SELECTED STATEMENTS BY
DOD AND OTHER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS
ON VIETNAM

JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 31, 1965

Prepared by:
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DOD AND OTHER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

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   Secretary of the Air Force
Air Mobility

I think that we fully realize that any power with military capability such as China could be a possible aggressor. You link Viet Nam and China; as to the Vietnamese type of struggle I would say that it's just for the reason of Viet Nam that we have spent in the last four years a considerable effort in making our forces more mobile so that we could move army troops where they were needed faster, developing special warfare techniques for Army and Air Force and, in some, gearing ourselves to fight at any level of conflict.

Question: Mr. Secretary would you care to comment on why it is that our attack aircraft as well as our helicopters appear to be so vulnerable in the South Vietnam war zone?

Mr. Zuckert: I wouldn't say they were so vulnerable, I'd say that one of the risk of fighting is that you get shot at and when you get shot at you're apt to get shot down. Our experience in Vietnam has indicated that our losses to ground fire are certainly no greater than they were in Korea. In fact, less so that I would have to take issue with the statement.
Another development to come out of the Vietnamese War that is related to airpower is the emergence of the helicopter as a most useful aerial vehicle in support of the fight against guerrillas. As you may remember, the helicopter's capability to land and take off vertically was utilized extensively during the Korean War to evacuate wounded from areas not accessible to other aircraft and to rescue downed airmen from enemy-held territory. This now traditional role has been greatly expanded in Viet-Nam.

With guerrillas striking in many remote and unexpected places, from small bands of snipers to well-sized ambushes, helicopters have proved invaluable in evacuating outnumbered patrols and outposts, and in landing reinforcements and ammunition where paratroops are not feasible.

The helicopter has been one of our most valuable pieces of equipment. In addition to increased mobility and faster reaction time, it provides a close-in suppressive fire capability immediately preceding and during a helicopter troop lift into an assault area. The helicopter's battle staying capability is a matter of record. Between January 1962 and 31 August of this year, only 51 helicopters were lost to ground fire.
General Harold K. Johnson, October 7, 1965

The significance of this figure lies in the fact that when related to the actual sorties flown, this figure represents only one helicopter lost in battle for roughly every 16,614 sorties flown.

In an operation last July, over 3,000 of our combat troops in Vietnam were picked up in three different locations after a search and clear operation in War Zone D, and returned to their bases in less than 3-1/2 hours. This means that once they have searched multiple areas, soldiers do not have to waste time or energy reassembling. Moreover, they can move into combat with lighter loads because with helicopter resupply or extrication they do not need to carry in the extra supplies necessary to sustain them until ground supply or evacuation can take place.

NAME: Honorable Stanley R. Resor
Secretary of the Army

OCCASION: Opening Ceremonies of the AUSA Annual Meeting
Sheraton Park Hotel, Washington, D.C.

DATE: October 25, 1965

The 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) which has recently entered combat near An Khe affords an opportunity to employ many new concepts. We have for some time employed some of these concepts by using a large number of separate helicopter companies in support of both Vietnamese and American ground forces. But the new division is the first unit trained as an airmobile unit. It also has certain new equipment -- CH-47 Chinooks (large tactical transport helicopters) and the experimental CH-54 Heavy Lift Helicopters (flying cranes). We will now for the first time have the opportunity to compare the relative effectiveness in counter-insurgency operations of an airmobile division with organic airlift against regular infantry and airborne units supported by attached airlift.
The most important finding is that relatively slow, low flying aircraft are less vulnerable to visually sighted weapons than earlier analytic estimates and opinions had indicated. Statistics from Vietnam offer impressive proof of the helicopter's survivability. The statistics are based on over 650,000 combat sorties. They reveal that a helicopter will be hit by ground fire once in every 300 combat sorties; it will be downed only once in every 6,000 combat sorties; and it will be lost to ground fire only once in every 12,000 sorties.

NAME: L/G Andrew J. Goodpaster, USA
OCCASION: Before the World Council of Los Angeles
DATE: November 11, 1965

are there exploiting two weapons systems in a fashion and to a degree never before undertaken in guerrilla war. The first weapon is the helicopter, in use by the hundreds to transport troops to the scene of combat and, in some circumstances, to deliver mobile fire support. The second is the use of tactical fighter bombers in unprecedentedly large numbers to support Vietnamese and American ground troops. They may well have changed the course of the war through the swift and heavy air strikes they mount against the Viet Cong wherever they are found. These two weapons -- helicopters and fighter bombers -- provide the South Vietnamese and U.S. Forces an advantage in mobility and firepower greatly exceeding that available to counterinsurgency forces in any previous guerrilla war. And mobility and firepower remain the fundamentals of war!
In broad terms, this is what we are doing.

Today, we continue to maintain our assistance and advisory effort at the current level of about 23,000 Americans from all three services, of which about 15,000 are Army personnel. I assure you that we are sending our very best people to Vietnam, and, as a sidelight on this point, let me add that we have more volunteers for Vietnam than we can deploy.

Moreover, I believe that there are many more favorable and constructive events than there are unfavorable.

The military force is growing stronger and more capable with each passing month.

The paramilitary forces, that is, the local hamlet and village defense units, are giving a good account of themselves in many more cases than they used to.

There is a clearer understanding of the necessity for improving the lot of the man in the hamlet and the village, together with that of his family.

Military leadership has improved over that which I observed in April. There seemed to be a more cohesive and continuous effort out in the country than there was eight months earlier.

The Viet Cong have suffered heavily, and, while you read figures of Government casualties, it is estimated conservatively that the Viet Cong are suffering at least three to one for each Vietnamese soldier that is killed.
Our advisory effort, on all fronts, has done great things and, in the wide personal relationships involved, must stand almost unique in the history of relations between an Asian nation under fire and an outside Western nation. Although there are from time to time signs of anti-American feeling, working relationships at all levels remain close and friendly.

Our military effort and our equipment, supplied to the Vietnamese, have largely offset the unfavorable numerical ratio favoring the Viet Cong.

The Vietnamese military forces continue to fight well. Our own military men consider most of them as tough and brave as any in the world. Though there have been military reverses, there have also been significant victories -- which sometimes do not make headlines. On the military front, the Viet Cong is not capable of anything like a Dien Bien Phu.

Above all, the Vietnamese people are not voting with their feet or their hearts for communism.
**Appraisal of the War**

**NAME:** Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense  
**OCCASION:** News Conference  
**DATE:** April 26, 1965

**QUESTION:** In the event there is no radical change in the complex of the war such as Russia or China entering it in a major way, what is your best estimate of how long a war we are in for before the tide turns?

**SECRETARY McNA MARA:** I can't predict the future. I think we have all recognized for a long period of time that this will be a long and difficult road. Beyond that I can't say.

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**NAME:** Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense  
**Occasion:** Interview, CBS-TV, by Peter Kalischer, Harry Reasoner, and Alexander Kendrick  
**Date:** August 9, 1965

**QUESTION:** Let's like before we turn to another aspect of this, Secretary McNamara, you have been there. We have made these decisions. We have had a few months of experience with increased United States forces. How is it going this year?

**SECRETARY McNAMARA:** The Viet Cong did expand their force in the last 12 months and as we stated during the winter of last year and the spring of this, a major part of this expanded force had not been committed to combat at that time. We could only assume they were holding it for some special purpose or some special period. And we assume that they might be holding it to start operations on an expanded basis following the beginning of the monsoon season. This is the season of heavy rains in the highlands. It is a season when our air power is somewhat less effective than during the dry period and we assume that the Viet Cong would believe it was an advantage for them, therefore, to expand operations under those weather conditions. They did so. They expanded operations in number and intensity, beginning in May, and they increased their control of the area. They began to isolate certain particular portions of the village, isolate them in terms of road transportation, road communications with other parts of the country. This made it difficult to move rice from the storage centers out into certain of the rural areas. It made it difficult to move produce from the rural areas into the city.

The number of South Vietnamese killed in action increased. But while that is true, the number of Viet Cong killed in action increased dramatically. It is about 70 percent higher today than it was a year ago. So in recent weeks, recent months, they have had some success. They are paying a terrible price for it. And in the last 30 days, as a matter of fact, there seems to have been some withdrawal on their part. Whether this is for regrouping, recuperation, because some of their battalions were severely mauled, I don't know. It may be a reflection of the fact that larger United States forces are beginning to enter the country.
Appraisal of the War

Name: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense
Occasion: Interview, CBS-TV, by Peter Kalischer, Harry Reasoner, and Alexander Kendrick
Date: August 9, 1965

QUESTION: There is an area here that I think affects the confidence in this country in what we are doing, and I think maybe we can dispose of it without trying to pin either of you down on things you have said before; but for instance, as you remember about 18 months ago when we had a conversation, you said to the effect that this is a Vietnamese war, it must be won by the Vietnamese, we cannot win it for them. The kinds of things that administration leaders say have changed radically in the last two years -- is this because you have changed your minds that much or is there a possibility that you have even now a more advanced attitude and you are letting the country in on it little by little?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Let me say, first, that the outlook has changed over the past two years because the action of the North Vietnamese has changed during that period of time. They have vastly increased the number of men that they have infiltrated into South Viet-Nam. They have vastly increased the amount of equipment and material which they have infiltrated into that country. And this has temporarily given them an advantage which they particularly have applied in the form of terror and harassment. Today they have, for all practical purposes, a numerical advantage, not absolutely, but relatively in guerrilla war terms. They have about 70,000 regular guerrillas, perhaps 100,000 irregulars, and another 20 or 30 thousand in political cadre to collect taxes or distribute propaganda and so on. So, as Mr. Kalischer mentioned a moment ago, there are some 300,000 communists acting in guerrilla forces. Opposing them are about 150,000 South Vietnamese regular and paramilitary forces, a ratio something on the order of three or three and a half to one and somewhat lesser ratio in the form of combat battalions. Quite an unsatisfactory ratio in terms of guerrilla wars of the past, where in Malaya, in the Philippines, in Greece, a 10 to 1 advantage was required to defeat the guerrillas. This increase in the strength of the North Vietnamese occurred in the last 12 months. It requires that we supplement, not substitute for, but supplement the South Viet-Nam forces; and since our forces will supplement and not substitute for their forces, it remains a South Vietnamese war. They are bearing the brunt of the fighting; they will continue to bear the brunt of the fighting. We will furnish a mobile reserve to come in to assist them when their forces are inadequate numerically to effectively counteract the Viet Cong concentrations directed against them.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: First, let me say I can't predict the future with accuracy. I do want to mention one thing about the future, however, that I think is very interesting. Within the last three or four weeks, Ho Chi Minh looked into the future, and he said it might take 20 years for them to win. So while they have had some temporary success, it is obvious even to their own leaders that this is not going to lead to an immediate victory on their side.
Appraisal of the War

Admiral U.S.G. Sharp, USN
Commander-in-Chief, Pacific
Before the Institute on World Affairs
San Diego State College, San Diego, California
August 12, 1965

Clearly, the situation is serious, and as Secretary McNamara reported returning from his tour of Vietnam recently, it has deteriorated in the past year. The north has been stepping up the infiltration of both men and weapons. There are now approximately 70,000 hard core Viet Cong in South Vietnam, plus some 90 to 100 thousand irregulars. This does not include elements of the North Vietnamese Army known to be in South Vietnam. The South Vietnamese Armed Forces total about 550 thousand. This is an unsatisfactory ratio for guerrilla warfare in which the defenders normally need between five to 10 soldiers to one guerrilla. The Viet Cong are better armed today.

* * * *

There has been a rapid and dismaying succession of changes in the government leadership during the past year and a half. No one could hope more fervently that stability in this area can be established and maintained. But, at the same time, I would draw your attention to the fact that during all these rapid changes at the top, the armed forces have fought on and there has been no demand to buy peace by accepting communist terms. This is a country that has known little but war for twenty years, speaks volumes for the devotion, loyalty and resilience of its people.

Cyrus R. Vance, Deputy Secretary of Defense
Speech: 19th Annual Banquet of the National Association of Supervisors, DOD Chapters 12, 40 & 58
October 16, 1965

Militarily, then, matters continue to turn toward a more favorable tide. But the road ahead appears long and steep for Hanoi has given no sign of a realistic willingness to negotiate or to stop its aggression.

The struggle in Vietnam, however, is more than merely military. It is political; it is economic; and it is profoundly psychological.
Appraisal of the War

NAME: William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs

OCCASION: Before the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations

DATE: November 5, 1965

Today, as the military tide appears to be turning with our support, more than ever the development of strong and effective leadership in Saigon and in the provinces, together with programs that reach the individual in the countryside, is the most critical order of business in South Viet-Nam. And this task can only be done by South Vietnamese, which the whole of the military effort is designed to make possible.

Yet I think one can point to at least three promising lines of development that are already in motion.

First, the South Vietnamese Government, in its declaration of conditions of a peaceful settlement, has spoken clearly of the South running its affairs, freed of external interference, "through established democratic processes." (This was the Foreign Minister Mr. Tran Van Do's statement of June 22 last, which has perhaps been insufficiently noticed.)

Even prior to that declaration, provincial and municipal council elections--in an historic Vietnamese tradition largely interrupted by Diem in 1956--had been held on a wide basis at the end of May, with heavy registrations and voter turn-out, and candidate lists substantially reflecting local sentiment.

Second, a new and younger group of men, both military and civilian, is now in control in Saigon. This group is generally less affected than the older generation of leaders by past problems and divisions. It is more energetic and shows more understanding of the aspirations and attitudes of the population as a whole.

Thirdly, this same group has taken at least the first steps toward such needed reforms as a real land reform program, even as it wrestles with the enormous economic problems brought on by Viet Cong activity.

Above all, the South Vietnamese people and their leaders have stood fast. We must never forget that since 1961 South Vietnamese forces have sustained almost 30,000 combat deaths, a total which on the basis of population ratios would be the equivalent of 350,000 combat deaths in the United States, more than 10 times those we suffered in the Korean conflict.

Even today, with a major U.S. ground force commitment, the South Vietnamese continue to bear the brunt of the fight against Communist aggression.

In September, for example, South Vietnamese combat deaths were 655 as compared with 97 Americans.

As the military situation has tended to improve in recent months, Vietnamese morale has risen, the old divisions are at least muted, and there is a focussing on the basic problem of building political stability in the countryside from the ground up, in what we hope will be a newfound climate of security.
NAME: Lt Gen Andrew J. Goodpaster, USA  
Assistant to the Chairman, JCS  

OCCASION: Before the World Council of Los Angeles  
Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles  

DATE: November 11, 1965  

we are doing better -- definitely better than a few months ago when the situation was close to critical. No one is thinking of accepting kudos as yet, however. They remember too well the adage that "There is only a short distance between a pat on the back and a kick in the pants."

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Perhaps the best indicator of over-all progress is in the noticeable improvement in the willingness of Vietnamese peasants in many areas to give information about the Viet Cong. Not only does such information produce intelligence which is absolutely essential to the continuing success of the military effort but -- equally important -- it demonstrates a definite improvement in peasant confidence in the government. When the average peasant becomes willing to risk Viet Cong terrorist attack by giving us information, the dictum of Mao Tse-Tung that, "Guerrillas hide among the people as the fish hide in the sea," is turned against the Viet Cong. The sea then throws the Viet Cong fish up on the beach.

Despite all this, however, the Viet Cong still comprise a strong, skillful, determined military force of nearly 200,000 men, and there are indications that North Vietnamese reinforcements are still arriving. The Viet Cong organizational infrastructure is damaged but still operating effectively. Their supply lines are interdicted but not blocked. On our side, the Vietnamese economy is heavily strained, political processes and machinery are still disrupted in wide areas of the country, and their military expansion program is just regaining momentum. Most important, the average peasant, although he may well be leaning further toward the government, has by no means yet taken the step of full commitment and in many areas could not safely do so.

Thus, we may be holding our own and perhaps doing a bit more, although the communists are by no means yet on the run. As to the future, if it is too early to be optimistic there is at least no reason we need to be pessimistic, fearful or defeatist about the situation in Vietnam.
NAME: Lt. Gen. B. E. Spivy, USA, Director of Plans & Policy, J-5, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

OCCASION: Before the Western Railway Club

DATE: November 15, 1965

We are certainly doing better militarily. The so-called Viet Cong monsoon offensive which began on schedule in May and June was blunted by military power. Major attacks by the Viet Cong since that time have been relatively few despite the flurry of such attacks in the past several weeks. Viet Cong casualties have been very heavy; since 1 May they have lost over 12,000 KIA, 2,000 POW's and 4,000 defectors. During October the number of Viet Cong killed ran nearly four times as great as the KIA total of all friendly forces.

However, if you will recall my comments about enemy capabilities, you will realize that the picture, although not black, is far from rosy. The Viet Cong still comprise a strong, skillful, determined military force of nearly 200,000 men. Their organizational infrastructure is damaged but still operating effectively. Their supply lines are interdicted but not blocked. On our side, the Vietnamese economy is shaky, their political processes and machinery are still disrupted from the endless coups of the recent past, communications are interdicted, and their military expansion program is just getting off the ground. Most important, the average peasant, although he may well be leaning further toward the Government, has certainly not yet taken the step of full commitment.

In essence, we are holding our own and a bit more, but the communists are not yet on the run. Some years ago I heard General Al Gruenther tell a questioner that he was "soberly optimistic" about the future of NATO. I will steal this phrase to describe my attitude toward the situation in Vietnam.
Appraisal of the War

Name: Gen. John P. McConnell, Chief of Staff, USAF
Occasion: Speech: Calvin Bullock Forum, New York City
Date: November 16, 1965

...there is no longer any concern over a possible military defeat. The build-up in U.S. and South Vietnamese military strength is so great and so evident that all doubts have been removed in Vietnamese minds as well as American minds.

...despite the fact that we will very shortly have overwhelming military superiority, we must recognize that it will take a long time to subdue the Vietcong and complete the economic and social rehabilitation of South Vietnam. We are committed to a long and costly effort.

NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense

OCCASION: Arrival in Paris

DATE: November 26, 1965

Question: Could you tell us something about when you are going to Vietnam, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary McNamara: Yes, I'm leaving tomorrow night for Saigon.

Question: What is the reason for that?

Secretary McNamara: It's been several months since I was last there. During that period we have nearly tripled the strength of the U.S. combat forces in Vietnam; the events of the summer have, I think, proven the wisdom of that move. The Viet Cong monsoon offensive has been blunted--defeated, I think is the proper term to apply to it. Their fatalities have been very high; no doubt they're looking to the future. We should be, too. I'm going there for that purpose.
"The most vivid impression I'm bringing back is that we have stopped losing the war. The very substantial increases in the South Vietnamese military strength and particularly those in the strength of the Free World forces -- the U.S. combat strength, the forces provided by Australia, New Zealand, and Korea -- have very clearly denied the Viet Cong the victory that they sought to achieve during the summer monsoon season. There is no question in our minds but what during that period they hoped to divide the country in half, and maul and dismember, and in a real sense, defeat the military forces of South Vietnam. They have been defeated in achieving that objective. They've paid a very heavy price for their attempt to do so. But despite their very heavy losses, and they're running well over 100% higher this year than they were last, they are continuing to infiltrate men and equipment into South Vietnam. As a matter of fact, they have very substantially raised the levels of that infiltration. They have increased the number of their attacks, they have broadened the scope of their attacks, they have increased the level of conflict. And these actions, I think represent a clear intention on the part of Hanoi to escalate the level of their effort and to raise the level of their conflict.

NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: Interview at Washington National Airport
DATE: November 30, 1965
NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense

OCCASION: News Conference

DATE: December 10, 1965

QUESTION: You said we have stopped losing the war. Can you tell us where we are at this point?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Well, I can tell you two things about it. I think that perhaps some of you know already first that beyond any question of a doubt the Viet Cong objective for the monsoon period, which began roughly the 1st of May and ended the early part of last month, was to win the war. Specifically, it was to divide the country in half at its narrow waist, the plains between Pleiku and Qui Nhon, and it was to impose such heavy fatalities upon the South Vietnamese as to force them to lay down their arms. I think it is fair to say that the very rapid increase in U. S. military strength in South Vietnam, which arose from perhaps 40,000 at the end of May to as I said about 180,000 today, was a major factor in enabling the South Vietnamese to defeat that Viet Cong offensive and the Viet Cong paid a very heavy price for their efforts to achieve victory during the summer period. Their losses were heavy. They were forced to retire in July and August, recoup, reequip, retrain. Their fatalities, for example, are more than twice in 1965 as in the comparable period 1964 a year ago. But despite the defeat that was imposed upon them they have continued to infiltrate very substantial numbers from North Vietnam to South Vietnam. They have not only replaced their losses, but increased their strength and given intention of raising the intensity of the conflict.
Mr. Ambassador, regardless of the effect that the raids have on Hanoi's policy, your remarks—I interpret your remarks as meaning that the raids will not inhibit at all the infiltration from the physical sense, in the military sense. Aren't the raids making some dent on their infiltration capability?

AMB. TAYLOR: We have no way to meter their infiltration at a given moment, but knowing the nature of the targets we are thinking of, there is no reason to believe it will cripple in any serious way their ability to infiltrate. Bear in mind these attacks are largely for the effect upon the will of the leaders in Hanoi. That is the purpose of the present exercise. That is where we hope eventually to see the results.
Q Do you think that the bombings in the north, that the sense that those people that something is being done against the source of a lot of their trouble there, their enemy, has had a morale effect in the south? Has it caused them to have a more hopeful attitude toward the future?

AMB. TAYLOR: Very definitely so. It is the most tangible consequence of our air attack, has been the increased morale in South Viet-Nam both among the civilians and among the military.

Q Has this tended to add to the political stability?

AMB. TAYLOR: It certainly contributes to strengthening the Government to some degree.

Q Mr. Ambassador, has it also, however, perhaps complicated your problems somewhat by giving the Government in Saigon the theory that there is an easy way out?

AMB. TAYLOR: It hasn't yet, but it is certainly a point to watch. I am keeping aware of this possibility.
Question: Has our bombing attack really hurt the North Vietnamese?

Sec. McNamara: I don't think there is any question but what it has. As you know, the bombing program has been directed against the infiltration routes over which the North Vietnamese have been supplying men and material to the Viet Cong Communists in the South. In particular, during the past two weeks we have concentrated on bridges and routes of communication and destroyed many of these, and this can't but help delay the movement of men and material to the Communists in the South.

Sec. McNamara: Our discussions in Honolulu were directed primarily to the actions that we need to take to strengthen the opposition to the Viet Cong in South Vietnam. I think with the bombing strikes of the Vietnamese Air Force and the U.S. Navy and Air Force aircraft against the infiltration routes in North Vietnam, we sometimes fail to recognize the fundamental importance of the actions in South Vietnam itself. It is there that the Viet Cong are seeking to subvert and destroy the political institutions of an independent nation. It was to that problem that we directed our attention in Honolulu.
The ammunition supply for these weapons of course will have to come from Communist China via North Vietnam.

Now the current South Vietnamese Air Force and U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force strikes against North Vietnam have been designed to impede this infiltration of men and materiel, and infiltration which makes the difference between a situation which is manageable and one which is not manageable internally by the Government of South Vietnam.

The air strikes have been carefully limited to military targets, primarily to infiltration targets. To transit points, to barracks, to supply depots, to ammunition depots, to routes of communication, all feeding the infiltration lines from North Vietnam into Laos and then into South Vietnam.

More recently there has been added to this target system railroads, highways, and bridges which are the foundation of the infiltration routes. The strikes against the bridges have been particularly successful. During the last three weeks, between April 3 and April 26, Vietnamese and U.S. aircraft struck a total of 27 rail and highway bridges along key lines of communication in North Vietnam.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, in what way were the Viet Cong, which are operating in South Vietnam, protected by the air strikes against North Vietnam?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: In two respects. First, as I say, we have slowed down the movement of men and materiel and this has adversely affected the Viet Cong although I don't wish to over-emphasize the degree to which it has affected them so far.

Secondly, the air strikes against North Vietnam and also the increased tempo of air strikes by the Vietnamese Air Force and the U.S. Air Force in South Vietnam have significantly and adversely affected the morale of the Viet Cong troops in the south. We know this from our interrogation of Viet Cong captured within the last four to eight weeks.
The current South Vietnamese and US air strikes against the North have been carefully designed to impede infiltration of the men and materiel which make the difference between a situation which is manageable and one which is not manageable internally by the Government of South Vietnam. The air strikes have been carefully limited to military targets -- primarily to infiltration targets: transit-point barracks, supply dumps, ammunition depots, lines of communication, radars in the vicinity of these facilities, and more recently railroads, highways and bridges serving the infiltration routes.

It is important to understand the nature of our operations in North Vietnam, and to contrast them with those of the communists against South Vietnam. There are too many who have recklessly applied the adjective "barbaric" in the wrong place.

Our aerial operations are carefully controlled as to area, target, and munitions. They are almost surgical, aiming to cut the lines of control and supply running from north to south, but carefully avoiding essentially civilian targets.

Which is "barbaric," the bombing of an infiltration bridge, or the beheading of a mayor? Which is "barbaric," the strafing of a military convoy heading south, or the systematic murder of innocent villagers?
NAME: William P. Bundy  
Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs  
Dallas Council on World Affairs  
Dallas, Texas  
DATE: May 13, 1965

The President, acting at the request and urging of the South Vietnamese Government, directed that United States aircraft join with South Vietnamese aircraft in a campaign of measured and carefully directed attacks against military targets in North Vietnam. This was not a change of policy -- it was a change in the measures taken to carry out policy, made necessary by the actions of the other side, in order to show Hanoi, as well as our friends in the South, that we were prepared to see the struggle through so that South Vietnam would be free from external interferences.

NAME: John T. McNaughton, Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA)  
OCCASION: Graduation Ceremonies, University of Minnesota  
DATE: June 10, 1965

No one believes that the air strikes alone will be sufficient, but along with continued efforts in the South they are essential to a solution. They are essential to cut the flow of supplies. They are essential to convince Hanoi that their efforts in the South cannot succeed -- to prove to them for the first time that their acts of aggression do bring danger to them directly and do carry costs. The strikes give the North for the first time a reason to worry, and a reason to quit. By the same token, they give the Viet Cong in the South a reason to worry that the Northerners will quit, a reason to doubt that the long leaderships of the guerrilla life must eventually, with outside support, win out.
MR. LAWRENCE: Well, Mr. Secretary, in terms of our strategy, what are the reports of the success of our bombing; are we slowing down infiltration? Are we cutting off supplies? Are we indeed bringing them any closer to the peace table?

SECRETARY RUSK: Well, I think there have been very important results of the bombings in the North thus far. Ammunition dumps and bridges, transportation facilities, POL supplies in the South --

MR. LAWRENCE: What is POL?

SECRETARY RUSK: Gas and oil. Gasoline and oil. And these have had an important practical effect upon the ability of the North to support or to increase the support of their effort in South Vietnam.

We had never suspected this in itself would be a decisive element but it is important, Mr. Lawrence, that they have discovered that they are not going to be permitted to send tens of thousands of people into the South to attack South Vietnam and live in safety and comfort there in the North.

The idea of the sanctuary is dead as far as this situation is concerned, and that is something that all of the others who may be supporting Hanoi must take fully into account.

MR. SCALI: Including the Red Chinese?

SECRETARY RUSK: Including everybody. Including everybody who elects to get into this war.
as to the bombing program in the north, I think it is important that we understand what we hope to achieve by that program. In the first place, you recall, it started in part as a reprisal action for the terror bombings that have been carried out by the Viet Cong last year at Bien Hoa Air Field, at Brinks barracks, and more recently in February, early February this year, at Pleiku. It was necessary to show the North Vietnamese who were directing those activities that this would not go unchallenged, that they would pay a price for the continuation of them. And our bombings started in part to make that clear.

It was also important to begin to raise the price to the North Vietnamese of carrying on this war. It was important to try to restrict -- although certainly it was never considered it would be possible to stop the movement of men and equipment to the south. And I think these objectives have in part been accomplished. We never believed and we don't believe today that bombing in the north will drive the North Vietnamese to the bargaining table, or force them to cease their terror tactics and harassment and subversion of the political institutions of the south. There is only one thing that will stop that in my view, and that is to prove to them they can't win in the south. And therefore our strategy is directed to that end. How long it will take, I can't tell.
Bombing Raids Over the North

NAME: General Maxwell D. Taylor
Former Ambassador to South Vietnam

OCCASION: Interview on CBS-TV

DATE: August 16, 1965

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: the air campaign is having an effect, not a complete effect, of course, in suppressing infiltration, but it is certainly making it much tougher for that infiltration.

QUESTION: How effective is that air war? I understand a reevaluation has been asked for on the bombing both north and south. I believe that is correct?

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AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I will answer the first part. Why is the air campaign, what is the purpose of it? There are three purposes--duly announced, clearly thought through before embarking on this program. The first was to give the South Vietnamese people the sense of being able to strike back for the first time against the source of all their evils, namely North Vietnam. I can assure you the psychological effect, the morale effect of this decision, was most visible throughout all of South Vietnam, military and civilians alike.

The second purpose I have already alluded to, to reduce--not to eliminate infiltration--we know air can't eliminate infiltration any more than it could in Korea.

The third point and perhaps the most important in the long pull is to remind the leaders in Hanoi, the men who are making the decisions, who can stop the infiltration, that unless they cease their aggression they are going to pay an increasing price to the point that the game is just not worth this kind of loss.
airpower in Viet-Nam now is being used in two
new areas of operations which are truly unique in the annals of aerial
warfare. The two new areas are the use of airpower for what might be
called "strategic persuasion" and the employment of airpower in guer-
 rilla warfare.

Turning first to what I termed "strategic persuasion," we must bear in mind that, in effect, we are fighting a war with two different elements in Viet-Nam, of which one pertains to the north and one to the south. In turn, airpower has a dual objective in North Viet-Nam. One objective is to interdict the flow of supplies to the Viet Cong in the south and I will come back to this objective shortly. The other objective is to apply a measured amount of strategic airpower in order to persuade the North Vietnamese leaders to cease their aggressive actions and to accede to President Johnson's offer of negotiating a peaceful settle-
ment of the conflict.

It is evident, therefore, that the principle of "strategic persuasion is not meant to achieve total military victory, as all-out strategic air-
power helped to achieve in World War II. Rather, it is designed solely as an instrument of foreign policy for the attainment of a diplomatic objective.
in the past six months, South Vietnamese and U.S. aircraft have flown over 15,000 sorties against carefully selected targets in North Viet-Nam and dropped more than 14,000 tons of bombs on them.

The targets included primarily lines of communication and military facilities such as bridges, railroads, highways, barracks, ammunition depots, radar sites and the like. Most of the targets in North Viet-Nam were attacked for the added or principal purpose of helping to impede the flow of reinforcements and supplies to the Viet Cong in South Viet-Nam.

* * * *

There can be no doubt that aerial interdiction, in combination with naval surveillance of the sea supply routes, has greatly reduced the support which the Viet Cong are receiving from the outside and that it will have an increasing impact on their guerrilla operations throughout the remainder of the war. But because of geographic conditions, these actions cannot cut off outside support entirely; they can only reduce it and make it more costly. Nor is reduction of outside support sufficient, by itself, to defeat the guerrillas because they will continue to capture weapons and ammunition and to take whatever else they need from the civilian populace.
our initial aerial interdiction effort was limited to targets in South Viet-Nam in the hope that the conflict could be kept at the lowest possible level of intensity. But in granting the North Vietnamese a sanctuary where they could safely collect and store any amount of supplies for the Viet Cong guerrillas, we found ourselves in the same position as a narcotics squad that is trying to smash a dope ring by going after the pushers but has no warrant to enter the ring headquarters from where the pushers are directed and supplied.

When we began striking targets in North Viet-Nam last February, we not only added greatly to the effectiveness of our efforts to impede the flow of supplies to the guerrillas but we also made it increasingly costly for the North Vietnamese to engage in the provision of these supplies. A bridge and a highway which carry a flow of military supplies to the guerrillas in the South, normally serve local needs also, and when they are destroyed as interdiction targets, all other traffic is disrupted at the same time. This is the direct price which we are now exacting from the North Vietnamese themselves for their active support of the guerrillas in South Viet-Nam.
Meanwhile, our combined U.S. and South Vietnamese air strikes in the north continue to make it increasingly difficult for Hanoi to infiltrate men and supplies across the border. The air attacks, in the south, force the Viet Cong to stay constantly on the move -- constantly harrassed and harried -- constantly straining their logistics and sources of supply.

Against targets in North Vietnam, we reached a new high of one thousand six hundred and seventy one strike sorties last month. By destroying transport systems and other selected military targets of importance to the enemy, we are reducing his flow of supplies and are placing a price on aggression that is out of all proportion to any possible gain.
I would like now to deal briefly with the U. S. air campaign against North Vietnam. This campaign is, of course, distinct from our air operations against the Viet Cong. The air campaign against North Vietnam is a unique use of airpower. It is, in fact, an experiment. We are not using our airpower in the North in accordance with Von Clausewitz's principles of war. Airpower is not being asked to produce a military victory in the classic sense. It is being used to persuade North Vietnam to abandon its aggression in the South and to share in seeking a diplomatic solution to the problems of Southeast Asia. I have referred on occasions to this use of airpower as "strategic persuasion."

NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense

OCCASION: Arrival at Andrews AFB

DATE: November 30, 1965

Question: Mr. Secretary, Senator Russell said last night that we should bomb Haiphong. Do you agree?

Secretary McNamara: Our bombing of North Vietnam is designed to attack the lines of communication over which the North Vietnamese are infiltrating men and equipment into South Vietnam. I believe we should continue to emphasize that objective. It's not our objective to destroy the government of North Vietnam; it is our objective to preserve the independence of South Vietnam. And it's consistent with that latter objective to concentrate our bombing on the lines of infiltration. The North Vietnamese today, we believe, have nine regiments of their regular Army in South Vietnam. We believe also they have been infiltrating additional men into that country at the rate of about 1,500 a month during the rainy season and that their level of infiltration will approach 4,500 men per month during the forthcoming dry season. That compares with about 800 a month last year. It's to reduce that level of infiltration and particularly to reduce the infiltration of equipment, supplies to support those forces, that our bombing of North Vietnam is carried on.
There is just one facet of our air operations in Vietnam on which I want to comment briefly because its purpose and scope are not always well understood. I am referring to the strikes by South Vietnamese and American aircraft against targets in North Vietnam.

These strikes have actually a dual purpose. First, they are designed to assist our aerial interdiction effort in impeding the flow of supplies and reinforcements to the Viet Cong from the North because that is where the supplies are coming from. Second, our only hope of stopping these supplies is to discourage the North Vietnamese from supporting the Viet Cong by making such support too costly to them. This strategy, which is best described as "strategic persuasion," gives the President a highly flexible tool in inducing North Vietnam eventually to accept his offer of unconditional discussions.
NAME: Dean Rusk, Secretary of State

OCCASION: News Conference

DATE: December 9, 1965

Now, as far as the bombing is concerned, we did not anticipate that the bombing itself would interfere with, to the extent of stopping, infiltration. Any of us who have had Infantry experience would know that that is not likely to happen. And those who have been familiar with guerrilla operations in various parts of the world know that that is not likely to happen. But there is no doubt that the bombing has impaired their ability to reinforce and to supply their effort in South Vietnam.

NAME: Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense

OCCASION: News Conference

DATE: December 10, 1965

QUESTION: Do you think from a military standpoint it would be a bad idea to stop bombing now for a while?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: You are speaking specifically, I presume, of bombing targets in North Vietnam?

QUESTION: Yes.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: We have said before that our bombing program in North Vietnam is directed against military targets associated with the lines of infiltration from North Vietnam into South Vietnam. That program has been justified from a military point of view and continues to be justified from a military point of view.
Q. There was a great fuss in the European press about the use of this nonlethal gas, and then there was a suggestion in the press that pilots are now being told to go out and find their own targets, on their own initiative. Is that true?

A. Oh, it wouldn't surprise me if pilots go out and look for targets. That's what they're there for -- the mission is clear, and the mission is authorized.

The gas was, unfortunately, based upon a fundamental misunderstanding of what was involved. That was a police-type gas. and has nothing to do with gas warfare. It has been used many times, by many governments all over the world.

Our aerial defoliation program has helped the fight against the guerrillas in other respects also. In addition to denying raiders and snipers protection against discovery close to their intended targets, defoliation provides timely detection and a clear line of fire in case of attack. Moreover, it greatly improves not only horizontal but also vertical visibility. This adds to the effectiveness of another type of aerial operations employed against the guerrillas, namely, the Forward Air Controller operations.
some other aerial tactics now used in South Viet-Nam have little, if any, precedent.

For instance, airpower was called upon to deny the Viet Cong another type of sanctuary that is peculiar to guerrilla warfare in that part of the world—the jungle. Hiding in the dense woods, the guerrillas could make frequent lightening raids against camps and bases, sabotage railroads, ambush road and canal traffic, and fade safely back into the jungle after their forays. These raids and ambushes have been made far more difficult and costly to the Viet Cong ever since our aircraft started spraying a commercial type of weed killer which defoliates the brush and trees adjoining any area likely to be ambushed.

The defoliation tactic has been extremely effective. Interrogation of prisoners and defectors indicates that it has had a major effect on the operations as well as on the morale of the Viet Cong. Although the defoliant is no more harmful to humans than the chemicals used to kill crab grass and dandelions, and in fact does not even harm the plant roots, communist propaganda has charged that it is poisonous. Apparently, this vicious claim is widely believed by Viet Cong partisans who, as a result, fear the defoliant's alleged toxic effects on themselves as much as its impact on their ambush tactics.
Ambush from the cover of heavy vegetation along roads, powerlines, and
canals in Vietnam has been a favorite and effective Viet Cong tactic, which
at one time took a heavy toll of casualties. The use of chemical defoliants to
open up many areas has resulted in a marked decrease in these ambushes.

Chemical defoliation of jungle areas at first presented difficulties. This was
a new problem, and some of the initial efforts were not too effective. However,
needed equipment, such as special sprayers, were rapidly developed, along with
the acquisition of better knowledge of the type and amounts of chemicals needed
and the best times of the year to use them. Spraying is now accomplished effectively
and rapidly both from the air and on the ground.

Use of the defoliants has resulted in a very good example of serendipity, which
so often happens with military developments. Vietnamese farmers are now harvesting
the defoliated trees and using the wood for fuel. Previously, they were afraid to
enter the jungle because of the Viet Cong. Also, the land can be cultivated after
the wood has been cut.

We have also found that the Viet Cong tend to leave the area as soon as aerial
spraying is started. The Communists for so long have been charging that the
chemical defoliants were poison gases, that they may have begun to believe their
own propaganda.

Riot control agents, such as tear gas, have promising prospects for the clearing of
tunnels and flushing Viet Cong from other hiding places. The Viet Cong's ruthless
use of women and children as shields gives them an advantage on which they
capitalize to the limit. In these cases, harmless tear gases are far preferable to
Civic Action

NAME: William P. Bundy
Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs
OCCASION: Dallas Council on World Affairs
Dallas, Texas
DATE: May 13, 1965

But the military effort was and is only one aspect of the struggle. The economic front was equally important, and a smaller but extraordinarily dedicated group of civilian Americans went into the dangerous countryside, unarmed and often unescorted, to help the creation of the fortified hamlets that soon became, and remain a key feature of strategy, and to bring to the villages the schools, fertilizer, wells, pigs, and other improvements that meant so much and would serve to show the Government's concern for its people.
Operation "Golden Fleece" is a classic example of combined military and civic action. In this operation which is still continuing, we transported villagers to their rice fields, guarded them from the Viet Cong during the harvest, and brought them and the whole harvest back to the village.

This is assistance rather than charity. It supplements their own capabilities, and strengthens their desire to help themselves. It gives them security, hope, ambition and self respect.

These, then, are the hallmarks of a civic action program. First, it must be undertaken by the military, or under their auspices, to identify the military as friends rather than conquerors. And second, it must be responsive to local needs and aspirations in such a manner that it leads to the independence of the local population rather than making them dependent upon the continuation of the program.

Time does not permit a detailed cataloging of all the things which have been done under the civic action program, but here is a meaningful summary. We have distributed over 45 tons of food, fed over 25,000 refugees, given medical treatment to over 50,000 patients, evacuated over 3800 critically ill civilians to hospitals, and trained 36 men and women to give medical aid. We have completed 63 construction projects, distributed 8000 pounds of clothing, distributed $1,225.00 to local causes, and are conducting at least 5 local English classes.

(continued)
General Wallace Greene (continued)

Operation Golden Fleece has gathered and transported over 21 tons of rice, and it still continues.

These activities have been extremely effective. They are creating a new attitude among the Vietnamese people--one which will no longer accept the propaganda and domination of the Viet Cong. They no longer fear the Americans. In fact they help us by giving us information about the Viet Cong. They know there is something better than Viet Cong domination, and the Viet Cong no longer find a safe haven to hide among the population. Our successes, as we spread our influence like an ink blot, suggest that this is the method by which we can, and will, achieve our ultimate goals in South Vietnam.
This all started with the voluntary, compassionate acts of the average young Marine, who, as Americans in uniform have done for years, started handing out candy and food to the children of the villages. Medical assistance was provided. Such small items as soap and bandages were almost like treasures to these people. Then the project began to grow.

The village leaders were contacted by Marine commanders. They asked the chief, "What can we help you do?". After the initial traces of fear and reluctance had been allayed, the response was splendid. As a result, Marines began repairing and rebuilding roads, schools, and bridges. Wells were dug. Medical aid and medical training have been provided. Food, clothing, toys and money have been distributed. This is assistance rather than charity. It strengthens the real desire these people have to help themselves--gives them a start to rebuild. They are regaining self-respect, ambition and hope. Now they have security. These are the hallmarks of a successful civic action program, that is continuing and will continue so long as we clear more villages of the enemy.

To give you some idea of the quantities involved it can be told that the Marines have distributed about 90,000 pounds of food, some 8,000 pounds clothing and untold amounts of medical aid to more than 50,000 people. During the rice harvest, in an operation called Golden Fleece, their fields and their lives were protected while they worked, and some 25 tons of rice were transported from those fields to places of safety. This aid enabled the farmers to avoid the Viet Cong rice tax of 440 pounds per family.

You can correctly surmise that we have been receiving a large amount of help from people and organizations here in the states. Soap, clothing, food and money are being shipped in such quantities that our capabilities for moving the cargo by air are being heavily taxed. As you might well imagine, the Navy has come to our assistance and Project Handclasp has become a reality.
We continue to emphasize to our Marines that our purpose is to help the Government of Vietnam bring peace and security to that nation; that killing Viet Cong is only one element in the achievement of that purpose. The measures taken by Marines to win the people as well as the battle are called Civic Action.

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the U.S. provides nearly $400 million a year in support of economic, political, and psychological projects and the effort is expanding. Some measure of the importance we attach to such projects is derived from the fact that this sum exceeds the $330 million we are allocating the Vietnamese in military aid. Assisting the Vietnamese to make effective use of this non-military money are more than 1,200 civilian officials of the Defense and State Departments, the Agency for International Development, and the United States Information Agency.

United States Armed Forces are also playing a most significant role in this non-military activity. Our military forces place great stress on efforts in this area -- efforts grouped under the title, "Civic Action." Today, in Vietnam, under this program, they are repairing bridges, digging wells, clearing canals, treating the sick, and rebuilding schools destroyed by the Viet Cong.

Our Armed Forces have been engaged in civic action in many parts of the world for many years, but Vietnam, where they fight on the one hand and perform civic action on the other, approaches the unique. The normal, simple concept of letting the soldiers fight the war and the civilians manage the peace does not suffice. Each must help and coordinate closely with the other. The civil agencies conduct field operations as if they were in combat -- as sometimes they are -- and the military takes a heavy load of civic action because they are on the ground, they know the problem, and they have the manpower and means.

They are in fact doing very well. For example, the 173d Airborne Brigade in a two-week operation in the Pleiku-Kontum area, completely refurbished two schools, combined patrols with friendly visits to some 50 villages -- and in the process provided medical treatment to some 5,000 people, refurbished and rewired a civilian hospital and contributed 75,000 piasters from their own pockets for its operating expenses. This is a typical, not an unusual example.
CIVIC ACTION

NAME: Lt Gen B. E. Spivy, USA
Director of Plans and Policy, J-5, JCS
OCCASION: Before the Western Railway Club
Sherman House, Chicago, Illinois
DATE: November 15, 1965

Our Armed Forces have been engaged in civic action in many parts of the world for many years, but Vietnam, where we fight on the one hand and work on civic action on the other, approaches the unique. The normal, simple concept of letting the soldiers fight the war and the civilians manipulate the peace does not suffice. Each must help and coordinate closely with the other. The civil agencies conduct field operations as if they were in combat -- as sometimes they are -- and the military take a heavy load of civic action because they are on the ground, know the problems, and have the manpower and means.

They are in fact doing very well. For example, the 173d Airborne Brigade in a recent two-week combat operation in the Pleiku - Kontum area, completely refurbished two schools, combined patrols with friendly visits to some 5,000 people, refurbished and rewired a civilian hospital and contributed 75,000 piasters from their own pockets for its operating expenses. This is a typical, not an unusual example.
All of you are familiar with the attacks we are making against military targets in North Vietnam. In addition, sorties flown by the United States and Vietnamese Air Forces inside South Vietnam are now averaging around 4000 per week. Our aircraft escort helicopters, transports, convoys, trains and in some cases even boats. These 4000 per week are exclusive of those flown by the Navy and Marine Corps. Our forces strike at Viet Cong ambushes around landing and parachute drop zones, conduct reconnaissance, provide close support for ground forces, aid hamlets or outposts under attack and fly leaflet-dropping and tape-playing missions.
Many instances of valor have been recorded in all types of operations in South Vietnam, but nowhere have they been appreciated more than in the rescue of downed pilots from the sea, and the jungle and the Viet Cong, and often under heavy enemy fire.

I would like to quote you one example of such heroism which might be of special interest to you people in this room. In March 1965, Major Ronald L. Ingraham flew his helicopter for two and one-half hours over unfriendly territory in search of two downed pilots and assisted in their rescue under heavy fire, with complete disregard of his own safety. For his gallantry and devotion to duty, Major Ingraham received one of our highest awards, the Silver Star. This outstanding officer is the son of a veteran member of the Washington Press, Mr. Reg Ingraham, who doubtless is known to most all of you. Continuous search and rescue operations by all services, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and the Marines, have resulted in four out of five of the people who've been shot down in Vietnam being recovered.
Name: Eugene M. Zuckert, Secretary of the Air Force
Occasion: Press Conference, Shaw AFB, South Carolina
Date: July 12, 1965

Question: Have you been pleased with the results of the bombing raids by the B-52's in Vietnam?

Mr. Zuckert: Oh, I think two things. In the first place, the demonstration that the B-52 is an appropriate instrument for delivering large quantities of conventional bombs in a concentrated area. And I think that the performance itself - what they've done and how they've done it - has proved that SAC is operating with its customary effectiveness.

Question: Do you think it's effective in the jungle?

Mr. Zuckert: I have to go by what the theater says and the theater says the missions were successful and did what they wanted them to do. Sitting at my desk in Washington, I'm not in the best position to observe first hand.
Early this year, the U. S. Marine Corps role in South Vietnam was again expanded from an advisory and combat support role to include a defensive role. This expansion came about with the deployment of a Light Anti-Aircraft Missile Battalion to the airfield at Da Nang. This unit is equipped with ground-to-air HAWK missiles. Following closely behind the HAWKS were Marines from the Okinawa-based 3rd Marine Division.

Along with the ground elements, Marine air power in Vietnam has also grown this year. Phantom jet fighters and Skyhawk attack aircraft of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing—home-based in Japan—have been deployed to South Vietnam to provide additional air support.

Marines and the Navy's SeaBees, working together, have constructed a Short Airfield for Tactical Support—or SATS, as we call it—at Chu Lai, some 50 miles south of Da Nang. SATS is essentially an aircraft carrier deck installed ashore, complete with catapult and arresting gear. It provides Marine pilots with a rapidly-constructed airfield complete with all the trimmings. On June 1st our A-4 Skyhawks began using the field. They landed in the morning. They made their first combat strikes that afternoon.