In 1965 US troop strength in RVN had risen from a little over 20,000 to approximately 184,000. In 1966 this figure would more than double. The expansion of these forces was the direct result of requests from COMUSMACV to meet a growing enemy threat.

1966 Force Requirements

The Joint Chiefs of Staff had begun consideration of 1966 force requirements for Vietnam in mid-1965 and had submitted a program, Phase II forces, to the Secretary of Defense on 10 November 1965. When Secretary McNamara visited Saigon in late November 1965, General Westmoreland had informed him that NVA strength in RVN was increasing, and had requested that additional forces be deployed to RVN in 1966. Following these discussions, COMUSMACV and CINCPAC prepared detailed requirements for the additional forces needed in 1966, designating these additions Phase IIA forces. CINCPAC submitted the Phase IIA requirements to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 16 December 1965. The Phase IIA forces were integrated into a deployment priority list of all forces required by quarter. CINCPAC called for a total of 42 maneuver battalions and about 221,000 US troops to be moved to RVN during 1966. Major units involved included three Army divisions (25th, 4th, and a third, not designated), a separate Army infantry brigade, an armored cavalry regiment, the remainder of the 1st Marine Division, a Marine RLT, and ten tactical fighter squadrons. CINCPAC also included additional ground air defense weapons for employment at the more vulnerable US bases in RVN (11 more HAWK battalions, 13 more M-42 battalions, and 16 M-55 Quad 50 batteries). Since the deployment of the 25th Infantry Division and the Marine units would deplete his reserves, CINCPAC included in his requirements the reconstitution of the Marine Amphibious Brigade on Okinawa and an infantry division in Hawaii. He also requested 45,000 additional allied troops.

1. For Phase I deployment consideration, see Ch. 22
which would bring the total strength of allied forces in RVN to approximately 66,000 by the end of 1966.2

To meet CINCPAC's requirements, the Joint Chiefs of Staff convened a planning conference to work out troop lists and deployment schedules. This conference met in Honolulu from 17 January through 6 February 1966 and produced three alternative capabilities programs for the deployment of forces to PACOM in CY 1966. The three alternatives, Cases I, II, and III, were based on the requirements submitted by CINCPAC on 16 December, but modified and validated during the conference. Each case was based on a different combination of sources for the forces and provided varying levels and mixes of forces in differing time frames within CY 1966. The conference determined that the Service capabilities that could most nearly meet the requirements were those set forth in Case I. This Case provided for an increase of about 202,000 US personnel (including 43 maneuver battalions) and 24,000 allied personnel (13 maneuver battalions) in CY 1966. Case I also included 99,000 additional men for PACOM areas outside of South Vietnam. The forces would be drawn from the CONUS current force structure, activations, feasible drawdown from overseas areas, call-up of selected Reserve units and individuals, and extensions of terms of service.3

At a meeting on 9 February with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Service Secretaries, and other DOD officials, the Secretary of Defense summarized the results of the recent Honolulu planning conference and instructed those present "to assume and act to deploy" combat units as provided in Case I, but with the understanding that there would be no Reserve call-up. On 17 February, the Secretary of Defense formally directed the Military Departments and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to assume that Case I was
the requirement "we will try to meet" and to study all possible ways of meeting it short of calling Reserves or extending terms of service.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff did not object, at this time, to the Secretary's decision on a Reserve call-up, and on 18 February, they directed the Services to provide the forces for deployment on the timetable requested "or on the earliest practicable dates thereafter."4

After further study of the Case I requirements and schedules, the Joint Chiefs of Staff concluded that, without a selective Reserve call-up, these requirements could not be met in full. To do so, they explained to the Secretary of Defense on 1 March, would place combat elements out of balance with support capabilities and would cause "an extremely harmful effect" on EUCOM and LANTCOM capabilities. The Joint Chiefs of Staff estimated that the adoption of Case I requirements would cause drawdowns in EUCOM of 48,800 Army personnel (21 battalion equivalents), four tactical reconnaissance and six TFSs, and a Marine BLT with associated amphibious assault shipping; in LANTCOM of 6,500 personnel, resulting in 38 combat ships reduced to one-third manning level; and in PACOM of one tactical reconnaissance and five TFSs. They warned that such severe drawdowns would necessitate even greater reliance on "very early employment" of nuclear weapons if war should occur in Europe. The risks to US military posture inherent in the extensive drawdown that would be required, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said, were not justified by the earlier deployment schedules that would be achieved. They recommended against Case I deployments.

Instead, they proposed to the Secretary of Defense "stretched out" deployment schedules that would provide the same forces, but over a 16-month period rather than the ten months remaining in CY 1966. Even these stretched-out deployments posed some risk to US military posture worldwide, but the Joint Chiefs of Staff considered it "a more acceptable risk" than that inherent in Case I. To permit the earliest possible restoration of US military posture, the Joint Chiefs of Staff requested the necessary program changes and budgetary action for the activation of: two Army divisions; assorted Navy units, ships, and personnel;

4. (TS-GP 3) SM-170-66 to CSA, et al., 18 Feb 66 (derived from JCS 2343/772), JMF 9155.3 (24 Jan 66). (TS-GP 3) JCS 2343/772, 18 Feb 66; (TS-GP 1) Memo, SecDef to SecA et al., 17 Feb 65, Encl to JCS 2343/760-1, 18 Feb 66; JMF 9155.3 (24 Jan 66).
Air Force units including fifteen TFSs, six tactical reconnaissance squadrons, one tactical combat squadron, and four tactical air support squadrons; and one Marine attack squadron and additional personnel for Marine combat and combat support units. The Joint Chiefs of Staff considered that either alternative held serious logistic problems, but those arising from stretched-out deployments would be less severe than those inherent in Case I.\footnote{SecDef, 28 Apr 66 (derived from JCS 2343/760-38), same file, sec 9.}

Despite the JCS recommendation, the Secretary of Defense on 10 March authorized Case I figures "as the revised approved deployment plan for South Vietnam," stating that "all necessary actions are to be taken to meet these deployment dates without call-up of reserves, or extensions of terms of service (except for the Marine Corps and Navy)." The figure as finally approved by the Secretary of Defense provided for a US strength of 283,500 in RVN by June 1966, with this figure rising to 415,000 by December 1966 and to 425,600 by June 1967. US maneuver battalions in RVN would rise to 52 in June 1966 and reach a total of 79 by the end of the year, while combat support battalions for the same periods would total 38 and 66, respectively. US attack-capable aircraft would increase from the 711 in RVN in December 1965 to 866 by mid-1966 and to 1,087 by the end of 1966.\footnote{SecDef, 11 Mar 66 (derived from JCS 2343/760-9), same file, sec 4.}

The Joint Chiefs of Staff, still not convinced that the Case I schedules could be met within existing capabilities, re-examined the current estimates of the Service capabilities to meet the force requirements. On 4 April they forwarded to the Secretary of Defense an integrated deployment program that met "as closely as feasible" the Case I program prescribed by the Secretary of Defense in early March. The JCS plan reflected a projected strength by the end of CY 1966 of 376,350 (79 maneuver battalions) as compared to the Case I strength of 413,557 (79 maneuver battalions)—a drawdown of approximately 37,000. (In late April, the Joint Chiefs of Staff revised this drawdown figure to 47,731.)\footnote{SecDef, 11 Mar 66 (derived from JCS 2343/760-2), same file, sec 9.}

\footnote{SecDef, 11 Mar 66 (derived from JCS 2343/760-5), same file, sec 3.}
On 11 April 1966, Secretary McNamara approved, with minor modifications, the 4 April JCS plan. The exceptions dealt with the scheduling in the earlier months of 1966, but did not change the year-end figures. The Secretary's decision ended a four-month effort to resolve 1966 force requirements for Vietnam and provided for a doubling of US forces in South Vietnam by the end of the year. The movement of individual units in the approved program continued to require the specific approval of the Secretary of Defense.

While force requirement figures were being determined during the period January through April 1966, actual deployment of major combat units to South Vietnam continued. In the last days of December 1965, the airlift of the 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division began; the 2d Brigade arrived by ship in February; and the 1st Brigade closed on 29 April, bringing the total US strength in South Vietnam by early May to 255,574. In May and June 1966, US deployments proceeded ahead of schedule, and by late June, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were planning the deployment of an additional nine maneuver battalions (three previously scheduled for the Dominican Republic and six from the newly-activated 9th US Army Infantry Division) to South Vietnam in the latter half of 1966. This would provide 79 US maneuver battalions in RVN by the end of CY 1966, as had been requested by CINCPAC and specified in the Case I figures. To reflect this acceleration, the Secretary of Defense on 2 July 1966 issued a revised deployment plan, Southeast Asia Deployment Plan #3. It called for 391,000 US troops in SVN by the end of 1966. By June 1967, three additional maneuver battalions would be added (for a total of 82) and US strength would increase to 431,000. (During the next four months, the Secretary

8. (TS-GP 1) Memo, SecDef to SecA et al., 11 Apr 66, Encl to JCS 2343/760-13, 13 Apr 66, same file, sec 8. For SecDef approval of movement of individual units see JMF 9155.3 (24 Jan 66) secs 9-19.

9. The reason for this plan being designated Program #3 is not explained. None of the earlier programs were designated Southeast Asia Deployment Plan #1 or #2.
of Defense approved a number of revisions to Program #3, raising the projected US strength in RVN to 392,000 by the end of 1966 and to 434,000 by June 1967, but leaving the number of maneuver battalions unchanged.)

Just five days before the Secretary of Defense issued Program #3, the President had asked if any acceleration of deployments to Vietnam was possible. He wanted General Westmoreland to feel assured that he would have all the men he needed as soon as possible. The President requested the Secretary of Defense to meet with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and provide him an indication of what acceleration was possible for the remainder of the year.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff doubted that any further accelerations of "supportable combat-ready" forces beyond those currently scheduled could be attained, and on 15 July, the Secretary of Defense informed the President that "strenuous efforts" had already been made to accelerate deployments. He added that this effort had succeeded and that the United States would be able to provide more troops and equipment during the remainder of 1966 than had been thought possible in the spring. To illustrate the degree of acceleration already achieved, the Secretary of Defense informed the President of the plan to have 79 maneuver battalions in RVN by December 1966, as compared to the 70 battalions planned in April.

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11. (S-GP 1) Memo, Pres to SecDef, 28 Jun 66, Encl to JCS 2343/858, 28 Jun 66, JMF 9155.3 (28 Jun 66).

12. (TS-GP 4) JCSM-540-66 to SecDef, 8 Jul 66 (derived from JCS 2343/858-1); (TS-GP 4) Memo, SecDef to Pres, 15 Jul 66, Encl to JCS 2343/858-2, 18 Jul 66; JMF 9155.3 (28 Jun 66).
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NVN Force Increases

In the early months of 1966 NVN, too, was obviously building up its forces in RVN. By late April, NVN strength in South Vietnam had increased substantially. The Secretary of Defense estimated that there were eleven or more NVN regiments in SVN. In late June Secretary McNamara, in a public effort to justify US air strikes on oil depots in Hanoi and Haiphong, explained that North Vietnam had increased the infiltration of personnel into RVN by 120 percent and supplies by 150 percent during the past year. He believed NVN units in the South had increased by 100 percent.13

Adjusted 1966 and 1967 Requirements

Clearly, US forces, in addition to those scheduled in April, would be required. COMUSMACV and CINCPAC had already been considering a revision of force requirements, and on 18 June CINCPAC had submitted to the Joint Chiefs of Staff his adjusted CY 1966 and CY 1967 requirements. The adjusted CY 1966 requirements called for approximately 475,000 US personnel in RVN by the end of 1966, an increase of over 100,000 from the 376,350 figure approved by the Secretary of Defense in April. This would provide 79 maneuver battalions, 74 combat support battalions, 84 helicopter companies/squadrons, and 34 tactical air squadrons. The adjusted 1966 requirements also called for about 46,000 allied troops, including 23 maneuver battalions, to be in South Vietnam by the end of 1966.

CINCPAC asked for 84,000 additional troops during CY 1967. This increase would enable the United States to field a force of approximately 543,000, including 90 maneuver battalions, 89 combat support battalions, 88 helicopter companies/squadrons, and 39 tactical air squadrons. Allied strength would be raised to 59,000 (30 maneuver battalions). CINCPAC's requirements outside of Vietnam were 148,000 by the end of 1966, and an increase of 24,000 during 1967.14

CINCPAC explained that these requirements stemmed entirely from the threat posed by the continuing and increasing


HQ, CINCPAC, "CY 66 Adjusted Requirements and CY 67 Force Requirements," vols I and II, same file, secs 1A and 1B.

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NVN support of the war in South Vietnam. He pointed out that, although the air campaign against the North had made enemy infiltration into RVN more difficult, it had not "sufficiently" reduced his infiltration capability. CINCPAC stated that the enemy had built up his stockpiles in both NVN and RVN and was now capable of fielding and supporting more maneuver battalions in the South than ever before. In addition, said CINCPAC, more ground forces than those set forth in his current submission would probably be required if the enemy capability to field and support combat units in SVN was not sufficiently reduced.15

The Joint Chiefs of Staff reviewed the adjusted 1966 and 1967 requirements and, on 5 August, forwarded them to the Secretary of Defense for information. In brief, the Joint Chiefs of Staff found CINCPAC's requirements valid for force planning and budgeting purposes, representing "a logical and progressive build-up necessary to the attainment of US military objectives." The Joint Chiefs of Staff told Secretary McNamara that they and the Services were determining capabilities to meet these added requirements, in addition to sustaining the forces already in RVN. The Joint Chiefs of Staff had scheduled a capabilities planning conference for October to correlate these requirements into a comprehensive program which they hoped to present to the Secretary of Defense in late October or early November.16

Secretary McNamara replied on the same day. He recognized "our policy" of furnishing the troops, weapons, and supplies requested by General Westmoreland at the times he desired them, and he promised to accord these latest requirements the same consideration. Nevertheless, he desired a detailed analysis of the requirements to determine that each was essential to the war. He cautioned that:

we must send to Vietnam what is needed, but only what is needed. Excessive deployments weaken our ability to win by undermining the economic structure of the RVN and by raising doubts concerning the soundness of our planning.17

15. Ibid.

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CINCPAC, COMUSMACV, COMUSMACTHAI, and representatives of the Joint Staff and the Services met in Honolulu from 5 through 14 October to validate PACOM force requirements. This conference produced an updated intelligence estimate, a concept for the employment of forces, a Southeast Asia air program, and a comprehensive force deployment program. The intelligence estimate set forth the enemy threat from which the concept of operations was derived. Together they were the basis for the force requirements.\footnote{\textsuperscript{18} (TS) Hq, CINCPAC, "CY 66/67 Requirements/Capabilities Programs," vol I, same file, sec 6A.}

After reviewing the conference report, the Joint Chiefs of Staff developed a refined force deployment program for South Vietnam for CY 1966/1967. They submitted this program to the Secretary of Defense on 4 November, stating that it met CINCPAC requirements as closely as feasible. The program did not meet all of CINCPAC's desired closure dates and omitted certain requirements altogether (six infantry battalions for I CTZ, three helicopter squadrons, two artillery battalion equivalents, a sixth CVA, 12 destroyers, three tactical fighter squadrons, and certain combat support units). Although the program was less than CINCPAC desired, the Joint Chiefs considered it adequate for the effective execution of the concept of operations developed at the Honolulu conference.\footnote{\textsuperscript{19} (TS-GP 3) JCSM-702-66 to SecDef, 4 Nov 66 (derived from JCS 2343/555-25), same file, sec 8.}

Specifically, the JCS 4 November program provided for the buildup of US forces in RVN to reach 382,756 by the end of 1966--8,000 less than the figure approved by the Secretary of Defense in July, and nearly 90,000 less than that called for by CINCPAC in his 18 June requirements. The 382,756 figure included 82 maneuver battalions, 49 field artillery battalions, 51 helicopter companies/squadrons, and 32 tactical squadrons. Third country strength would be raised to 51,000, comprising 23 maneuver battalions. By the end of 1967, the JCS program projected US deployment in RVN at 497,168. This strength would make it possible to raise the number of maneuver battalions to 94, field artillery battalions to 66, helicopter companies/squadrons to 77, and tactical squadrons to 34. The increase in forces was expected to generate an expenditure of 46.21 billion piasters in CY 1967. The Joint Chiefs of Staff contemplated no further buildup of third country strength in 1967 or beyond, but they estimated that US deployment in RVN would reach approximately 524,000 troops, with the number of maneuver battalions remaining at 94, by the end of 1968. For PACOM...
areas other than RVN, the JCS program provided for 157,847 troops by the end of 1966, 201,140 by the end of 1967, and 206,429 by the end of 1968.20

Program #4

After reviewing the JCS submission, the Secretary of Defense decided that a deployment plan of the magnitude proposed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff would further exacerbate the already serious inflationary trend in RVN. He told the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 11 November that a "reasonably stable" SVN economy was essential to unite the population behind the Government and to conduct military operations successfully. It was necessary, therefore, to fit US deployments to the capacity of the RVN economy to bear them without undue inflation. Ambassador Lodge had already asked that US military spending in RVN be held to a 42-billion piaster level in 1967. Consequently, the Secretary of Defense found the JCS 46-billion piaster program self-defeating, and he had approved a plan, "Southeast Asia Deployment Program #4," that appeared the maximum consistent with any reasonable hope of achieving economic stability. Program #4 called for a total of 463,300 US personnel in RVN by the end of 1967, as contrasted with the JCS recommendation of 497,168, 87 maneuver battalions as opposed to 94 recommended by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and 62 artillery battalions as compared to the JCS recommendation of 66. Program #4 projected US strength in SVN by June 1968 at 469,300, but did not go beyond that date. (On 16 December 1966, Secretary McNamara revised Program #4, resulting in a reduction of the planned US strength in RVN at the end of 1967 from 463,300 to 460,000 and by June 1968 from 469,300 to 467,000; there was no change in the projected number of maneuver battalions.) Mr. McNamara invited the Joint Chiefs of Staff to suggest changes in unit mix, if he had deleted units that had a higher priority than those he had approved.21

The Joint Chiefs of Staff were not satisfied with Program #4. They informed the Secretary of Defense on 2 December that, while the restoration of economic stability in SVN was important, the achievement of such stability would depend primarily on the capabilities of military and paramilitary forces to defeat

20. Ibid.
the enemy, provide the secure environment necessary for political, economic, and social development and, concurrently, provide the essential impetus to the Revolutionary Development Program. The Joint Chiefs of Staff believed that the imposition of Program #4 would reduce the military capability to execute military tasks in RVN and to achieve US national objectives. They added that the rate at which US forces could undertake area control, open land LOCs, and provide the security essential for Revolutionary Development and other associated programs would be slower under Program #4 than with the forces requested in their 4 November program. They thought that as a consequence of the Program #4 reductions, the intensity and frequency of combat operations might be restricted, resulting in a longer war at increasing costs in casualties and materiel.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff reaffirmed their support for the 4 November program, but in the absence of approval of their program, they recommended to the Secretary of Defense certain modifications to Program #4. These modifications made no changes in approved deployment figures, but did make substantial changes in unit mix in order to create a better balanced force.22 Secretary McNamara accepted these modifications, with the exception of certain new Army units totalling 2,803 spaces. Thus 1967 deployment figures were at last fixed.23

During the second half of 1966, actual deployment of US combat units had continued. Operation ROBIN, the deployment of the 4th Infantry Division, began on 21 July with the arrival of advance parties of the 2d Brigade at Pleiku. The remainder of the Division closed in the following three months with the last units of the 3d Brigade arriving at Dau Tieng on 18 October. As 1966 ended, the 9th Infantry Division was closing, and plans had been made to station elements of the Division in IV CTZ. At the end of December US strength in South Vietnam stood at approximately 383,278, more than doubling the 184,000 US troops that had been there at the beginning of the year, and another 80,000 had been approved for deployment in 1967. By the end of 1967 the United States would have nearly a half a million men in Vietnam.24

Enemy forces had also increased in 1966. The Secretary of Defense estimated enemy forces in South Vietnam at 275,000

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22. (TS-GP 4) JCSM-739-66 to SecDef, 2 Dec 66 (derived from JCS 2343/885-29), same file, sec 10.
23. (TS-GP 4) Memo SecDef to CJCS, "Deployments to SEA and Other PACOM Areas (U)," 9 Dec 66, Encl to JCS 2343/855-31, 12 Dec 66, same file, sec 10.
at the close of 1966, a gain of nearly 25,000 since the beginning of the year. The 275,000 figure included 54,000 SVN regulars--more than double the 26,000 in SVN in late December 1965--62,000 main force VC troops, 11,000 local and district VC guerrillas, and 58,000 political and administrative cadres and support troops, such as supply, medical, and communications personnel. Secretary McNamara found one bright spot in this picture: enemy strength during the second half of 1966 had remained at a level of about 275,000.25

On his part General Westmoreland was optimistic. While visiting the United States in late December, he stated in a television interview that "the tide had turned in our favor during the year 1966." But he was quick to caution that the length of the war must be measured in years and that "more troops will be needed from our country and, hopefully, from free world allies."26

THIRD COUNTRY FORCES, 1966

During 1966, third country strength in RVN increased from 22,404 to 52,602. This 30,000-man increase included a ROK division and a ROK regiment with supporting elements, a two-battalion Australian task force, and a 2,000-man Filipino civic action group.27

In early 1966, the Joint Chiefs of Staff undertook a review of third country participation in RVN in order to analyze the third country support already provided and to determine what additional assistance would be useful. The study, noted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 1 July, found that, with the exception of certain Free World nations in the Pacific, efforts to procure military assistance for RVN had not yet yielded significant results. The study termed the Free World military assistance that had already been contributed "highly effective and of material assistance" to the effort in RVN. Shortfalls in US force capabilities could be met in part through increased Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF) contributions, particularly in the areas of transportation, construction, maintenance, and medicine. The study cautioned, however, that such FWMAF contributions would only supplement, and not substitute

25. NY Times, 26 Jan 67, 2.
27. (TS-NOPORN-GP 1) NMCC OPSUM 1-67 (Supp.), 3 Jan 67, p. 35.
for, the approved US deployments. The study listed, by country, the Free World forces that might be available for use in Vietnam. In addition to forces from the ROK, Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines, the study also listed several Western European countries (Greece, The Netherlands, Italy, and Spain), Turkey, India, South Africa, Jordan, Israel, Iran, and a number of Latin American nations. The study did not recommend any specific courses of action, and after noting the study, the Joint Chiefs of Staff merely returned it to the Joint Staff "for use as a reference." \(^{28}\)

Republic of Korea

While the Joint Chiefs of Staff were analyzing the broad question of Free World assistance to RVN, actual deployments of third country forces had moved ahead. The third country that contributed the largest number of troops in 1966, as had been the case in 1965, was the Republic of Korea.

CINCPAC's CY 1966 force requirements, submitted in December 1965, had contained provision for an additional ROK division and regiment. On 8 January 1966, the Secretary of State instructed the US Ambassador in Seoul to begin negotiations for these ROK forces. President Park agreed on 29 January to supply the requested forces, contingent upon approval by the ROK National Assembly, and in return the United States promised to equip this force and finance all its additional costs. As ultimately worked out between the ROK and the United States, the force augmentation included the desired infantry division and regiment, along with assorted logistic, medical, and other support-type units, for a total of 23,488 men. Added to the forces already in country, the new augmentation would raise the total ROK strength in South Vietnam to approximately 45,600. \(^{29}\)

The ROK announced the planned increase of its forces in RVN on 28 February, and the deployment began on 29 April. The United States and the ROK made no formal arrangement covering the operational control of the ROK force in RVN, but, like the

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28. (S-GP 3) SM-258-66 to Dir, J-5, 22 Mar 66; (S-GP 4) JCS 2343/764-2, 24 Jun 66; JMF 9155.3 (3 Feb 66).
ROK force deployed to RVN in 1965, the ROK troops deployed in 1966 came under the de facto control of COMUSMACV.30

In May COMUSMACV, in the preparation of his CY 1967 force requirements, called for the provision of a ROK marine division, but COMUSKOREA expressed serious reservations about the feasibility of this proposal. He believed that such a request prior to the ROK presidential election scheduled for early 1967 might result in adverse consequences for President Park and his political party. COMUSKOREA also doubted that the ROK could supply additional marine forces without an extensive expansion of the ROK Marine Corps base structure. Consequently, no further action was taken on this matter in 1966.31

Australia

Late in 1965, and again early in 1966, the United States raised with Australia the possibility of increasing its troop commitment in RVN. Despite some initial reluctance, Australia agreed in early March to augment its force. The augmentation would consist of a two-battalion task force, totalling about 4,500 personnel.32

In light of the pending troop increase, the United States and Australia negotiated a new Military Working Arrangement, replacing the 5 May 1965 Arrangement. The new Arrangement, signed on 17 March 1966, was similar to the previous one. It vested command of the Australian forces in the Commander, Australian Force, Vietnam (COMAFV), and it maintained the operational control of COMUSMACV over the Australian commander. A Logistical and Administrative Supplement and a Financial Working Arrangement continued provision for MACV logistic and administrative support for the Australian forces and for Australian reimbursement for this support.33

30. (U) ROK Government Statement on its Decision to Dispatch Additional Forces to the RVN, 28 Feb 66; (C) Msg, JCS 6292-66 to MACV, 14 Oct 66; OCJCS Bulky File 091 Vietnam Oct 66.
33. (S-NOFORN except Australia) Military Working Arrangement between Chief of the General Staff, Australian Army, and COMUSMACV, 17 Mar 66; (C-NOFORN except Australia) Logistical and Administrative Supplement to Military Working Arrangement between Australia and United States, 17 Mar 66; (S-NOFORN except Australia) Financial Working Arrangement between USMACV and AFV, 26 Mar 66; JMF 9155.3 (12 Nov 65).
The advance party of the Australian Task Force (ATF) arrived in RVN during April, and the main body followed in several increments with the deployment being completed by 5 June 1966. COMUSMACV deployed the ATF to Ba Ria, placing it under the control of CG II FIForcev. Australia requested and received US assurances that its forces would not be used in operations near the Cambodian border since Australia had diplomatic relations with Cambodia. With the arrival of the ATF in RVN, the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, which had been in Vietnam since mid-1965, returned home.

In August the United States considered approaching Australia for another commitment of forces for Vietnam. COMAFV advised COMUSMACV, however, that the Australian Government, although aware of the need for additional forces for the ATF, did not wish to raise the matter of further troops for Vietnam until after the Australian elections in November. COMAFV gave the impression that Australia would make a troop increase after the election, and this impression proved correct. On 22 December 1966, Prime Minister Holt announced that Australia would send a squadron of light bombers (B-57 Canberras), a new guided missile destroyer, and 900 more army personnel to RVN. This would raise the Australian strength to about 6,300, but these additional forces did not arrive in Vietnam until the Spring of 1967.

In early 1966 the United States sounded out New Zealand with regard to the possible deployment of an infantry battalion to South Vietnam. New Zealand, like Australia, faced an election in 1966, and although sympathetic to the US approach, the Government preferred not to introduce the question of further combat troops for Vietnam into the election year debate. At this time, although New Zealand was unwilling to supply the infantry battalion, it did bring its artillery battery (sent to Vietnam in 1965) up to strength by the addition of two 105mm
howitzers and 27 men. It also augmented its medical team at Qui Nhon with six additional men, raising the total New Zealand strength in Vietnam to 155.30

The Philippines

The Philippines contributed a 2,000-man civic action group to the Vietnam effort in 1966. The United States had suggested this move in 1965 and the Philippine Government had agreed, but the Philippine Congress had refused to approve this action. In early 1966, President Marcos again requested his Congress for authorization to send the group. To assist in the passage of the measure, "judicious use" of US MAP aid was applied in areas suggested by Marcos, including the delivery of four Swift Boats for antismuggling operations, M-14 rifles and machine guns for a constabulary battalion combat team, and equipment for three engineer battalions. The Philippine Congress passed the bill on 5 June 1966, and the Philippine Civic Action Group (PHILCAGV) began arriving in South Vietnam on 16 August.37

The PILCAGV consisted of engineer construction, medical, and rural community development units/teams with the necessary security support units. On 20 July 1966, the United States and the Philippines signed a Military Working Arrangement placing all elements and personnel of the PILCAGV under the command of the Philippines military commander (COMPHILCAGV). The Arrangement did not place COMPHILCAGV under the operational control of COMUSMACV, but it did provide for a Free World Military Assistance Policy Council (FWMAPC) consisting of the Chief, Joint General Staff, RVNAF, COMPHILCAGV, and COMUSMACV, or their representatives, to "develop and prescribe the general concept of employment of PILCAGV units . . . ." The United

States agreed that USMACV would provide all support for the Philippine force, specifically stating that this support was not reimbursable by the Philippine Government.38

Republic of China

The question of the use of Nationalist Chinese combat troops in South Vietnam arose again in 1966. In April the Commandant of the Marine Corps told the Joint Chiefs of Staff that objections to the employment of Chinese Nationalist forces in RVN normally had as their basis the "historical, traditional antipathies of the Vietnamese people for the Chinese." However, said the Commandant, Marine Corps, he had witnessed enthusiastic exchanges between prominent Vietnamese and Chinese leaders for CHINA participation in Vietnam. The Commandant believed that by "isolating the purely military consequences," great benefit could be derived from participation of the well-trained and -equipped Nationalist Chinese forces. He also stated that the "long accepted hypothesis" of Vietnamese antagonism toward such a proposal was not borne out by his observations. Consequently, he recommended that the Joint Chiefs of Staff request the preparation of a Special National Intelligence Estimate to consider both South Vietnamese and Communist Chinese reaction to the introduction of Nationalist Chinese combat troops in RVN.39

The Joint Chiefs of Staff did request the special estimate and the resulting SNIE found that there would be little popular support in South Vietnam for Nationalist Chinese participation. The SNIE added that the RVN military leaders, although concerned "to some degree" about popular reaction, would probably agree to the deployment of Chinese troops. The Estimate predicted that the Chinese Communists would interpret a GRC deployment to RVN as a significant change in US policy with potentially serious implications. It listed the following possible CHICOM reactions: increased pressure and

38. (C-NOFORN except Republic of the Philippines-GP 4) Military Working Arrangement Between the Chief of Staff, Armed Forces of the Philippines and COMUSMACV, 20 Jul 66; Financial Working Arrangement Between COMUSMACV and the Chief of Staff, Armed Forces of the Philippines, 21 Nov 66; JMF 9155.3 (12 Nov 65) sec 2.
CINCPAC, whose views were solicited by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, readily recognized that military benefits would derive from a GRC deployment, but he pointed out that the US Embassy in Saigon had reservations. According to CINCPAC, Ambassador Lodge did not believe that the introduction of GRC combat troops would cause Communist China to enter the war. It was Ambassador Lodge's opinion, however, that the traditional anti-Chinese attitude of the Vietnamese would hinder the usefulness of the Chinese troops. Moreover, the Ambassador had warned that the rest of the world would view such a deployment as an expansion of the war.

The pessimistic prognostication of the SNIE did not dissuade the Commandant of the Marine Corps. On 31 May, he informed the Joint Chiefs of Staff that, in full recognition of the military, political, and economic factors involved, he deemed it both appropriate and desirable to secure Nationalist Chinese combat forces for use in South Vietnam. He proposed that the United States request the Government of the Republic of China to provide a Marine brigade for duty with the III MAF in I CTZ.

After considering the recommendations of the Commandant, Marine Corps, and CINCPAC's views, a Joint Staff study concluded that, while the employment of Nationalist Chinese combat troops would be "militarily useful," the possible political consequences outweighed the purely military factors. Thus no further action was taken to secure Nationalist Chinese forces for employment in South Vietnam.

40. (TS-GP 1) JCS 2343/814-1, 12 May 66, same file. (TS) SNIE 10-3-66, 19 May 66.
41. (TS-GP 1) CMc-43-66, 31 May 66, Encl to JCS 2343/814-2, 6 Jun 66, JMF 9155.3 (18 Apr 66).
43. (TS-GP 1) JCS 2343/814-3, 18 Jul 66; (C) Note to Control Div, "Introduction of Additional Forces into SVN (U)," 20 Jul 66; JMF 9155.3 (18 Apr 66).
As the result of the US decision not to solicit Chinese combat troops, there was little change in the GRC commitments in RVN. At the beginning of 1966, there were 14 Nationalist Chinese political warfare advisors and two Chinese C-46s and crews in RVN. The United States did request, and the GRC supplied, two LSTs to assist in coastal shipping. These ships had been given to the GRC by the US MAP program. Chinese naval crews in civilian clothing manned the ships, but they were supported and paid by the United States.

Thailand and Spain

The only other Free World nations providing military assistance to the RVN in 1966 were Thailand and Spain. On 17 February 1966, Thailand activated the Royal Thai Military Assistance Group, Vietnam (RTMAGV). The Royal Thai Air Force contingent, that had been in Vietnam since 1964, was placed under the RTMAGV. The United States and Thailand signed a Military Working Arrangement on 23 March 1966. The Arrangement placed all Thai military units and personnel in RVN under the command of the COMRTMAGV. To assure an appropriate system of control, the arrangement also provided for a Free World Military Assistance Policy Council for the RTMAGV, composed of the Chief, Joint General Staff, RVNAF, COMRTMAGV, and COMUSMACV. As was the case with most of the other third country forces, COMUSMACV would provide logistical and administrative support for the Thai forces, but the Military Working Arrangement made no provision for Thai reimbursement for this support. By the end of 1966, Thai strength in RVN stood at 224.

The Spanish contribution consisted of a 12-man military medical unit. The Spanish Government had announced in December 1965 that it would send a medical team to Vietnam, but it was not until 9 September 1966 that the four doctors, seven nurses, and one quartermaster captain arrived in RVN.

44. (TS-NOFORN-GP 1) COMUSMACV Command History, 1966, p. 98.
45. Ibid., p. 98. (C-NOFORN except the Kingdom of Thailand-GP 4) Military Working Arrangement between COMRTMAC-V and COMUSMACV, 23 Mar 66, JMF 9155.3 (12 Nov 65). (TS-GP 1) NMCC OPSUM 1-67 (Supp.), 3 Jan 67, p. 35.
Other Suggestions for Third Country Forces

There were two other suggestions in the latter half of 1966 for the deployment of additional third country forces to Vietnam. The first was a COMUSMACV proposal, supported by Ambassador Lodge, for the formation of KANZUS—a multinational brigade force composed of Korean, Australian, New Zealand, and US forces—to assist in countering the large-scale NVN infiltration through the DMZ. But by late September, before Washington took any action on the proposal, CINCPAC advised the Joint Chiefs of Staff that KANZUS was no longer consistent with the enemy situation in ICTZ, which would now require a considerably greater force to counter the current multiple division enemy threat. As a result the proposal was shelved. 47

The second possibility was the introduction of a British Gurkha Brigade into RVN. This Nepalese unit of the British Army was currently employed in the Malaysia-Borneo area, but was expected to be phased out of the British Army soon. In early October, the Adjutant General of the British Army raised with the US Army Attache in London the question of using this Gurkha Brigade in South Vietnam, but the matter soon became academic when Britain decided not to phase out the Gurkha Brigade before 1969. 48

47. (S-GP 3) Msg, Saigon 2934 to State, 080804Z Aug 66, JCS IN 38737. (TS-GP 3) Msg, CINCPAC to JCS, 242348Z Sep 66, JCS IN 31896.