17-30)

The original purpose in introducing additional US military personnel into RVN was to train the RVNAF.

At the second Sec Def conference on 15 January 1962, Brigadier General Anthis reported that Detachment 2 Alpha [FARM GATE] was training VNAF pilots in night attack, flare drop, outpost air support, free fall resupply, and night area reconnaissance. Responding to a question from McNamara, Anthis stated that the VNAF would be an "Air Force" within one year.

However, General O'Donnell sounded a note of caution pointing out that the VNAF suffered from a shortage of maintenance, supply, and flying personnel which would not be easy to remedy. O'Donnell observed that, "You can't make an Air Force overnight."

The goal of training the VNAF was mentioned repeatedly in subsequent Sec Def meetings. In February 1962, McNamara mentioned the desirability of looking ahead a year or two and of training VNAF pilots on an accelerated basis. At
that time there were 65 student pilots being trained in the United States.

During the March Sec Def conference, McNamara asked Anthis how the delivery of aircraft and the training of pilots were progressing. Anthis replied that, in general, progress was good. He expected 25 pilots to be combat ready by 30 April as a result of the in-country transition program. The Secretary asked how much longer US personnel would have to fly with the VNAF. General Anthis answered, "... for sometime in order for the GVN to learn, and to check on the GVN state of training and standardization."

In October 1962, McNamara stated that steps should be taken to develop a wholly adequate Vietnamese Air Force. He noted specifically that, rather than the 130 Vietnamese officers then in flight training, there should be 300 or more. The Secretary also stated that, "... he desired to reorient to the original concept of training as soon as possible to do so." This was in response to a discussion concerning a proposed augmentation of FARM GATE.

In May 1963, upon being briefed that the sortie rate for all aircraft was soaring, Secretary McNamara stated that he was mainly interested in the projected VNAF capability to take on a greater share of the burden. He noted that the percentage of VNAF versus US effort was no greater than it had been a year before and that he wanted US pilots to get out of combat and transport operations.
At the 20 November 1963 meeting, General Harkins informed McNamara and Rusk that the combined VNAF/USAF air effort had reached 3,500 sorties per month. Ambassador Lodge commented that, "... we should keep before us the goal of setting dates for phasing out US activities and turning them over to the Vietnamese ... "

The quarterly V-12 report from the Air Section, MAAG-V (MAAGAF) for the October - December 1963 period stated that, the 917R Field Training Detachment (FTD) had graduated 25 helicopter pilots and 29 maintenance personnel in December. The third class of 30 student pilots and 32 maintenance personnel started training on 9 December and were programmed for graduation in May 1964.

The 921R FTD graduated 48 pilots from the U-17A school on 21 December and the second class started training on 16 December. This class was scheduled to graduate in March 1964. Also, the VNAF was scheduled to assume the responsibility for the conduct of all in-country liaison pilot training on 1 July 1964.

There were 40 students attending observer school with the 19th Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS) at Bien Hoa providing the TO-1D instructors for the flying training. These students were forecast to graduate in May 1964.

A USN A-1H maintenance MTT had arrived in RVN on 28 September 1963, and had completed class room training of 132 personnel. A photo reconnaissance MTT had arrived on
15 November 1963, and photo reconnaissance, interpretation, and processing were being taught to VNAF pilots of the Reconnaissance Squadron. Advanced English language training was being provided by an MTT to students of the U-17A and UH-19 flying and maintenance schools.

MAAGAF reported that, as of 31 December 1963, there were 805 officers and 7,691 enlisted men assigned to VNAF. The 376 pilots included 86 helicopter, 63 fighter, 89 liaison, 71 transport, 31 reconnaissance, and 36 staff and command.

There were 432 VNAF personnel undergoing off-shore training on 31 December 1963, of which 424 were in CONUS and eight at PACAF bases. Formal courses being conducted in-country were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>In Training</th>
<th>Completed Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>17 Weeks</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UH-19 Helicopter</td>
<td>20 Weeks</td>
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<td>U-17A Pilot</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesel Oper.</td>
<td>12 Weeks</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switchbd. Op.</td>
<td>7 Weeks</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teletype Op.</td>
<td>16 Weeks</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acft Hyd. Repair</td>
<td>16 Weeks</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inst. Spec.</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gnd. Sup. Eqmnt. Rep.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acft Elect. Systems</td>
<td>14 Weeks</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flt Eng. (Helo)</td>
<td>16 Weeks</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons Mech.</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Sepc.</td>
<td>12 Weeks</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supply Training</td>
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<td>122</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admin. &amp; Pers. Spec.</td>
<td>14 Weeks</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Base Defense</td>
<td>14 Weeks</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Title | Duration | In Training | Completed Training
---|---|---|---
Basic English Lang | 14 Weeks | 139 | 94
Adv. English Lang | 13 Weeks | 68 | 98
Cadet Training | 29 Weeks | 76 | 49

In a letter to Col Nguyen Cao Ky, Commander, VNAF on 21 December 1963, Maj Gen Rollen H. Anthis stated that, "... significant progress has been made in developing the VNAF into a first rate military arm."72

General Anthis pointed out the accomplishments and shortcomings of the VNAF, and concluded with, "... I cannot speak too highly of the many improvements in the operation of the VNAF ..."

Facilities (Part VI, ps. 31-42)

In 1961, facilities in RVN to support any sizeable increase in either RVN or US military were extremely limited. MAAG-V had provided, under MAP funding, some critical items such as water, POL pipelines, and runway lighting for a few airstrips. MAAG had programmed permanent radar surveillance sites but no facilities existed when the USAF deployed a mobile radar unit to Tan Son Nhut Air Base in October 1961.

The MAP and Country Team aid had been underway since 1958. In January 1961, Headquarters PACAF requested adequate terminal facilities be provided at Pleiku, Da Nang, and Nha Trang. MAAG-V indicated that these facilities could be furnished within RVN resources. However, in December 1961, Headquarters PACAF informed MAAG-V that, "... there is no evidence of either programming or
In order to expedite the construction of facilities needed by the USAF and VNAF, Headquarters PACAF delegated approval authority for all projects to Thirteenth Air Force. The programming, designing, and awarding of contracts for military construction was administered by MAAC-V, with unilateral service responsibility extending only to the monitoring of proposed construction. Supervision and funding of minor construction and repair to USAF-occupied installations was within the jurisdiction of USAF.

Construction Lead Times: The beneficial occupancy date (BOD) for the all-weather airfield at Bien Hoa was September 1963. Having been approved in February 1962, this project was illustrative of the lead times involved in the up-grading of RVN facilities. The problem was complicated by having to utilize the facilities being renovated every day in the counterinsurgency effort.

Real Estate Boom: The paucity of terminal and basing facilities in RVN resulted in joint occupancy of many installations by ARVN, VNAF, US Army, and USAF units. Consequently, unilateral arrangements for facilities were sometimes in conflict.

In July 1962, the 6223d Air Base Squadron commander at Nha Trang cited an example wherein a warehouse building area had been verbally committed to the US Army by a former Vietnamese commander. On that basis, the Army had proceeded with plans and contracts for construction.
Subsequently, the same area had been promised to the commander of the 6223d by the VNAF commander at that time. The commander of the 6223d mentioned that the US Army and the USAF were, unfortunately, placed in the position of appearing to compete with each other for housing, operational, and maintenance facilities.

Air Facilities Construction Under MAP: The total construction cost of the Fiscal Year 1962 MAP program had been nearly 20 million dollars. The Fiscal Year 1963 MAP construction program, including a 4.6 million dollar carryover from FY 62, had been set at 14.8 million which represented a 25% decrease in construction funding. The FY 63 program included the rehabilitation of airfields at Soc Trang, Nha Trang, Vung Tau, and miscellaneous repair and maintenance of 18 other airfields in RVN.

Can Tho Airfield: Early in 1962, the field unit of the Advanced Research Projects Agency (OSD/ARPA) had suggested construction of an airfield in the Can Tho area of the Delta.

Overall problem of stabilizing Delta soil for airfields and roads most important. French and others have used sand but this usually requires long hauls and high cost. If any new techniques or ... concepts available ... advise soonest. If nothing feasible ... suggest ... basic engineering research elsewhere because problem important throughout Delta and area /OF/ SEA. COMUSMACV concurs.

The Air Section, MAAG-V-12 report for October-December 1962 reflected $125,000 in the FY 63 MAP for architect-engineer work on Can Tho airfield.
For reasons not fully apparent in available documentation, opposition to the proposed airfield solidified. The MAC-V Assistant Chief of Staff, Plans (Brig Gen M. B. Adams) enumerated some sources of opposition. A series of memoranda between the Chief of Staff, MAC-V; the deputy Chief of Staff; the Assistant Chief of Staff Operations; and the Assistant Chief of Staff Materiel, bore out Adams' concern. The consensus of these memoranda was that the reaction time of strike aircraft would not be materially reduced; and, in any case, such reduction was not worth the cost of the proposed airstrip.

Although MAC-V had approved the project, and had included it in a list of priorities as number five out of 183, in his submission to CINCPAC of the FY 64 MAP CINCPAC withdrew the item in April 1963 pending a feasibility study to be made by COMUSMAC-V.

In his reply dated 1 December 1963, COMUSMAC-V listed the following operational benefits to be realized from the Can Tho airfield:

1. Reduction in reaction time by average of 30 minutes. This can mean difference between success or defeat in short and frequent engagements encountered in Delta area.

2. Night and bad weather recovery capability not now available anywhere in Delta.

3. There is no airfield south of Saigon with sufficient length and facilities to permit safe, around the clock operations with the VNAF-flown A-1H aircraft carrying full combat load.

4. Airfield adjacent to IV Corps headquarters provides opportunity for greatly
improved coordination between Army and Air Force planning staffs working on proposed operations. Close coordination is not now available.

5. Additional airfield in Delta will relieve congestion on other already crowded airstrips in area, when increased activity indicates more air support is required.

COMUSMAC-V stressed the urgency of the project and recommended that it be approved with CINCPAC's authority to proceed by 1 January 1964.

It was difficult to reconcile the urgency expressed by MAC-V in December 1963, with the documented dialogue of the various staff agencies which had succeeded only in delaying the project almost two years as of the close of this reporting period--31 December 1963.

Communications-Electronics: In 1961, the existing navigational aids (NAVAIDS) and air traffic control (ATC) facilities in RVN were inadequate to support the increased counterinsurgency operations. Both VNAF and USAF forces quickly saturated the in-country ATC system, its supporting communications, and the NAVAID structure.

Beginning in early 1962, a series of special communications projects were instituted. The unclassified code names given these operations were BACK PORCH, BARN DOOR I, BARN DOOR II, and LOW POSITION. Each was intended to contribute an increment to a complete network for RVN, to include tactical air control, long-line point-to-point communications, ATC, radar forward and cross tell, and pinpoint navigation.
Incompatibility: Much effort and money were expended on C-E facilities in RVN. However, a limiting factor in the efficiency of the system was the incompatibility of the equipment. A message from 2ADVON to Thirteenth Air Force, on 30 May 1962, defined measures which had been taken to improve the communications between the requester of air support and the provider. The message concluded with the observation that:

... ground troops should be equipped with radios that will mate with USAF aircraft. This point of doctrine has apparently been overlooked in SVN since US Army supplied ARVN with over 10,000 PRC-10's, although USAF had no FM capability.

On 4 September 1963, the Department of the Army proposed to the Commander-in-Chief, US Army, Pacific (CINCUSARPAC), the US Army Support Group, Vietnam (USASG-V), and COMUSMAC-V, the introduction of 90 single side-band radios, 73 of which would be AN/ARC-102's. The estimated cost of this proposal was $250,000.

ACTIV, in supporting the proposal, cited the need for a separate command and control communications net based upon the MAC-V Directive 44.* An attachment to the ACTIV letter stated:

4. (c) More important however to the needs for SSB radios in specific aircraft is the fact that these radios will give the Army commanders of aviation battalions a tool they do not now possess—a means for

* See Part IV for detailed examination of MAC-V Dir. 44.
In a memorandum to Maj Gen Joseph Stillwell, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, MAC-V, his deputy, Col G. I. Ruddell, USAF, stated his view of the Army proposal:

... The problem itself is not clear, as in effect the proposal is essentially a duplication of existing TACS communications, merely using a different set of frequencies.

The deputy chief of the Operations Branch, MAC-V J-3, pointed out in a memorandum to General Stillwell that a command and control system had already been established in RVN for air resources, consisting of the TACS and the ARVN Air Ground Operations System. He maintained that any additional command and control system equipment should complement and be an extension of the system that was then in use, and would exist for use by the Vietnamese when the US effort was phased out.}

**Problems and Lessons in Communications:** On 19 April 1963, the Commander, 1964th Communications Squadron submitted an End-of-Tour report to the Commander Second Air Division. In listing problem areas in order of priority, the three most important were: lack of a base C-E supply; inadequate and unstable ground power sources; and lack of airconditioning.

In listing lessons learned, some significant items were:

**F. The traditional TACS doctrine is not implicit in a COIN operation and**
must be deviated from as the situation demands, i.e., USAF to extend the TACS below the ASOC and its own quick re-action communication to the division ALO's and FAC's in lieu of the customary Army provided Air Request Net.

* * * * * * *

I. Inadequate and unstable ground power has been a major source of expensive equipment failure in this theater to the detriment of the overall air mission.

* * * * * * *

K. Routine theater airlift transportation is inadequate to serve AOCP and similar urgent operational maintenance requirements.

**USAF/PACAF Funding:** The amount of funds used by PACAF units in RVN was difficult to identify, as it was usually intermingled with other areas of Southeast Asia in which USAF units were deployed. Based upon records available from disbursing offices, the following figures were deemed credible by the Assistant Chief of Staff, Comptroller, Headquarters PACAF:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>FY 62</th>
<th>FY 63</th>
<th>FY 64*</th>
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<tr>
<td>3400</td>
<td>Oper &amp; Maint</td>
<td>$1,584</td>
<td>$4,931</td>
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<td>3300</td>
<td>Military Const</td>
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<td>0700</td>
<td>Family Housing, Defense</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>3500</td>
<td>Military Personnel Subsistence</td>
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<td>1,091</td>
<td>949</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Intracommand PCS</td>
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<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,269</td>
<td>$6,967</td>
<td>$5,353</td>
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* First half, FY 1964. These are estimated amounts, and include POL requirements previously funded by TAC. Assumed by PACAF as of 1/64.
Fiscal and Procedural Constraints: It was recognized by PACAF that considerable voice had been given to the wisdom of requiring normal, peace time reporting and accounting procedures from units operating in essentially war time conditions. However, from the Department of Defense downward, there had been no relaxation of the necessity, placed on lower echelons to provide full justification and disclosure of fund requirements in the standard budgetary cycle. Personnel preoccupied with the counterinsurgency effort in RVN felt they should not be burdened by peace time management impediments in a war time environment.