yes, but they're not that important. The Cambodians were reporting
the other day praising the Vietnamese Marines. It depends on the
officers leading.

Mr. Mollohan: Of the 70,000, how many are equipped and in the
field?

Mr. Ladd: 20,000 to 30,000. I'm just guessing. I haven't been here
long enough. There are three or four battalions and another over in the
Iron Triangle.

Mr. Mollohan: Of the 70,000, how many are not effective?
Col. Napier: How many casualties have they taken?
Mr. Ladd: I don't know yet, although I've asked. I don't think too
high. Not excessive.

Mr. Mollohan: Are there 20,000 ineffective?
Mr. Ladd: Take the example of rifle practice. Before they only got
to fire five rounds per year. Now they have to be taught not to stick
their rifles up in the air just to make a loud noise.

Mr. Montgomery: The newsmen said we're giving them close sup-
port. What is it? F4s? B52s.

Mr. Ladd: All I know is what they, the press, told me.
Mr. Montgomery: Who controls the strikes? The South Vietnamese?
Mr. Ladd: Perhaps, although French-speaking USAF pilots are
flying as FACs (forward air controllers).

Mr. Montgomery: You are an advisor to Mr. Rives (the U.S.
Charge). In Laos, our ambassador controls each bomb. Who controls
here?

Mr. Blackburn: It's not here; it's out of MACV.

Mr. Ladd: The Cambodians decide where the strikes shall be made.
The attaches here were being used by Mr. Rives as coordinators. They
now work for me with his approval.

Mr. Adair: Would you comment on the capability of the Cambodian
fighting men?

Mr. Ladd: I can't comment on the FANK. I haven't seen it in the
field. I can only speak of the Khmer Krom in the CIDVs (Civilian
Irregular Defense Groups) in South Vietnam. The students seem to
have the guts and will to fight, but I haven't been out with the battal-
ions. I hope to get the attaches out soon.

The FANK staff is OK. I think that they want to fight. They're not
sophisticated now. In six months they can probably defend themselves.
If they want to regain their lost areas, however, they'll have to build up
more. They need communications, choppers, mobility, hospitals—so,
realistically, they can't be an offensive army for some time to come.

Another factor—if the Cambodians get support in good faith from
other sources, the psychological effect can offset their rawness. The
fact the Australians will help and that Thieu has done so has helped
(in this regard). You don't hear this in the news. All the U.S. people
hear is that these people should be saved, but that other countries
just wait and watch. If this country is worth saving, do it. The timing
is all important.
There are nine Veterans' Administration representatives in South Vietnam located in the following manner: one at Tan Son Nhut for Air Force, USARV and MACV; two at the 90th Replacement Group at Long Binh; one for the Air Force at Bien Hoa; one for the Air Force at Cam Ranh Bay; one for the 22nd Replacement Group at Cam Ranh Bay; one for the Marines at Da Nang; and one for the Air Force at Da Nang. About 80% of the servicemen leaving South Vietnam have been contacted by the VA either in group meetings or individually.

There is not complete coverage of the hospitals, although the men are contacted when they are evacuated to hospitals in the States. The only exception would be servicemen evacuated out of Vietnam but not taken to hospitals in the States. The VA conducts regular briefings for men leaving which usually last 15 minutes. The men are then given an opportunity to confer with the VA representatives on an individual basis. The VA representatives receive no special training before coming to Vietnam because they do, basically, the same type of work at any other duty assignment. The VA has been in Vietnam since late 1967.

Within 48 hours after a serviceman reaches the military hospital of final destination in the United States he is contacted by a representative of the VA. If the military doctors feel the serviceman is going to be a long term total disability case, they will usually go ahead and have the man transferred to a VA hospital. If their previous judgment is borne out, the serviceman would be discharged and his severance pay worked out after four to six weeks in the VA hospital. The VA attempts to provide all servicemen with a pamphlet outlining the various VA programs before the final briefings are held in order to generate questions. These pamphlets are distributed by mail.

A serviceman with 30% disability or greater would be retired just as if he had served for twenty years. The VA always works to see that the serviceman receives the most benefits, whether it be on the basis of his retirement pay or the basis of receiving benefits from the VA. In either case, the serviceman is entitled to commissary privileges. A serviceman with 100% disability receives $400 to $450 a month.

There is more of a tendency to send servicemen to VA hospitals rather than military hospitals than there was in previous wars. A man might be sent to a VA hospital even though he was still considered to be on active duty. This is usually done in order to begin special therapy programs for injuries, such as spinal cord damage.

In some areas such as this, certain VA hospitals have better facilities than the military hospitals, although this doesn't always mean a
Serviceman would be sent to the VA hospital nearest his home. He would go where the facilities are available.

Servicemen who are wounded, patched-up and returned to their units don't always receive the VA information they should. And they are really the ones who should be contacted by the VA in order to let them know they might be eligible for partial benefits. The biggest problem for the VA representatives is securing transportation to get around South Vietnam.

The VA uses the Armed Forces radio and tv stations to broadcast messages on various VA programs in order to keep the men informed the whole time they are assigned to South Vietnam. The VA program generating the greatest number of questions is the one dealing with mobile homes.
The following points were made by Mr. Vi:

The government in South Vietnam has historically considered the press as the opposition and, as a result, there has always been a conflict between the press and government. This was true even during the Diem regime. The only exception was during the short rule of General Minh. In December 1969, the National Assembly passed a press code which set up the duties and responsibilities of the press. This code also gave the government the right to seize any issue of any newspaper it feels might contain stories damaging to the people of South Vietnam. This seizure practice results in great financial loss to the owners of the newspapers, and the reasons for which a newspaper might be seized are not spelled out in clear and concise terms.

According to the code, a newspaper can supposedly print the verbatim statements of members of the National Assembly even though these statements are in opposition to the government. The only problem is that in doing so some newspapers have been seized by the government.

Those administering the press code and making the decision as to whether or not a particular issue of a particular paper will be seized are the Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior, Minister of Information and Minister of Defense. The man who appears to have the most influence is the Minister of the Interior.

Whether or not the people of South Vietnam have freedom after the war might end will depend largely on the type government running the country.

President Thieu is a very suspicious man. He keeps a small group of relatives and long time friends around him, so he, therefore, does not receive very good advice.

President Thieu's advisors keep him isolated and he receives a great deal of false information. He worries too much about his opposition and not enough about the economy of South Vietnam. The President also publicly calls people opposed to him degrading names that are not very becoming of a man in high office.

In the beginning, student unrest was a result of the torture techniques used in the prisons. This torture is supposedly prohibited by the South Vietnam constitution. The student unrest has since become a plea for freedom in general. If South Vietnam were to have truly free and open elections, you would be able to determine the real aspirations of the students and the people of South Vietnam.

Mr. Vi wants to speak only the truth to the Select Committee and have this truth repeated in the United States. He and others opposed
to the Thieu government are not pro-Communist. Mr. Vi did work with the Communists against the French, but he now realizes that Communism is wrong. The present government behaves in such a way that it is not possible to defeat Communism. The people who get promoted in the army and the government are big-shot friends of Thieu. There is widespread corruption and contraband resulting in the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. Poor people are put in the army while the children of rich people are sent to Paris to school and escape military service. These practices are a good breeding ground for the Communist line.

The Third Force idea put forth by a Senator in the National Assembly is very unclear and Mr. Vi really can't support the concept. There is a far left and a far right, both of which are dictatorial. In between there is a great mass of people wanting democracy. Although he didn't elaborate on the statement, Mr. Vi said that through his reading of history, he finds the past histories or civilizations of America and South Vietnam to be very similar.

One difference between the United States and South Vietnam is the fact that the people of South Vietnam have been fighting against their neighbors (Chinese) for many hundreds of years, whereas the U.S. has not. People from North Vietnam are more disciplined and harder working, whereas people from South Vietnam are more easy going. There has also been a conflict between the people of North and South Vietnam for many years, dating back to the dynasties. Mr. Vi felt that former Emperor Bao Dai would be the only possibility to unite the people of North and South Vietnam. He went on to say that in the end Bao Dai would only be a figurehead to keep the people together, and someone else would actually have to run the government. He also commented that since the Communists are very stubborn, they would probably disrupt any settlement that might be reached between the two countries.

Bao Dai was forced to work for the French when they were in power or else he would have been killed. The French continue to treat deposed rulers with respect even after they fall from power, and this is something America should do. Even though the Vietnamese are trained in the ways of the French, they do not like the French. Just because Bao Dai worked for the French, this would not preclude his being able to unite the people.

Only about 50% of the people voted in the elections on Sunday (believe he was referring to the turnout in Saigon). People are no longer fearful of being caught with their voter registration card showing they did not vote. Only the Chinese, civil servants and military take the trouble to vote in order to stay in good with the government.

Most of the people who seek seats in the National Assembly are young people trying to escape the draft. Most of the candidates are also members of political parties supported by the present government. South Vietnam will not have free elections until there is honest counting of the ballots, and the Thieu government isn't allowed to label the opposition candidates as pro-Communist.

The councils elected on Sunday won't have any real power. In the provinces, they will do what the provincial chiefs want to do, and the city council in Saigon is only a debating society.
Nobody paid much attention to the elections on Sunday, even from the standpoint of honest counting of ballots because they did not consider them important. Those in opposition to the Thieu government will be paying very close attention to the next election for members of the National Assembly.

When President Kennedy announced that America would assist South Vietnam, the people were very happy and appreciative. However, the policy of the United States has been wrong in two respects: (a) The U.S. has supported governments not freely elected and (b) U.S. aid has never really reached the great mass of people.

The people of America view the war in South Vietnam as a conventional war whereas in reality it is an ideological political struggle. Whoever wins the minds of the most people will win the war. The people of Saigon hate Communism because of the terrorist attacks, but at the same time they see the Thieu government throwing people in prison and torturing them. As a result the people can't really see any hope from the two present choices.

It is true North Vietnam is using conventional warfare from the standpoint of sending troops into South Vietnam, but Mr. Vi said his previous comment dealt with what he termed the war behind the lines. The death of soldiers is useless unless you win the minds of the people at the same time.

President Thieu never bothers to explain his actions as President Nixon does. Thieu doesn't consider or reply to the opinions of the people. In America, you have the several states with their separate powers. In South Vietnam, Thieu controls all the police, military and finances, which makes him a virtual dictator.

Mr. Vi stated he believes a two-party system with a Prime Minister representing the majority party would be the best system for South Vietnam. The President should be ceremonial only. The present problem is that the people in power have used the money at their disposal to fragment parties in opposition to them.

Mr. Vi feels sure that the United States does not support President Thieu because of his methods, but if Ambassador Bunker weren't here then President Thieu wouldn't be in power. Just as if Ambassador Lodge had not been here then Ky wouldn't have had power, and if Ambassador Nolting hadn't been here then Diem would have never come to power.

Mr. Vi would hope the Select Committee would report back faithfully everything they have learned in South Vietnam. The people of South Vietnam and America have suffered together in the war and they should learn to know and understand each other better.
SELECT COMMITTEE VIETNAM FIELD TRIP TO QUI NHON AND CAM RANH BAY, RVN, JUNE 30, 1970


VISIT TO ROK FORCES

The group arrived at Qui Nhon from Tan Son Nhut Airport, Saigon, and was met by Major General Kim, Deputy Commander, Tiger Division, Republic of Korea (ROK) Army. We were then ferried by helicopters (U.S. crews) to Tiger Division Headquarters and at ROK Headquarters we were received by Lieutenant General Lee Sae Ho, Commanding General. Gen. Lee expressed his appreciation for U.S. support and said the ROK Army has always admired the U.S. Forces as their teachers. He characterized his division as one of the top notch divisions of the ROK Forces and said he is proud to participate in the fight against the communists.

Gen. Lee considers civic and psychological action as important as military action and stated that great emphasis was placed on the pacification program by ROK Forces.

The Committee was further advised: The Tiger Division arrived in Vietnam in October 1965. Since then it has expanded its responsibility three-fold, both in terms of geographic area and the population for whose defense it is responsible.

Currently it covers four provinces lying in the coastal and central regions south of Da Nang, but also includes some mountainous territory in the northern part of its Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR). Tiger Division headquarters gave an estimate of the enemy strength in all categories in its TAOR. The figures are omitted for security reason but can be characterized as being higher than the Committee expected.

Enemy activity was reported taking the following forms: efforts to cut off main roads, to destroy major facilities, to attack opposing forces, and assassination and abduction. The Division estimates that the enemy is making an effort to reduce personnel losses, increase the use of sapper teams, increase its psychological warfare programs and attempt to regain the portions of its infrastructure lost.

Gen. Lee acknowledged that he was short of airborne capability. (In fact, he must rely almost exclusively on American air.) He has a psychological warfare unit, and, from the general description of its concept of operations, it appeared to be soundly conceived and effective.

The Tiger Division reported having conducted 16 major divisional operations since deployment to Vietnam, and countless small scale operations. The last reported operation occurred between April 22 and May 8, 1970. Six battalions deployed against an enemy stronghold in Phu Yen province just outside the ROK TAOR. In this action,
270 enemy were reported KIA with two ROK personnel KIA and eight wounded. A total of 70,540 kg. of rice has been captured since 1965.

Other overall results since deployment to RVN were summarized: 14,332 enemy KIA; 3,064 prisoners taken; 5,258 ralliers returned to the allied side. The ROK Forces have lost 999 men KIA.

The ROK Division places emphasis on small unit tactical training and has also helped train the Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces.

The Committee was impressed that the Tiger Division conducts courses in the Vietnamese language for its troops as a means of strengthening mutual ties and friendships with the Vietnamese people.

Strong emphasis is placed on civic action programs. ROK Forces have built or assisted in building 918 houses and have settled more than 10,000 displaced persons. They have supported agricultural and educational development, 31 industrial projects and assisted in the building of roads, temples and churches.

The ROK troops serve one year in Vietnam, and Gen. Lee advised that most were volunteers. He stressed the importance of strict military discipline, realistic training, sound operational planning and effective civic action. He mentioned plans to further strengthen psychological warfare and pacification efforts.

The total ROK personnel in South Vietnam was stated to be 49,870. The Division has no helicopters of its own and no input into the training program for potential pilots. Apparently the U.S. has supplied some helicopters to the ROK but these are used in Korea.

Gen. Lee was not aware of any plans to change ROK troop strength in South Vietnam, but to “stick it out.” He made it quite clear, however, that if the U.S. commences a withdrawal of its forces from the ROK, ROK forces may withdraw from South Vietnam.

The only ROK troops permitted to return to Korea on R & R are those “who fight well and are decorated.” Not very many ROK enlisted personnel ask for a second tour in South Vietnam. Quite a few officers do, however, because “it helps their careers.”

The Tiger Division of the ROK is a decided and impressive asset to the allies.

Cam Ranh Bay

The Committee proceeded via helicopters and C-54 to Cam Ranh Bay where a large percentage and variety of U.S. Forces are stationed or based. Following a quick, informal briefing at the air base, we proceeded to the 483rd USAF Hospital which had a current patient load of 317 personnel that day and which is responsible for 22,000 personnel in the immediate area, plus such outlying personnel as are flown in for treatment. This medical unit is basically responsible for military and public health services in the I and II Corps areas. It is also active in the pacification program through such activities as Vietnamese civilian vaccination programs, assistance in training of civilian nurses and medical service assistance at schools and orphanages.

Civilian casualties are treated, as well as military, whether allied or VC. About 20% of the patients are Air Force personnel and about 50%, Army. The ordinary length of stay is seven to eight days.

Although housed mainly in Quonset-type buildings, the hospital facilities seemed well maintained and adequate. The medical and
administrative staffs both seemed highly qualified and highly motivated. This was corroborated through individual discussions among approximately 50 patients and Committee members.

The Committee was somewhat surprised at the large number of Vietnamese civilians employed in the area—13,800. Many of these are employees of contractors moving supplies and equipment; 870 are hired privately for laundry and maid service and other work for U.S. personnel.

The Committee toured the Cam Ranh air base. Some of the troop quarters are in pretty bad shape but are in process of renovation—often by regular base officers and enlisted personnel themselves.

The base area is hit more than any air base in Southeast Asia. There have been 24 major attacks since the first of this year, including two sapper attacks. Most of the attacks consist of rocket fire and result in relatively small losses. The objective of the attacks appears to be protracted harassment.

The Committee then visited the 504th Tactical Air Support Group base from which forward aircraft control functions are based or directed in many areas of Southeast Asia using O-1, O-2 and OV-10 aircraft. This unit was obviously "gung-ho" and proficient and effective in its missions.

Air Force base and operational commanders were uniform in their praise of the very small $412,000 A-37 attack aircraft. It can carry a surprisingly large ordnance load for its size and is very economical to operate although its range is limited.

Returning to Saigon via C-54, the Committee observed an air strike by three A-1-E aircraft at a large rubber plantation 20 miles east of Saigon.
Ambassador W. E. Colby's Statement to the Select Committee, July 1, 1970, Saigon, RVN

Pacification can best be understood as the manifestation of Vietnamese and American understanding of the Communist tactic of the People's War. That tactic was refined in China, and in Vietman from 1945 to 1954.

When South Vietnam did not collapse following the Geneva Accords of 1954 as the world had expected, the Communists resumed the application of this new and apparently quite successful tactic of war. In 1957, they began the re-infiltration of the South Vietnamese men who had gone North in 1954. These revived the clandestine networks, began the work of promulgating revolution through "armed propaganda teams" of four to five men each, and started training guerrilla forces in hidden jungle and mountain bases. This process went quite effectively. The Diem Government had developed a reasonably effective administration, was beginning to build an army and the economy of the South was reviving in a substantial fashion. The Diem Government did not, however, develop an active political base nor an effective police force. As a result, the first or organizational effort made by the Communists moved without substantial opposition at the level it aimed.

By late 1959, it was time to move to the second classic stage of the People's War, the guerrilla, designed to erode the authority and presence of the government from the countryside and surround and isolate the urban centers. Again this process went quite effectively. The government began to increase its armed forces, but in addition to the other failings listed above, a new gap in its defenses became obvious, that of territorial or local security forces which at that time were almost completely ineffective. As a result, the guerrilla waged by the Communists also proved quite successful and, combined with the collapse of the Diem Government from internal political problems, caused the Communists to move to the third classic stage: the offensive.

The offensive was launched in late 1964 when the first ethnic North Vietnamese troop units, battalions, regiments, and, later, divisions, began moving down from North Vietnam to join the conflict and make the final assault on the centers of government power. This would have been successful by 1966, but the arrival of the United States combat forces in 1965 blocked this third stage, or level, of the People's War. In addition, over the following years, the Vietnamese and the Americans began to put into practice some of the ideas which had been debated about ways to defend against a People's War, especially at the guerrilla and organizational levels. In 1967, a constitution was adopted and an elected government took office. CORDS was established to integrate into one effort the different military and civilian agencies working in Vietnam. General Abrams headed a committee to improve the Regional and Popular Forces to provide territorial security against the guerrillas.
In mid-1967, a reassessment of the situation was made by the Communists in Hanoi. It was clear that their regular force assault had been stopped by the American forces. It was also clear that steps were being taken by the Vietnamese government to build up its strength at the other levels of the People's War. The future did not look as promising as it might have. As a result, the decision was made in Hanoi to launch a major main force effort, to seize and hold the centers of government power, to generate a mass uprising and support and to shatter the GVN and ARVN. This attack took place at Tet 1968 and achieved a strategic psychological victory. However it did not achieve the tactical objectives stated above. The Communists resumed the attack in May and again in August of 1968, with less impact on each occasion. They followed this by reversion to the “high point” strategy of a day or two of intense effort each month, primarily characterized by attacks by fire at minimum cost to the Communists. The significant characteristic of this effort was its heavy focus on regular or main force tactics and its corresponding subordination of the other levels of activity in a People's War, the guerrilla and organizational.

The Tet attack had the effect on the GVN of accelerating the application of some of the newer programs designed to fight the People’s War at its other levels. National mobilization was decreed and a vigorous program was pressed to improve the territorial forces, the RF and PF, through issuance of M-16s, a special training effort by US mobile advisory teams, and a substantial expansion in strength from 300,000 in early 1968 to 500,000 current strength. The People’s Self Defense Force was started and a strong effort made by the government to involve as many of its citizens as possible in this unpaid, part-time effort to defend their own communities and families with weapons furnished by the government (now totalling some 350,000 weapons for over a million “Combat PSDF” members, with an additional indefinite figure of “Support PSDF”—women, children and older supporters). The Phoenix program was begun to identify and counteract the political apparatus which directs and controls the Communist effort in South Vietnam.

In late 1968, all these programs were integrated into the GVN’s “Accelerated Pacification Campaign,” designed to move again into the countryside in a methodical way and recapture many of the territories which had been abandoned and left to the enemy in the wake of the Tet attacks. This campaign also integrated into one overall effort the various programs related to pacification, to include territorial security, internal security, local political development, the Chieu Hoi or returnee program, the refugee program, information and the revival of the rural economy.

The enemy did not contest the expansion of pacification in early 1969. Perhaps he did not credit it as likely to achieve anything. However it did so, and by mid-1969 the enemy became aware that it presented a substantial threat to his long-term hopes. As a result, another assessment was made and COSVN Resolution 9, and later 14, called for the strategy of protracted war in South Vietnam, matched by a special effort to build the “base of Socialism” in North Vietnam, a doctrine promoted originally by Trung Chinh.

Nothing particular happened as a result of these new directives until well into 1970. On the government side, there was a tendency at the
end of the highly successful 1969 to "coast" and the curve of improve­
ment of pacification flattened. In March, the indication of the new
tactic on the Communist side became clear through additional attacks
on outposts, increased terrorism, etc. This increased to a high level
in April, dropped back somewhat in May, and by end-June will proba­
bly show some further minor decline, possibly indicating that the
new enemy effort has been, in essence, contained. President Thieu
has recently completed a series of meetings designed to energize
the officials throughout the country to new efforts in pacification during
the remainder of 1970, to include special efforts on security (especially
PSDF), information and popular participation in economic planning
and development.

The state of the war today, then, is that the enemy has tried to
increase his attacks on pacification to overcome the very substantial
advantage the government gained by its successful program during
1969. The additional strength developed during 1969, however, as a
result of the new focus of the government's effort over the past several
years, is such that the enemy faces a considerably greater obstacle
than he did in prior years in territorial security forces, PSDF, Phoenix,
elected governments, etc. The Vietnamese may not "live happily
ever after" and will have to fight for their security against the enemy's
protracted war, but it does appear that they are developing the
strength and the knowledge of the tactics necessary to fend off this
reversion by the enemy to the "People's War." The confusion brought
into the enemy camp by the successful operations against the sanctu­
taries in Cambodia will be another factor weakening his protracted
effort.

Over the years, the GVN and US started the war by fighting a
military effort and were outdistanced by an enemy fighting a People's
War tactic. Especially during 1968, the enemy adopted the military
approach and dropped the People's War levels of attack which were
picked up instead by the government forces. The balance then has
shifted to the government, but the GVN has learned to fight it and is
developing the capability of sustaining it on a Vietnamized basis as
US forces are gradually withdrawn.
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