FEAR OF SOVIET THREAT

Ambassador Lodge. Well, the view in the Eisenhower administration and the President himself and, I think, Secretary Dulles and the State Department was that, while the Soviet Union might not have been as strong as it is today, it was certainly strong enough and big enough to bring about a very disorderly and dangerous situation. They certainly thought that.

When it came to the Soviet invasion of Hungary and there was such a tremendous demand to go in and save Hungary, President Eisenhower made the decision not to send U.S. troops into Hungary because he thought that that was the thing that the Soviet Government felt so strongly about that they would fight, and that you could not get them out of Hungary in any lesser way. You couldn't do it by negotiation or by way of the other more pacific methods.

FEAR OF CHINESE INTERVENTION IN VIETNAM

Mr. Wolff. In the same area, Mr. Secretary, when we come back to the question—here we were told, knowing that you are one of the dissenting voices on Vietnam—we are told that continued pressure upon the North Vietnamese at the time would bring in the Chinese. Here again, there was a question as to whether or not we should proceed, whether we should bomb Hanoi, whether we should close the ports, and the like.

Was there any sort of discussion in this fashion in your era?

Ambassador Lodge. I was not in Washington, which is where the policy was made. I was carrying out policy in Vietnam.

Mr. Wolff. I was addressing this to Mr. Ball.

Ambassador Lodge. He can answer that question better than I can.

Mr. Ball. There was a great deal of discussion about the possibility of triggering some kind of Chinese reaction—one has to recall the circumstances of the time. This was very shortly after the Korean war. A long time has elapsed since then, but in 1964 and 1965, it was a very short time after the Korean war.

Furthermore, it was a time when many people still believed that the North Vietnamese were in effect operating as extensions or surrogates for China, extensions of the power of Peking.

There was concern that we might repeat the mistake of the Yalu River, that to get too near the Chinese border with our offensive weapons might give the Chinese the feeling that they were in danger—they have a pathological concern for preserving buffer zones historically—and that we might again have a recurrence of the old nightmare of Chinese forces appearing over the hills as they did in Korea.

It is a little hard to recreate that feeling this late in the day. But at the time the cultural revolution was in progress. There was chaos in China. No one knew whether China was an expansionist power or wasn't.

Mr. Wolff. What I am getting at, Mr. Ball, is the fact that you voiced objections to our position in Vietnam. Was this something that came about gradually or were you of that conviction at the outset?
IMPLICATIONS OF TAYLOR-ROSTOW RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Ball. In 1961, when General Taylor and Mr. Rostow came back from their mission to investigate the situation in Vietnam, I told President Kennedy that I thought it would be a great mistake if we accepted the recommendations of the Taylor-Rostow mission and increased the number of advisers from the 600 which were permitted by the accords that had been signed at the time of the ending of the Indochinese War in an open-ended manner. I said to the President: "I can only tell you that I think we will have 300,000 Americans in the field in 5 years time, and it will be a disaster." And he said in flamboyant, but very direct, language that I couldn't be more wrong. He said to me, in fact, as I recall, "You are crazier than hell. Nothing of that kind is going to happen."

Well, I was wrong. It wasn't 300,000. It was 550,000. I had felt from the beginning that our adventure in Vietnam was a mistake. I never saw it as parallel to the situation in Korea. I felt that we were trying to move into a very ambiguous situation where the element of indigenous revolt was quite as strong as the element of external aggression, and where we were inevitably, going to appear as the imperialist, colonialist power simply by putting white soldiers in Vietnam, at least that was the kind of propaganda that could be made against us. It was a situation where we couldn't win, since there was not sufficiently strong, solid political base on which we could rest our massive military power. That was the position, as Ambassador Lodge will recall, I urged on President Johnson beginning in early fall of 1964. Of course, Cabot, you were in Saigon at that time, and I think you only got just an echo, so to speak, since we conducted this as a very discreet debate.

I say with great respect to President Johnson and the others, that they tolerated my dissent and, in fact, encouraged it as an expression of view which they thought I was entitled to urge. It was, I think, a useful contribution to the debate and from time to time I had the feeling that I won a significant point or two. At least I slowed the escalation down a little bit.

Mr. Wolfe. Yesterday we spoke to General Taylor about just this question because part of the operation, as it has been called by many people, of Vietnam is having an effect upon current relations and will have an effect upon the future.

What we want to try to do here in the committee is to try to find some of the answers to the questions that still puzzle us, THE OVERTHROW OF DIEM

We talked yesterday about the question of Diem particularly and the situation that developed.

On August 23, a telegram was sent to make detailed plans as to how we might bring about Diem's replacement. Now, it is understood, Mr. Lodge, that you proceeded to get in touch with the generals to bring about Diem's overthrow. Who did you believe was responsible? Who was responsible for that telegram?
Ambassador Lodge. You get a telegram—if you are in Saigon, you get a telegram from the State Department. It is signed either Rusk or Ball, and that doesn't mean that they wrote it.

Mr. Wolff. Then it was canceled a week later.

Ambassador Lodge. It was canceled a week later, and in the Pentagon Papers they don't put in the fact that it was canceled a week later, and they give the impression that when the actual coup did come on November 1, it was under the provisions of that telegram. That is unfair to President Kennedy. The telegram was canceled a week later, and, when the coup did come it was a thoroughly, to use Mr. Ball's phrase, a thoroughly indigenous operation, Vietnamese in origin and Vietnamese in every respect.

Mr. Wolff. But there was a point, from the research that we did, that you cabled back Dean Rusk at the time saying something about the fact that we are launched on a course from which there is no respectable turning back on the overthrow of the Diem government.

Ambassador Lodge. I mean respectable in the sense that, if you send a telegram telling the man in Saigon to overthrow Diem, then a week later you tell him not to, I don't think that makes you look terribly smart.

Mr. Wolff. Were we right in that first decision?

Ambassador Lodge. We were wrong. I think the very best opinion was that we were wrong to send the telegram instructing me to bring about the overthrow of Diem, and I think the opinion of everybody at the top of the U.S. Government in Washington, from the President and Secretary Rusk and Under Secretary Ball and Assistant Secretary Harriman, and, I think, all those people thought the telegram was a mistake.

I have some ideas as to who the individual was, but it is just theory.

Mr. Wolff. What is your theory?

Ambassador Lodge. I am not going to tell you. [Laughter.]

Mr. Wolff. Would you like to comment on that, Mr. Ball?

ORIGINS OF "OVERTHROW DIEM" TELEGRAM

Mr. Ball. Yes; I remember the telegram very well. The telegram was sent at a time when I was Acting Secretary. Secretary Rusk was in New York, I believe, in connection with the United Nations at that moment. What time of year was that?

Ambassador Lodge. August.

Mr. Ball. He was in New York for some purpose and President Kennedy was at Hyannisport and Mr. Harriman and Mr. Hilsman brought me the telegram which they had drafted and asked me if I would approve it.

I wasn't totally unsympathetic with the idea. Let me say at that time the Diem regime was committing some actions which were very difficult to condone, if they were an ally of the United States. There were serious problems with the Buddhist repression and the sacrifices, the immolations which were taking place.

I said: "Well, this is obviously a matter of very great importance and I am not going to send a telegram on my own responsibility," so I telephoned President Kennedy in Hyannisport and I read him the
telegram, and he said: “Well, if you and Rusk feel this is the right thing to do, why, go ahead.”

And I called Secretary Rusk and found him in New York, gave him a very brief view of the telegram, and he gave, in effect, his assent to having it sent out. I don’t think he was enthusiastic about it. It was a problem of getting authorization from Secretary McNamara, who wasn’t there, but Mr. Gilpatric, the Deputy Secretary, was acting and we got word to him down at his estate in Virginia. In fairness to him I found out later that the form of the message as it was: “The President and Dean Rusk and Ball and so on have approved this. Would you approve it?” Under those circumstances he said: “yes”. I am not sure what his opinion would have been if he had had an opportunity to express it directly.

RELATION OF TELEGRAM TO SUBSEQUENT COUP

We should have been very clear as to what was going to happen before we took action against Diem, but I have the impression—and I would like Ambassador Lodge to confirm it one way or the other—that it is not at all what precipitated the coup, as the Ambassador suggests. I mean it occurred anyway.

To try to create a theory of causation between that particular telegram, which was one of a long series of telegrams that Saigon was getting from Washington and what actually happened, is a mistake. I don’t think that triggered it. I think it would have happened. The situation was becoming intolerable and there was an enormous lot of dissidence and dissent.

Ambassador Lodge. People were being hauled in and tortured and religious people were burning themselves alive and there was a tremendous state of upheaval, psychological upheaval, and in a country like Vietnam it doesn’t occur to people that an election is a good way to bring about a change. That is not in their traditions at all.

Usually when whoever is the dictator has been in power too long and he gets cruel and he gets arbitrary, then they all try to organize a coup and go in and get rid of him.

This coup which did overthrow Diem came on the first of November, which was almost 2 months after the telegram of August 23.

It was purely Vietnamese in origin, and it was carried out by the Vietnamese, using techniques that none of us know how to use. We know a thing or two in this country about running for election, but we don’t know anything about putting on a coup the way they do.

Mr. Wolfe. Pretty good for us that we don’t.

Ambassador Lodge. Contrary to what has been said, they didn’t tell me when the coup was coming until that morning, and they were so clever, they had coup plots organized among 10 or 12 different groups, and Diem told me—he said: “There are so many coup rumors that I don’t know which one is the real one.”

I saw him at noon and I went home for lunch and I was sitting having lunch at half past 1, and then I heard the machinegun fire, the bombs being dropped, and all that.

Well, now, it didn’t have the remotest connection with the telegram of August 23, which was canceled, and let me say that I had and I have the highest regard for every one of the men that were involved
in that, and you could not possibly pin the coup on that telegram, and I think it is a pity that in the "Pentagon Papers" that fact isn't made clear. It is unfair.

Mr. Wolff. I am glad that we were able to make it clear here today.

Ambassador Lodge. Well, Secretary Ball's statement today contains information I had never heard before until now. You know, when you are in Saigon at the end of the line, you don't—you can't possibly know all the Washington detail.

Mr. Wolff. Well, thank you gentlemen. I have exceeded my time limit. Mr. Guyer?

Mr. Guyer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ambassador, good to see you. Nice memories back in Ohio. Secretary Ball. Nice to have you both here.

We are sorry for the smallness of the committee, but you are getting a great latitude in reception over and above that.

I am curious. Post mortems don't serve a lot of good purposes. There is an old epitaph that doctors' mistakes are often found safely tucked beneath the ground, and I am sure that history doesn't always record activities quite that way.

One could sit here and talk about the four presidents that were involved in Vietnam, three deceased and one in exile, and I suppose we would disagree 1,000 percent as to what contributed to what.

I think that one of the things this committee wants to do is to know how in the future we can have more wisdom than in the past.

TROOP ESCALATION IN VIETNAM

I heard a Congressman who has been here many, many years say not long ago that President Johnson was totally in the dark as to the ultimate effect of escalating troops and admitted that it did not work out.

Would you gentlemen agree with that?

Ambassador Lodge. Well, I agree we should try to learn the lessons from this tragic experience that we have had in Vietnam. When you think of all the people who have been killed, Americans and Vietnamese, it really, really is a tragic thing.

To me, one very important lesson is the necessity to have the support and the understanding of American public opinion for military effort of any size. I hope we have learned that, and not to put our troops into a conflict when the people here at home don't understand and don't approve of what has been done, which, I am sure, was the state of mind of the public.

PURPOSE OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM

Mr. Guyer. Weren't the real steps of our involvement in Vietnam—first in an advisory capacity and then troop presence and then finally escalation—wasn't the real reason being to contain communism at that point?

Now, it never was agreed that it was everybody's business, was it? As I recall the Charter of the United Nations, one of the objectives was to act as a group against a member of the human family who didn't deserve, by conduct, to be a member of the human family or who at least acted in such a way that they should be reprimanded.
Ambassador Lodge. The words of the charter are the suppression of acts of aggression.

Mr. Guyer. Didn't it also allow military use and force if that was necessary?

Ambassador Lodge. Oh, yes.

Mr. Guyer. How many member nations of the United Nations felt as we did, or took part in the involvement in Vietnam?

LACK OF SUPPORT AT U.N. FOR INTERVENTION IN VIETNAM

Ambassador Lodge. It was never brought before the United Nations. The Soviet Union and North Vietnamese were opposed to bringing it before the United Nations. I remember very, very sharp focus head count that was made at the U.N. when Ambassador Goldberg was the U.S. representative. They couldn’t find 12 votes to have the United Nations take up the Vietnam question.

Another thing was the fear of the effect on France of a Communist—very successful Communist invasion of South Vietnam. They were afraid of the strength of communism in France, so the question was considered much more from a point of its effect on Western Europe than from the standpoint of the effect in the Far East.

You may remember that in 1945, when the war had just stopped, General Gracey of the British Army, with a battalion of Gurkhas, was landed in Saigon to pave the way to bring the French Army back.

That is not generally known, but it shows the way the people were thinking.

Mr. Guyer. Doesn’t it also show, Mr. Ambassador, that we often don’t really understand the minds of our neighbors abroad? As Will Rogers one time said in talking to a Chinese—He said: “Your wheels squeak.” And the Chinese said: “Well, the squeak is cheaper than the oil.”

MISREADING VIETNAMESE SITUATION

That is oversimplified, but I do think that we have totally misread, and, if you go back into Vietnam, as you gentlemen know, they had known hardly anything except aggression and occupation, whether it was the French or the Japanese or the Chinese Communists. They had been through all that.

So we misread that. It was one war that few crowds ever stood en masse to welcome the troops home. As I recall, there was no great ground swell of relief and gratitude except the families of military persons.

Ambassador Lodge. They haven’t got the same traditions that we have. The people of Western European—all the different Western European stocks have a tradition of democracy, different forms of democracy, but out there they are Confucianists and a little boy is taught when he is a child that the ruler deserves respect and you have got to do what he says and never make fun of him and never have cartoons about him or anything as long as he is brave, and unselfish, and intelligent. Now, the minute he gets stupid and cruel, then you kill him and you go on and get another one. It is a different tradition.

Mr. Wolffe, Mr. Yatson.
PARIS PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Yatrom. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ambassador Lodge, at the time of the Paris peace accords when they were signed in 1973, you were quoted as saying that you doubted the possibility of achieving a negotiated end to the Vietnam war.

Now, looking at the development subsequent to the accords, do you think the United States was wrong to accept a negotiated settlement? Was there any possibility of achieving any better terms, and what criteria should we use to evaluate such settlements?

Ambassador Lodge. I have thought that we got about the best deal we could get, considering the situation, and we ourselves weren't defeated, but we certainly hadn't won, and I thought it was about as good as we could get.

What is your other question?

Mr. Yatrom. The other question was—What criteria should be used to evaluate such settlements. I guess it is rather a broad question.

Ambassador Lodge. Well, we got the return of a certain number of prisoners. We were able to get all our troops out without some sort of a disaster, which was no small achievement, and, although we did not get a peace, we did not get a settlement, we did not even get a cease-fire. Yet we got less fire, and less fire is better than more fire, it seems to me.

Mr. Yatrom. Thank you.

Ambassador Lodge. So I was surprised that Henry Kissinger did as well as he did, I think he is a very remarkable gentleman and he has accomplished things in this tough business that I don't think anybody else could have accomplished.

Mr. Yatrom. Thank you. We would like to follow up later on this when we return.

Mr. Guvier. One thing before we leave, Mr. Chairman. We are going over to vote on the Turkish issue. How would you vote if you were going over there? [Laughter.]

Ambassador Lodge. Turkey and Greece are our allies in NATO. They are very, very important, and I would vote to support them. [Laughter.]

Mr. Guvier. That isn't quite the question.

Ambassador Lodge. I would vote to let it go through for Turkey.

Mr. Wolff. Mr. Ball, I am sure that Mr. Gilman, who has joined us, wants to ask some questions as well. Unfortunately, as a result of the situation that has transpired— that of the vote plus the fact that the full committee must meet here to discuss the situation on Jordan aid at the moment—the committee will be called into full session very shortly—at 5 o'clock. It will be impossible now.

We will go over there to vote. If we take a recess, it will be about 15 minutes. We would have probably 10 or 15 minutes more. I don't want to take your time, however. You have been very gracious in giving us your time. We are very appreciative of the far-reaching statements that both of you gentlemen have made in looking into the future.

Unfortunately, circumstances prevent our going further, but we hope that we can send some additional questions to you.
We thank you again for helping us focus on our future foreign policy. The committee stands in recess until Wednesday. The subcommittee stands in recess until Wednesday, at 3 o'clock.

[Whereupon, at 4:25 p.m., the subcommittee adjourned, to reconvene at 3 p.m., Wednesday, July 30, 1975.]

[The responses to the questions submitted to Ambassador Lodge follow:]

Responses to Questions Submitted to Ambassador Lodge

Question. What are the critical areas and issues of greatest priority for a foreign policy during the next ten years?
Answer. It is natural to think first of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and between the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Japan, and Western Europe. But any area can quite suddenly become dangerous—as Vietnam did—and go to the top of the priority list. We are asking for trouble if we "freeze" a list of critical areas and issues in our minds. It is virtually impossible to look ten years ahead. Who saw World War I in 1904 or World War II and the rise of Hitler in 1929?

Question. How do we define our "vital" interests? Do you feel our present commitments need a reassessment? Which ones? Under what conditions would you support a U.S. "intervention"? Where do you foresee this?
Answer. We should constantly reassess our various foreign policies—every day. President Eisenhower used to say that the plans that you make are not very important—and that you probably won't use them when the trouble comes—but that the act of constantly planning is vitally important. A nation with a long history of friendliness to the United States can suddenly change. "Intervention" must be decided separately in each case in the light of the circumstances. In a situation in which an apparently strong argument can be made for intervention, we must always stop and ask the cost because something which appears desirable, all things being equal, can cost too much—in life, in treasure, and in spiritual distress. Stalin is reliably reported to have said he would stop fighting—leave Hitler alone—when he recovered Russia's pre-war boundaries. This thought disturbed Eisenhower as late as June, 1944. The cost for the Russians had simply become too much.

Question. Keeping in mind the "secret war" in Laos and the Cambodia bombing raids, is it possible for the United States to conduct an "open" foreign policy that is also an effective one? Do you feel that a lack of openness in the conduct of foreign policy has a serious adverse effect on our democratic process?
Answer. The specifics of foreign relations are not only complicated; in many cases they are only known to a few insiders. While there has been over-classification of government papers and too much secrecy in many cases, it is also often in our best interest to keep some matters secret. We are, after all, in a competitive—not to say, adversarial—relationship with other powers where free speech is unknown and where speed and secrecy can give them an advantage. This is a real dilemma, because free speech is at the heart of our system. The problem is not solved simply by saying that the public has a right to know. The public also has a right to be protected against the dangers caused by indiscriminate revelation of official secrets.

Question. How do you view the large scale vending of arms to the Third World nations—with particular reference to such recent wars as the India-Pakistan and the Greece-Turkey in which both sides are fighting with American weapons?
Answer. Countries prefer to buy our military articles, because they are of high quality, well-designed, well-made and dependable. We also have very efficient supporting systems—training and logistics. And many nations do not fear involvement with us as they fear it with others. Also nations want to be associated with us on other matters of mutual interest. Under Secretary Sisco told the House Committee on International Relations on June 10, 1975 that the U.S. "is dealing with the arms supply business in the context of an overall and carefully developed policy concept. The fact is that foreign relations are a whole piece. We cannot pick up elements in which we feel comfortable and ignore others. For every country in the world its ability to defend itself is the most important thing to its national survival. If we do not take this into account
in our relations with that country, the totality of our relationships with that country will suffer as will our political and economic objectives.” In his statement before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations of June 18, 1975 Mr. Thomas Stern, Deputy Director, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, says that “a good case can and should be made that the risk of war is increased in situations when a power imbalance exists, where the stronger power is tempted to take advantage of the weaker or where one power or the other attempts markedly to alter the power relationship.” It is a mistake to take a black and white view of such a very subtle and complicated matter. Each case must be decided on its merits in the light of conditions at the time.

Question. What can the United States do to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons among Third World nations?

Answer. Secretary Kissinger in his U.N. General Assembly speech of September 23, 1974 said that “the avoidance of further nuclear proliferation is increasingly a matter of political restraint, which has to be reinforced by laws. The technical barriers to nuclear proliferation are gradually crumbling and where export controls are helpful and even essential we have to assume that their effectiveness will diminish in the years ahead.” He pointed out that while several of the industrial countries like West Germany, Italy, Japan and Canada could produce nuclear arsenals of great power within a short time, they have taken clear political action to indicate they do not intend to pursue that course. They took political action by signing or ratifying the non-proliferation treaty and by public statement. Clearly the United States can encourage nations which exercise this political restraint.

Question. How do you view the emerging nationalism in Asia? By what standard do we start normalization of relations with Vietnam? Cambodia?

Answer. As far as the new nations in Asia are concerned, I believe we should look to the future and that our attitude toward them should be influenced by their conduct toward their neighbors and their attitude toward us.

Question. How should the United States deal with recent advances of communism in southern Europe—with particular reference to Portugal and Italy?

Answer. The United States has indicated that we would be ready to give economic assistance to a democratic Portugal. This seems to me about as much as we can do at this time as regards Portugal and Italy.

Question. How should the United States balance her moral commitment to Israel with her economic interest in Arab oil?

Answer. The United States is powerful, but not all powerful. I do not doubt that the United States, through diplomatic negotiations, will work hard to get the best possible reconciliation of all the factors involved and will remain faithful to our moral commitments.

Question. What is your view of the Congressional role in future foreign policy?

Answer. Congress under the Constitution are the long range policy makers. We have recently seen illustrations of the influence and power of Congress as regards Vietnam. To exercise maximum influence, its members must “do their homework.” This means a lot of work. I believe the vast majority of our Congressmen are highly industrious.
STATEMENT OF HON. ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG

I commend this Subcommittee for conducting these hearings on United States foreign policy in the future.

The aftermath of Vietnam plainly necessitates a reassessment of our foreign policy—its methodology, goals, and objectives.

Recent American foreign policy has been characterized by excessive secrecy, personalism, flexibility, maneuver, and power politics.

President Nixon's active personal role, coupled with the more widely recognized import of Dr. Kissinger's persona, made the period of Nixon's administration one of extraordinary secretiveness and personalism in foreign policy. It was a period when Congressional, bureaucratic and nongovernmental perspectives and interests were, to a considerable extent, excluded from events by the sheer force of the involvement of the President and Dr. Kissinger's great popularity and diplomatic successes.

Our future foreign policy should be more open, less personal, and less secretive. It is to be welcomed, rather than condemned, that Congress is reasserting its constitutional role in foreign affairs. This will result in a less secretive and less personal foreign policy.

Moreover, an extroverted President Ford, as distinguished from an introverted President Nixon, is bound to affect the future style of our diplomacy and contribute to more openness.

This is not to say that Dr. Kissinger can easily lay aside his propensity for super-secret negotiations; nor is it to say that I believe that every incoming diplomatic cable ought to be made public the next day.

Democratic diplomacy does not require open covenants openly arrived—a Wilsonian concept never totally possible of realization.

The diplomacy of a democracy does mandate, however, at the very least, open covenants secretly arrived at.

Part of the unease about the notable achievements of Dr. Kissinger in the Middle East and elsewhere arises from evidence of understandings and commitments not made public. I can see good reason why, when matters are in the negotiating track, secrecy is required; I can see little reason why, when negotiations are completed and agreements or commitments are made, they should not be disclosed for congressional and public scrutiny. Every agreement, of course, may not reach the magnitude of a treaty, which constitutionally requires senatorial approval. But what the Constitution does not command, it may inspire; and our Constitution inspires the open disclosure imperative to the functioning of the democratic process.

Another aspect of recent American foreign policy is that, in important aspects, it has been marked by flexibility and willingness to break free of the burden of the past.

This is clearly the case with China, whose well publicized and even cordial correctness has wisely replaced festering enmity as the official American position. SALT also may be said to be a manifestation of a willingness to deal with reality and genuine interests instead of slogans.

Flexibility is clearly useful and to be commended, but there is the ever-present danger that undue flexibility may lead to a policy of maneuver. It is of the essence of a good foreign policy that maneuver should not be employed at the expense of either credibility or principle. And certainly maneuver must not take place for the art of maneuvering or to win public approval of activism in foreign policy regardless of its substance.

A pervasive aspect of recent foreign policy is reliance upon “big power” politics. This “realpolitik” reflects the dream of an International Utopia in which a few...
great states would use their power to settle the affairs of the world, much as the major powers of Europe did in the century after the Congress of Vienna. But we should remember that when the rule of the Concert of Europe finally fell apart, world war ensued. This happened in great part because, in large areas of the world, the international order of the Nineteenth Century did not redress grievances, but merely submerged them—until in our own century they erupted in revolution and world war.

Our future foreign policy should embrace in a spirit of friendship and respect all races and cultures of the world—all nations, large or small. It would follow the wise counsel of President George Washington in his Farewell Address, to “observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all.”

And our future foreign policy should give priority to the real troubles of mankind: poverty, inequality, and the deprivation of rights.

And we must beware of accepting a philosophy of international affairs in such a way that morality and power become antithetical. Power not ruled by morality is a menace; morality not served by power tends to be a delusion.

It must always be remembered that our nation derives its great influence in the world not only from great physical power, but also from the fact that our basic law and our national outlook are premised on the equality and dignity of all persons.

There are many lessons to be derived from the tragedy of Vietnam, but perhaps the most pervasive one is that the people of this country want our foreign policy to be conducted in a constitutional manner and our government to be morally as well as politically right in the conduct of foreign affairs.

No American president and no Congress can any longer assume that Americans will, as they often have done in the past, adhere to the notion that: “Our country . . . may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong.”

This slogan is no longer on the masthead of the Chicago Tribune. It is no longer on the masthead of the American people. They are patriotic but not jingoistic.

Our country will henceforth have to be right in its foreign policy and commitments—right in assessing where our real interests lie—right in a moral, as well as in a geopolitical, sense.

In no other way can our future foreign policy command the consent of the governed. And as recent events have demonstrated, consent of the governed is indispensable to a viable foreign policy.
SOUTHEAST ASIA COLLECTIVE DEFENSE TREATY

Treaty and Protocol signed at Manila September 8, 1954; Ratification advised by the Senate of the United States of America February 1, 1955; Ratified by the President of the United States of America February 4, 1955; Ratification of the United States of America deposited with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines February 19, 1955; Proclaimed by the President of the United States of America March 2, 1955; Entered into force February 19, 1955.

Treaty and Protocol ratified by Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Republic of the Philippines, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

NOTE.—By protocol the parties to the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty designated the States of Cambodia and Laos and the free territory under the jurisdiction of the State of Vietnam for the purposes of Article IV of the Treaty. Subsequently, Cambodia indicated disinterest in the protection of the Southeast Asia treaty. Also, in the Geneva Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos, the Royal Government of Laos declared that it will not "recognize the protection of any alliance or military coalition, including SEATO" and the United States and any other nations agreed to "respect the wish of the Kingdom of Laos not to recognize the protection of any alliance or military coalition, including SEATO."

The Parties to this Treaty,

Recognizing the sovereign equality of all the Parties,

Reiterating their faith in the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments,

Reaffirming that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, they uphold the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and declaring that they will earnestly strive by every peaceful means to promote self-government and to secure the independence of all countries whose peoples desire it and are able to undertake its responsibilities,

Desiring to strengthen the fabric of peace and freedom and to uphold the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, and to promote the economic well-being and development of all peoples in the treaty area.

Intending to declare publicly and formally their sense of unity, so that any potential aggressor will appreciate that the Parties stand together in the area, and

Desiring further to coordinate their efforts for collective defense for the preservation of peace and security,

Therefore agree as follows:

ARTICLE I

The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

ARTICLE II

In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack and to prevent and counter subversive activities directed from without against their territorial integrity and political stability.
ARTICLE III

The Parties undertake to strengthen their free institutions and to cooperate with one another in the further development of economic measures, including technical assistance, designed both to promote economic progress and social well-being and to further the individual and collective efforts of governments toward these ends.

ARTICLE IV

1. Each Party recognizes that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the Parties or against any State or territory which the Parties by unanimous agreement may hereafter designate, would endanger its own peace and safety, and agrees that it will in that event act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. Measures taken under this paragraph shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations.

2. If, in the opinion of any of the Parties, the inviolability or the integrity of the territory or the sovereignty or political independence of any Party in the treaty area or of any other State or territory to which the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article from time to time apply is threatened in any way other than by armed attack or is affected or threatened by any fact or situation which might endanger the peace of the area, the Parties shall consult immediately in order to agree on the measures which should be taken for the common defense.

3. It is understood that no action on the territory of any State designated by unanimous agreement under paragraph 1 of this Article or on any territory so designated shall be taken except at the invitation or with the consent of the government concerned.

ARTICLE V

The Parties hereby establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. The Council shall provide for consultation with regard to military and any other planning as the situation obtaining in the treaty area may from time to time require. The Council shall be so organized as to be able to meet at any time.

ARTICLE VI

This Treaty does not affect and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations of any of the Parties under the Charter of the United Nations or the responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. Each Party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any other of the Parties or any third party is in conflict with the provisions of this Treaty, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagement in conflict with this Treaty.

ARTICLE VII

Any other State in a position to further the objectives of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the area may, by unanimous agreement of the Parties, be invited to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines shall inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

ARTICLE VIII

As used in this Treaty, the "treaty area" is the general area of Southeast Asia, including also the entire territories of the Asian Parties, and the general area of the Southwest Pacific not including the Pacific area north of 21 degrees 30 minutes north latitude. The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, amend this Article to include within the treaty area the territory of any State acceding to this Treaty in accordance with Article VII or otherwise to change the treaty area.

ARTICLE IX

1. This Treaty shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. Duly certified copies thereof shall be transmitted by that government to the other signatories.
2. The Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall notify all of the other signatories of such deposit.

3. The Treaty shall enter into force between the States which have ratified it as soon as the instruments of ratification of a majority of the signatories shall have been deposited, and shall come into effect with respect to each other State of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.

**ARTICLE X**

This Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely, but any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall inform the Government of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.

**ARTICLE XI**

The English text of this Treaty is binding on the Parties, but when the Parties have agreed to the French text thereof and have so notified the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, the French text shall be equally authentic and binding on the Parties.

**UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

The United States of America in executing the present Treaty does so with the understanding that its recognition of the effect of aggression and armed attack and its agreement with reference thereto in Article IV, paragraph 1, apply only to communist aggression but affirms that in the event of other aggression or armed attack it will consult under the provisions of Article IV, paragraph 2.

**Protocol to the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty**

**DESIGNATION OF STATES AND TERRITORY AS TO WHICH PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE IV AND ARTICLE III ARE TO BE APPLICABLE**

The Parties to the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty unanimously designate for the purposes of Article IV of the Treaty the States of Cambodia and Laos and the free territory under the jurisdiction of the State of Vietnam.

The Parties further agree that the above mentioned states and territory shall be eligible in respect of the economic measures contemplated by Article III.

This Protocol shall enter into force simultaneously with the coming into force of the Treaty.

Note.—Subsequently, Cambodia has indicated disinterest in the protection of the Southeast Asia Treaty. In the Geneva Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos, the Royal Government of Laos declared that it will not “recognize the protection of any alliance or military coalition, including SEATO” and the United States and other nations agreed to “respect the wish of the Kingdom of Laos not to recognize the protection of any alliance or military coalition, including SEATO.”
In late 1965, well after the United States had committed ground troops to Vietnam, the CIA assigned me to study the Vietcong. Despite the almost 200,000 American troops and the advanced state of warfare in South Vietnam, I was the first intelligence analyst in Washington to be given the full-time job of researching our South Vietnamese enemies. Incredible as it now seems, I remained the only analyst with this assignment until just before the Tet offensive of 1968.

At CIA headquarters in 1965 nobody was studying the enemy systematically, the principal effort being geared to a daily publication called the "Sitrep" (Vietnam Situation Report), which concerned itself with news about the activities of South Vietnamese politicians and the location of Vietcong units. The Sitrep analysts used the latest cables from Saigon, and tended to neglect information that didn't fit their objectives. The Johnson Administration was already wondering how long the Vietcong could stick it out, and since this seemed too complicated a question for the Sitrep to answer, the CIA's research department assigned it to me. I was told to find out the state of enemy morale.

GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS

I looked upon the new job as something of a promotion. Although I had graduated from Harvard in 1955, I didn't join the Agency until 1963, and I had been fortunate in my first assignment as an analyst of the Congo rebellion. My daily and weekly reports earned the praise of my superiors, and the Vietcong study was given to me by way of reward, encouraging me in my ambition to make a career within the CIA.

Without guidance and not knowing what else to do, I began to tinker with the VC defector statistics, trying to figure out such things as where the defectors came from, what jobs they had, and why they had wanted to quit. In short order I read through the collection of weekly reports, and so I asked for a ticket to Vietnam to see what other evidence was available over there. In mid-January 1966, I arrived in Saigon to take up a desk in the U.S. Embassy. After a couple of weeks, the CIA station chief (everyone called him "Jorgy") heard I was in the building adding and subtracting the number of defectors. He called me into his office. "Those statistics aren't worth a damn," he said. "No numbers in Vietnam are, and, besides, you'll never learn anything sitting around Saigon." He told me I ought to go to the field "and start reading captured documents." I followed Jorgy's advice.

The captured documents suggested a phenomenon that seemed incredible to me. Not only were the VC taking extremely heavy casualties, but large numbers of them were deserting. I got together two sets of captured papers concerning desertion. The first set consisted of enemy unit rosters, which would say, for example, that in a certain seventy-seven-man outfit, only sixty men were "present for duty." Of the seventeen absent, two were down with malaria, two were at training school, and thirteen had deserted. The other documents were directives from various VC headquarters telling subordinates to do something about the growing desertion rate. "Christ Almighty," they all seemed to say. "These AWOLs are getting out of hand. Far too many of our boys are going over the hill."

I soon collected a respectable stack of rosters, some of them from large units, and I began to extrapolate. I set up an equation which went like this if A, B, and C units (the ones for which I had documents) had so many deserters in such and such a period of time, then the number of deserters per year for the whole VC
Army was X. No matter how I arranged the equation, X always turned out to be a very big number. I could never get it below 50,000. Once I even got it up to 100,000.

The significance of this finding in 1966 was immense. At that time our official estimate of the strength of the enemy was 270,000. We were killing, capturing, and wounding VC at a rate of almost 150,000 a year. If to these casualties you added 50,000 to 100,000 deserters—well, it was hard to see how a 270,000-man army could last more than a year or two longer.

I returned in May to tell everyone the good news. No one at CIA headquarters had paid much attention to VC deserters because captured documents were almost entirely neglected. The finding created a big stir. Adm. William F. Raborn Jr., then director of the CIA, called me in to brief him and his deputies about the Vietcong's AWOL problem. Right after the briefing, I was told that the Agency's chief of research, R. Jack Smith, had called me "the outstanding analyst" in the research directorate.

But there were also skeptics, particularly among the CIA's old Vietnam hands, who had long since learned that good news was often illusory. To be on the safe side, the Agency formed what was called a "Vietcong morale team" and sent it to Saigon to see if the news was really true. The team consisted of myself, acting as a "consultant," and four Agency psychiatrists, who presumably understood things like morale.

The psychiatrists had no better idea than I'd had, when I started out, how to plumb the Vietcong mind. One of the psychiatrists said, "We'll never get Ho Chi Minh to lie still on a leather couch, so we better think up something else quick." They decided to ask the CIA men in the provinces what they thought about enemy morale. After a month or so of doing this, the psychiatrists went back to Washington convinced that, by and large, Vietcong spirits were in good shape. I went back with suitcases full of captured documents that supported my thesis about the Vietcong desertion rate.

But I was getting uneasy. I trusted the opinion of the CIA men in the field who had told the psychiatrists of the Vietcong's resiliency. The South Vietnamese government was in one of its periodic states of collapse, and somehow it seemed unlikely that the Vietcong would be falling apart at the same time. I began to suspect that something was wrong with my prediction that the VC were headed for imminent trouble. On reexamining the logic that had led me to the prediction, I saw that it was based on three main premises. Premise number one was that the Vietcong were suffering very heavy casualties. Although I'd heard all the stories about exaggerated reporting, I tended not to believe them, because the heavy losses were also reflected in the documents. Premise two was my finding that the enemy army had a high desertion rate. Again, I believed the documents. Premise three was that both the casualties and the deserters came out of an enemy force of 270,000. An old Vietnam hand, George Allen, had already told me that this number was suspect.

In July, I went to my supervisor and told him I thought there might be something radically wrong with our estimate of enemy strength, or, in military jargon, the order of battle. "Maybe the 270,000 number is too low," I said. "Can I take a closer look at it?" He said it was okay with him just so long as I handed in an occasional item for the Sitrep. This seemed fair enough, and so I began to put together a file of captured documents.

The documents in those days were arranged in "bulletins," and by mid-August I had collected more than 600 of them. Each bulletin contained several sheets of paper with summaries in English of the information in the papers taken by American military units. On the afternoon of August 19, 1966, a Friday, Bulletin 689 reached my desk on the CIA's fifth floor. It contained a report put out by the Vietcong headquarters in Binh Dinh province, to the effect that the guerrilla-militia in the province numbered just over 50,000. I looked for our own intelligence figures for Binh Dinh in the order of battle and found the number 4,500. "My God," I thought, "that's not even a tenth of what the VC say."

In a state of nervous excitement, I began searching through my file of bulletins for other discrepancies. Almost the next document I looked at, the one for Phu Yen province, showed 11,000 guerrilla-militia. In the official order of battle we had listed 1,400, an eighth of the Vietcong estimate. I almost shouted from my desk, "There goes the whole damn order of battle!"

Unable to contain my excitement, I began walking around the office, telling anybody who would listen about the enormity of the oversight and the implica-
tions of it for our conduct of the war. That weekend I returned to the office, and on both Saturday and Sunday I searched through the entire collection of 600-odd bulletins and found further proof of a gross underestimate of the strength of the enemy we had been fighting for almost two years. When I arrived in the office on Monday a colleague of mine brought me a document of a year earlier which he thought might interest me. It was from Vietcong headquarters in South Vietnam, and it showed that in early 1966 the VC had about 200,000 guerrilla-militia in the south; and that they were planning to build up to 300,000 by the end of the year. Once again, I checked the official order of battle. It listed a figure of exactly 103,573 guerrilla-militia—in other words, half as many as the Vietcong said they had in early 1965, and a third as many as they planned to have by 1966. 

NO OFFICIAL COMMENT

That afternoon, August 22, I wrote a memorandum suggesting that the overall order of battle estimate of 270,000 might be 200,000 men too low. Supporting it with references to numerous bulletins, I sent it up to the seventh floor, and then waited anxiously for the response. I imagined all kinds of sudden and dramatic telephone calls. “Mr. Adams, come brief the director.” “The President’s got to be told about this, and you’d better be able to defend those numbers.” I wasn’t sure what would happen, but I was sure it would be significant, because I knew this was the biggest intelligence find of the war—by far. It was important because the planners running the war in those days used statistics as a basis for everything they did, and the most important figure of all was the size of the enemy army—that order of battle number, 270,000. All our other intelligence estimates were tied to the order of battle: how much rice the VC ate, how much ammunition they shot off, and so forth. If the Vietcong Army suddenly doubled in size, our whole statistical system would collapse. We’d be fighting a war twice as big as the one we thought we were fighting. We already had about 350,000 soldiers in Vietnam, and everyone was talking about “force ratios.” Some experts maintained that in a guerrilla war our side had to outnumber the enemy by a ratio of 10 to 1; others said 5 to 1; the most optimistic said 3 to 1. But even if we used the 3 to 1 ratio, the addition of 200,000 men to the enemy order of battle meant that somebody had to find an extra 600,000 troops for our side. This would put President Johnson in a very tight fix—either quit the war or send more soldiers. Once he was informed of the actual enemy strength, it seemed inconceivable that he could continue with the existing force levels. I envisioned the President calling the director on the carpet, asking him why this information hadn’t been found out before.

Nothing happened. No phone calls from anybody. On Wednesday I still thought there must have been some terrible mistake; on Thursday I thought the news might have been so important that people were still trying to decide what to do with it. Instead, on Friday, the memorandum dropped back in my in-box. There was no comment on it at all—no request for amplification, no question about my numbers, nothing, just a routine slip attached showing that the entire CIA hierarchy had read it.

I was aghast. Here I had come up with 200,000 additional enemy troops, and the CIA hadn’t even bothered to ask me about it, let alone tell anybody else. I got rather angry and wrote a second memorandum, attaching even more references to other documents. Among these was a report from the Vietcong high command showing that the VC controlled not 3 million people (as in our official estimate) but 6 million (their estimate). I thought that this helped to explain the origins of the extra 200,000 guerrilla-militia, and also that it was an extraordinary piece of news in its own right. A memorandum from my office—the office of Current Intelligence—ordinarily would be read, edited, and distributed within a few days to the White House, the Pentagon, and the State Department. It’s a routine procedure, but once again I found myself sitting around waiting for a response, getting angrier and angrier. After about a week I went up to the seventh floor to find out what had happened to my memo. I found it in a safe, in a manila folder marked “Indefinite Hold.”

I went back down to the fifth floor, and wrote still another memo, referencing even more documents. This time I didn’t send it up, as I had the others, through

A document was later captured which showed the Vietcong not only reached but exceeded their quota. Dated April 1968, it put the number of guerrilla-militia at 280,000.
regular channels. Instead, I carried it upstairs with the intention of giving it to somebody who would comment on it. When I reached the office of the Asia-Africa area chief, Waldo Duberstein, he looked at me and said: “It's that Goddamn memo again, Adams, stop being such a prima donna.” In the next office, an official said that the order of battle was General Westmoreland's concern, and we had no business intruding. This made me even angrier. “We're all in the same government,” I said. “If there's a discrepancy this big, it doesn't matter who points it out. This is no joke. We're in a war with these guys.” My remarks were dismissed as rhetorical, bombastic, and irrelevant.

On the ninth of September, eighteen days after I'd written the first memo, the CIA agreed to let a version of it out of the building, but with very strange restrictions. It was to be called a “draft working paper,” meaning that it lacked official status; it was issued in only 25 copies, instead of the usual run of over 200; it could go to “working-level types”—analysts and staff people—but not to anyone in a policy-making position—to no one, for example, on the National Security Council. One copy went to Saigon, care of Westmoreland’s Order of Battle Section, carried by an official who worked in the Pentagon for the Defense Intelligence Agency.

By this time I was so angry and exhausted that I decided to take two weeks off to simmer down. This was useless. I spent the whole vacation thinking about the order of battle. When I returned to the Agency, I found that it came out monthly and was divided into four parts, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communist regulars</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guerrilla-militia</td>
<td>103,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service troops</td>
<td>18,558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political cadres</td>
<td>69,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>271,801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Approximately. It varied by month.
2 Exactly.
3 That is—or about 270,000.

The only category that ever changed was “Communist regulars” (uniformed soldiers in the Vietcong Army). In the last two years, this figure had more than doubled. The numbers for the other three categories had remained precisely the same, even to the last digit. There was only one conclusion: no one had even looked at them! I decided to do so right away, and to find out where the numbers came from and whom they were describing.

I began by collecting more documents on the guerrilla-militia. These were “the soldiers in black pajamas” the press kept talking about; lightly armed in some areas, armed to the teeth in others, they planted most of the VC's mines and booby traps. This was important, I discovered, because in the Da Nang area, for example, mines and booby traps caused about two-thirds of all the casualties by U.S. Marines.

I also found where the number 103,573 came from. The South Vietnamese had thought it up in 1964; American Intelligence had accepted it without question, and hadn't checked it since. “Can you believe it?” I said to a fellow analyst. “Here we are in the middle of a guerrilla war, and we haven't even bothered to count the number of guerrillas.”

The service troops were harder to locate. The order of battle made it clear that these VC soldiers were comparable to specialists in the American Army— ordinance sergeants, quartermasters, medics, engineers, and so forth. But despite repeated phone calls to the Pentagon, to U.S. Army headquarters, and to the office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I couldn’t find anyone who knew where or when we'd hit upon the number 18,558. Again I began collecting VC documents, and within a week or so had come to the astonishing conclusion that our official estimate for service troops was at least two years old and five times too low—it should not have been 18,558, but more like 100,000. In the process I discovered a whole new category of soldiers known as “assault youths” who weren't in the order of battle at all.

I also drew a blank at the Pentagon regarding political cadres, so I started asking CIA analysts who these cadres might be. One analyst said they belonged to something called the “infrastructure,” but he wasn’t quite sure what it was. Finally, George Allen, who seemed to know more about the VC than anyone else, said the “infrastructure” included Communist party members and armed
police and people like that, and that there was a study around which showed how the 39,175 number had been arrived at. I eventually found a copy on a shelf in the CIA archives. Unopened, it had never been looked at before. The study had been published in Saigon in 1965, and one glance showed it was full of holes. Among other things, it left out all the VC cadres serving in the countryside—where most of them were.

By December 1966 I had concluded that the number of Vietcong in South Vietnam, instead of being 270,000 was more like 600,000, or over twice the official estimate. The higher number made many things about the Vietnam war fall into place. It explained, for instance, how the Vietcong Army could have so many deserters and casualties and still remain effective.

7 This was broken down as follows: Communist regulars, about 100,000; guerrilla-militia, about 500,000; service troops, about 100,000; political cadres, about 100,000.
Soon after, I attended the annual meeting of the Board of National Estimates on Vietnam. Held in a windowless room on the CIA's seventh floor, a room furnished with leather chairs, blackboards, maps, and a large conference table, the meeting comprised the whole of the intelligence community, about forty people representing the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the State Department. Ordinarily the meeting lasted about a week, its purpose being to come to a community-wide agreement about the progress of the war. This particular consensus required the better part of six months.

The procedure of these estimates requires the CIA to submit the first draft, and then everyone else argues his group's position. If one of the services violently disagrees, it is allowed to take exception in a footnote to the report. The CIA's first draft used the same 500,000 number that had gone to McNamara in May. None of us expected what followed.

George Fowler from DIA, the same man who'd carried my guerrilla memo to Saigon in September 1966, got up and explained he was speaking for the entire military. "Gentlemen, we cannot agree to this estimate as currently written. What we object to are the numbers. We feel we should continue with the official order of battle." I almost fell off my chair. The official OB figure at that time, June 1967, was still 270,000, with all the old components, including 103,573 guerrilla-militia.

In disbelief I hurried downstairs to tell my boss, George Carver of the deception. He was reassuring. "Now, Sam," he said, "don't you worry. It's time to bite the bullet. You go on back up there and do the best you can." For the next two-and-a-half months, armed with stacks of documents, I argued with the military over the numbers. By the end of August, they no longer insisted on the official order of battle figures, but would not raise them above 300,000. The CIA numbers remained at about 500,000. The meetings recessed for a few weeks at the end of the month, and I left Washington with my wife, Eleanor, to visit her parents in Alabama. No sooner had we arrived at their house when the phone rang. It was George Carver. "Sam, come back up. We're going to Saigon to thrash out the numbers."

I was a little cynical. "We won't sell out, will we?"
"No, no, we're going to bite the bullet," he said.

**ARMY ESTIMATE**

We went to Saigon in early September to yet another order-of-battle meeting, this one convened in the austere conference room in Westmoreland's headquarters. Among the officers supporting Westmoreland were Gen. Phillip Davidson, head of intelligence (the military calls it G-2); General Sidle, head of press relations ("What the dickens is he doing at an OB conference?" I thought); Colonel Morris, one of Davidson's aides; Col. Danny Graham head of the G-2 Estimates Staff; and, of course, Col. Gains B. Hawkins, chief of the G-2 Order of Battle Section. There were also numerous lieutenant colonels, majors, and captains, all equipped with maps, charts, files, and pointers.

The military dominated the first day of the conference. A major gave a lecture on the VC's low morale. I kept my mouth shut on the subject, even though I knew their documents showed a dwindling VC desertion rate. Another officer gave a talk full of complicated statistics which proved the Vietcong were running out of men. It was based on something called the crossover memo which had been put together by Colonel Graham's staff. On the second day we got down to business—the numbers.

It was suspicious from the start. Every time I'd argue one category up, the military would drop another category down by the same amount. Then there was the little piece of paper put on everybody's desk saying that the military would agree to count more of one type of VC if we'd agree to eliminate another type of VC. Finally, there was the argument over a subcategory called the district-level service troops.

I stood up to present the CIA's case. I said that I had estimated that there were about seventy-five service soldiers in each of the VC's districts, explaining that I had averaged the numbers in a sample of twenty-eight documents. I briefly reviewed the evidence and asked whether there were any questions.

"I have a question," said General Davidson. "You mean to tell me that you only have twenty-eight documents?"
"Yes sir," I said. "That's all I could find."
“Well, I’ve been in the intelligence business for many years, and if you’re trying to sell me a number on the basis of that small a sample, you might as well pack up and go home.” As I resumed my seat, Davidson’s aide, Colonel Morris, turned around and said, “Adams, you’re full of shit.”

A lieutenant colonel then got up to present the military’s side of the case. He had counted about twenty service soldiers per district, he said, and then he went on to describe how a district was organized. When he asked for questions, I said, “How many documents are in your sample?”

He looked as if somebody had kicked him in the stomach. Instead of answering the question, he repeated his description of how the VC organized a district.

Then George Carver interrupted him. “Come, come, Colonel,” he said. “You’re not answering the question. General Davidson has just taken Mr. Adams to task for having only twenty-eight documents in his sample. It’s a perfectly legitimate question. How many have you in yours?”

In a very low voice, the lieutenant colonel said, “One.” I looked over at General Davidson and Colonel Morris to see whether they’d denounce the lieutenant colonel for having such a small sample. Both of them were looking at the ceiling.

“Colonel,” I continued, “may I see your document?” He didn’t have it, he said, and, besides, it wasn’t a document, it was a POW report.

Well, I asked, could he please try and remember who the twenty service soldiers were? He ticked them off. I kept count. The total was forty.

“Colonel,” I said, “you have forty soldiers here, not twenty. How did you get from forty to twenty?”

“We scaled down the evidence,” he replied.

“Yes, he said. “We cut out the hangers-on.”

“And how do you determine what a hanger-on is?”

“Civilians, for example.”

Now, I knew that civilians sometimes worked alongside VC service troops, but normally the rosters listed them separately. So I waited until the next coffee break to ask Colonel Hawkins how he’d “scale down” the service troops in a document I had. It concerned Long Dat District in the southern half of South Vietnam, and its 111 service troops were broken down by components. We went over each one. Of the twenty in the medical component, Hawkins would count three, of the twelve in the ordnance section, he’d count two, and so forth, until Long Dat’s 111 service soldiers were down to just over forty. There was no indication in the document that any of those dropped were civilians.

As we were driving back from the conference that day, an Army officer in the car with us explained what the real trouble was: “You know, our basic problem is that we’ve been told to keep our numbers under 800,000.”

Later, after retiring from the Army, Colonel Hawkins confirmed that this was basically the case. At the start of the conference, he’d been told to stay below a certain number. He could no longer remember what it was, but he recalled that the person who gave it to him was Colonel Morris, the officer who had told me I was “full of shit.”

The Saigon conference was in its third day, when we received a cable from Helms that, for all its euphemisms, gave us no choice but to accept the military’s numbers. We did so, and the conference concluded that the size of the Vietcong force in South Vietnam was 299,000. We accomplished this by simply marching certain categories of Vietcong out of the order of battle, and by using the military’s “scaled-down” numbers.

I left the conference extremely angry. Another member of the CIA contingent, William Hyland (now head of intelligence at the Department of State), tried to explain. “Sam, don’t take it so hard. You know what the political climate is. If you think they’d accept the higher numbers, you’re living in a dream world.”

Shortly after the conference ended, another category was frog-marched out of the estimate, which dropped from 299,000 to 248,000.

I returned to Washington, and in October I went once again in front of the Board of National Estimates, by this time reduced to only its CIA members. I told them exactly what had happened at the conference—how the numbers had been scaled down, which types of Vietcong had left the order of battle, and even about the affair of Long Dat District. They were sympathetic.

“Sam, it makes my blood boil to see the military cooking the books,” one of the board members said. Another asked, “Sam, have we gone beyond the bounds of reasonable dishonesty?” And I said, “Sir, we went past them last August.” Nonetheless, the board sent the estimate forward for the director’s signature, with
the numbers unchanged. I was told there was no other choice because Helms had committed the CIA to the military's numbers.

"But that's crazy," I said. "The numbers were faked." I made one last try. My memorandum was nine pages long. The first eight pages told how the numbers got that way. The ninth page accused the military of lying. If we accepted their numbers, I argued, we would not only be dishonest and cowardly, we would be stupid. I handed the memo to George Carver to give to the director, and sent copies to everyone I could think of in the research branch. Although I was the only CIA analyst working on the subject at the time, nobody replied. Two days later Helms signed the estimate, along with its doctored numbers.

That was that. I went into Carver's office and quit Helm's staff. He looked embarrassed when I told him why I was doing so, but he said there was nothing he could do. I thanked him for all he had done in the earlier part of the year and for his attempt at trying to deal with real rather than imaginary numbers. I thought of leaving the CIA, but I still retained some faith in the Agency, and I knew that I was the only person in the government arguing for higher numbers with accurate evidence. I told Carver that the research directorate had formed a VO branch, in which, I said, I hoped to find somebody who would listen to me.

FACING FACTS

In November General Westmoreland returned to Washington and held a press conference. "The enemy is running out of men," he said. He based this on the fabricated numbers, and on Colonel Graham's crossover memo. In early December, the CIA sent McNamara another "Whither Vietnam?" memo. It had the doctored numbers, but this time I was forbidden to change them. It was the same story with Helms's New Year briefing to Congress. Wrong numbers, no changes allowed. When I heard that Colonel Hawkins, whom I still liked and admired, had been reassigned to Fort Holabird in Baltimore, I went to see him to find out what he really thought about the order of battle. "Those were the worst three months in my life," he said, referring to July, August, and September, and he offered to do anything he could to help. When he had been asked to lower the estimates, he said, he had retained as many of the frontline VO troops as possible. For several hours we went over the order of battle. We had few disagreements, but I began to see for the first time that the Communist regulars, the only category I'd never looked at, were also seriously understated—perhaps by as many as 50,000 men. No one was interested, because adding 50,000 troops would have forced a reopening of the issue of numbers, which everyone thought was settled. On January 29, 1968, I began the laborious job of transferring my files from Carver's office to the newly formed Vietcong branch.

The next day the VC launched the Tet offensive. Carver's office was chaos. There were so many separate attacks that someone was assigned full time to stick red pins in the map of South Vietnam just to keep track of them. Within a week's time it was clear that the scale of the Tet offensive was the biggest surprise to American intelligence since Pearl Harbor. As I read the cables coming in, I experienced both anger and a sort of grim satisfaction. There was just no way they could have pulled it off with only 248,000 men, and the cables were beginning to show which units had taken part. Many had never been in the order of battle at all; others had been taken out or scaled down. I made a collection of these units, which I showed Carver. Two weeks later, the CIA agreed to reopen the order-of-battle controversy.

Suddenly I was asked to revise and extend the memorandums that I had been attempting to submit for the past eighteen months. People began to congratulate me, to slap me on the back and say what a fine intelligence analyst I was. The Agency's chief of research, R. Jack Smith, who had once called me "the outstanding analyst" in the CIA, but who had ignored all my reporting on the Vietcong, came down from the seventh floor to shake my hand. "We're glad to have you back," he said. "You know more about Vietnam than you did about the Congo." All of this disgusted me, and I accepted the compliments without comment. What was the purpose of intelligence, I thought, if not to warn people, to tell them what to expect? As many as 10,000 American soldiers had been killed in the Tet offensive because the generals had played politics with the numbers, and here I was being congratulated by the people who had agreed to the fiction.

In February the Agency accepted my analysis, and in April another order-of-battle conference was convened at CIA headquarters. Westmoreland's delegation, headed by Colonel Graham (now a lieutenant general and head of the Defense
Intelligence Agency) continued to argue for the lower numbers. But from that point forward the White House stopped using the military estimate and relied on the CIA estimate of 600,000 Vietcong.

All along I had wondered whether the White House had had anything to do with fixing the estimates. The military wanted to keep them low in order to display the "light at the end of the tunnel," but it had long since occurred to me that maybe the generals were under pressure from the politicians. Carver had told me a number of times that he had mentioned my figures to Walt Rostow, a member of the White House. But even now I don't know whether Rostow ordered the falsification, or whether he was merely reluctant to face unpleasant facts. Accepting the higher numbers forced the same old decision: pack up or send a lot more troops.

On the evening of March 31, the question of the White House role became, in a way, irrelevant. President Johnson made his announcement that he wasn't going to run again. Whoever the next President was, I felt, needed to be told about the sorry state of American intelligence so that he could do something about it. The next morning, April 1, I went to the CIA inspector general's office and said: "Gentlemen, I've come here to file a complaint, and it involves both the research department and the director. I want to make sure that the next administration finds out what's gone on down here." On May 28 I filed formal charges and asked that they be sent to "appropriate members of the White House staff" and to the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. I also requested an investigation by the CIA inspector general. Helms responded by telling the inspector general to start an investigation. This took two months.

The director then appointed a high-level review board to go over the inspector general's report. The review board was on its way to taking another two months when I went to the general counsel's office and talked to a Mr. Ueberhorst. I said, "Mr. Ueberhorst, I wrote a report for the White House about three months ago complaining about the CIA management, and I've been getting the runaround ever since. What I want is some legal advice. Would I be breaking any laws if I took my memo and carried it over to the White House myself?" A few days later, on September 20, 1968, the executive director of the CIA, the number-three man in the hierarchy, called me to his office: "Mr. Adams, we think well of you, but Mr. Helms says he doesn't want your memo to leave the building," I took notes of the conversation, and sent it back up to the executive director's office with a covering letter saying, "This is not a legal problem but a practical one of your future within the CIA." I was told, "Because if you take that memo to the White House, it will be at your own peril, and even if you get what you want by doing so, your usefulness to the Agency will thereafter be nil." The executive director carried on this conversation for thirty-five minutes. I copied it all out until he said, "Do you have anything to say, Mr. Adams?" "Yes sir," I said, "I think I'll take this right on over to the White House, and please tell the director of my intention." I wrote a memorandum of the conversation, and sent it back up to the executive director's office with a covering letter saying, "I hope I'm quoting you correctly; please tell me if I'm not."

A short while later he called me back to his office and said, "I'm afraid there's been a misunderstanding, because the last thing in the world the director wanted to do was threaten. He has decided that this thing can go forward."

I waited until after the Presidential election. Nixon won, and the next day I called the seventh floor to ask if it was now okay to send on my memo to the White House. On November 8, 1968, Mr. Helms summoned me to his office. The first thing he said to me was "Don't take notes." To the best of my recollection, the conversation then proceeded along the following lines. He asked what was bothering me; did I think my supervisors were treating me unfairly, or were they promoting the conversation fast enough? No, I said. My problem was that he caved in on the numbers right before Tet. I enlarged on the theme for about ten minutes. He listened without expression, and when I was done he asked what I would have had him do—take on the whole military? I said, that under the circumstances, that was the only thing he could have done; I military's numbers were faked. He then told me that I didn't know what things were like, that we could have told the White House that there were a million more Vietcong out there, and it wouldn't have made the slightest bit of difference in our policy. I said that we weren't the ones to decide about policy; all we should do was to send up the right numbers and let them worry. He asked me who I wanted to see, and I said that I had requested appropriate members of the White House staff and the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board in my memo, but, frankly, I didn't know who the appropriate members were. He asked whether Gen. Maxwell Taylor...
and Walt Rostow would be all right. I told him that was not only acceptable, it was generous, and he said he would arrange the appointments for me.

With that I was sent around to see the deputy directors. The chief of research, R. Jack Smith, asked me what the matter was, and I told him the same things I had told Helms. The Vietnam war, he said, was an extraordinarily complex affair, and the size of the enemy army was only—his exact words—"a small but significant byway of the problem." His deputy, Edward Procter, now the CIA's chief of research, remarked, "Mr. Adams, the real problem is you. You ought to look into yourself."

**PERMISSION DENIED**

After making these rounds, I wrote letters to Rostow and Taylor, telling them who I was and asking that they include a member of Nixon's staff in any talks we had about the CIA's shortcomings. I forwarded the letters, through channels, to the director's office, asking his permission to send them on. Permission was denied, and that was the last I ever heard about meeting with Mr. Rostow and General Taylor.

In early December I did manage to see the executive secretary of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, J. Patrick Coyne. He told me that a few days earlier Helms had sent over my memo, that some members of PFIAB had read it, and that they were asking me to enlarge on my views and to make any recommendations I thought were in order. Coyne encouraged me to write a full report, and in the following weeks I put together a thirty-five-page paper explaining why I had brought charges. A few days after Nixon's inauguration, in January 1969, I sent the paper to Helms's office with a request for permission to send it to the White House. Permission was denied in a letter from the deputy director, Adm. Rutus Taylor, who informed me that the CIA was a team, and that if I didn't want to accept the team's decision, that I should resign.

There I was—with nobody from Nixon's staff having heard any of this. It was far from clear whether Nixon intended to retain the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. J. Patrick Coyne said he didn't know. He also said he didn't intend to press for the release of the thirty-five-page report. I thought I had been had.

For the first time in my career, I decided to leave official channels. This had never occurred to me before, not even when Helms had authorized the doctor ed numbers in the month before Tet. I had met a man named John Court, a member of the incoming staff of the National Security Council, and through him I hoped for a measure of redress. I gave him my memorandum and explained its import—including Westmoreland's deceptions before Tet—and asked him to pass it around so that at least the new administration might know what had gone on at the CIA and could take any action it thought necessary. Three weeks later Court told me that the memo had gotten around, all right, but the decision had been made not to do anything about it.

So I gave up. If the White House wasn't interested, there didn't seem to be any other place I could go. I felt I'd done as much as I possibly could do, and that was that.

Once again I thought about quitting the Agency. But again I decided not to, even though my career was pretty much in ruins. Not only had the deputy director just suggested that I resign, but I was now working under all kinds of new restrictions. I was no longer permitted to go to Vietnam. After the order-of-battle conference in Saigon in September 1967, Westmoreland's headquarters had informed the CIA station chief that I was persona non grata, and that they didn't want me on any military installations throughout the country. In CIA headquarters I was more or less confined to quarters, since I was no longer asked to attend any meetings at which outsiders were present. I was even told to cut back on the lectures I was giving about the VC to CIA case officers bound for Vietnam.

I suppose what kept me from quitting this time was that I loved the job. The numbers business was going along fairly well, or so I thought, and I was becoming increasingly fascinated with what struck me as another disturbing question. Why was it that the Vietcong always seemed to know what we were

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*In mid-1968 I had discovered that Agency officers sent to Vietnam received a total of only one hour's instruction on the organization and methods of operation of the Vietcong. Disturbed that they should be sent up against so formidable a foe with so little training, I had by the end of the year increased the hours from one to twenty-four. I gave most of the lectures myself.*
At about this time, Robert Klein joined the VC branch. He had just graduated from college, and I thought him one of the brightest and most delightful people I had ever met. We began batting back and forth the question of why the VC always knew what was going to happen next. Having written a study on the Vietcong secret police in 1967, I already knew that the Communists had a fairly large and sophisticated espionage system. But I had no idea how large, and, besides, there were several other enemy organizations in addition to the secret police that had infiltrated the Saigon government. Klein and I began to sort them out. The biggest one, we found, was called the Military Proselytizing Directorate, which concentrated on recruiting agents in the South Vietnamese Army and National Police. By May 1969 we felt things were beginning to fall into place, but we still hadn't answered the fundamental question of how many agents the VC had in the South Vietnamese government. I decided to do the obvious thing, which was to start looking in the captured documents for references to spies. Klein and I each got a big stack of documents, and we began going through them, one by one. Within two weeks we had references to more than 1,000 agents. “Jesus Christ!” I said to Klein. “A thousand agents! And before Tet the CIA only had one.” Furthermore, it was clear from the documents that the thousand we'd found were only the top of a very big iceberg.

Right away I went off to tell everybody the bad news. I had begun to take a perverse pleasure in my role as the man in opposition at the Agency. The first person I spoke to was the head of the Vietnam branch of the CIA Clandestine Services. I said, “Hey, a guy called Klein and I just turned up references to over 1,000 VC agents, and from the looks of the documents the overall number might run into the tens of thousands.” He said, “For God's sake, don't open that Pandora's box. We have enough troubles as it is."

The next place I tried to reach was the Board of National Estimates, which was just convening its annual meeting on the Vietnam draft. Because of the trouble I'd made the year before, and because the meeting included outsiders, I wasn't allowed to attend. By now, Klein and I had come to the very tentative conclusion, based mostly on extrapolations from documents, that the Military Proselytizing Directorate alone had 20,000 agents in the South Vietnamese Army and government. This made it by far the biggest agent network in the history of espionage, and I was curious to know whether this was known in Saigon. I prompted a friend of mine to ask the CIA's Saigon station chief-back in Washington to give another briefing I wasn't allowed to attend—just how many Vietcong agents there were in the South Vietnamese Army. The station chief (a new one; Jorgy had long since moved) was taken aback at the question. He said, “Well, the South Vietnamese Military Security Service has about 300 suspects under consideration. I think that about covers it.”

If Klein and I were anywhere near right with our estimate of 20,000, that made the station chief's figure too low by at least 6,000 percent.

NEW DISCOVERIES

Deciding that we didn't yet know enough to make an issue of the matter, Klein and I went back to plugging the documents. The more we read, the wilder the story became. With a great deal of help from the CIA counterintelligence staff, we eventually found that Vietcong agents were running the government's National Police in the northern part of the country, that for many years the VC had controlled the counterintelligence branch of the South Vietnamese Military Security Service (which may explain why the station chief's estimate was so low), and that in several areas of Vietnam, the VC were in charge of our own Phoenix Program. Sarcely a day passed without a new discovery. The most dramatic of them concerned a Vietcong agent posing as a South Vietnamese ordnance sergeant in Da Nang. The document said that the agent had been responsible for setting off explosions at the American air base in April 1969, and destroying 40,000 tons of ammunition worth $100 million. The explosions were so big that they attracted a Congressional investigation, but the military managed to pass them off as having been started accidentally by a grass fire.
The problem with all these reports was not that they were hidden, but that they'd never been gathered and analyzed before in a systematic manner. Although CIA men in the field were aware of VC agents, Washington had failed to study the extent of the Vietcong network.

This is exactly what Klein and I attempted in the fall of 1969. By this time we had concluded that the total number of VC agents in the South Vietnamese Army and government was in the neighborhood of 80,000. While we admitted that the agents were a mixed bag—most of them were low-level personnel hedging their bets—we nonetheless arrived at an extremely bleak overall conclusion. That was that the agents were so numerous, so easy to recruit, and so hard to catch that their existence "called into question the basic loyalty of the South Vietnamese government and armed forces." This, in turn, brought up questions about the ultimate chances for success of our new policy of turning the war over to the Vietnamese.

In late November Klein and I had just about finished the first draft of our study when we were told that under no circumstances was it to leave CIA headquarters, and that, specifically, it shouldn't go to John Court of the White House staff. Meanwhile, however, I had called Court a number of times, telling him that the study existed, and that it suggested that Vietnamization probably wouldn't work. For the next two-and-a-half months, Court called the CIA front office asking for a draft of our memo on agents. Each time he was turned down.

Finally, in mid-February 1970, Court came over to the VC branch, and asked if he could have a copy of the agent memorandum. I told him he couldn't, but that I supposed it was okay if he looked at it at a nearby desk. By closing time Court had disappeared, along with the memo. I phoned him the next morning at the Executive Office Building and asked him if he had it. "Yes, I took it. Is that okay?" he said. It wasn't okay, and shortly after informing my superiors I received a letter of reprimand for releasing the memo to an "outsider." (Court, who worked for the White House, was the "outsider"). All copies of the study within the CIA—several were around, being reviewed—were recalled to the Vietcong branch and put in a safe. Klein was removed from work on agents, and told that if he didn't "shape up," he'd be fired.

The research department and perhaps even Helms (I don't know) apparently were appalled by the agent memo's reaching the White House. It was embarrassing for the CIA, since we'd never let anything like that out before. To suddenly say, oh, by the way, our ally, the South Vietnamese government, is crawling with spies, might lead someone to think that maybe the Agency should have noticed them sooner. We'd been in the war, after all, for almost six years.

Court later wrote a précis of the memo and gave it to Kissinger. Kissinger gave it to Nixon. Shortly thereafter, the White House sent a directive to Helms which said, in effect: "Okay, Helms, get that damn agent paper out of the safe drawer." Some months later, the Agency coughed it up, almost intact.

Meanwhile, Klein quit. I tried to talk him out of it, but he decided to go to graduate school. He did so in September 1970 but not before leaving a letter of resignation with the CIA inspector general. Klein's letter told the complete story of the agent study, concluding with his opinion that the White House would never have learned about the Communist spies had it not been for John Court's sticky fingers.

By now my fortunes had sunk to a low ebb. For the first time in seven years, I was given an unfavorable fitness report. I was rated "marginal" at conducting research; I had lost my "balance and objectivity" on the war, and, worst of all, I was the cause of the "discontent leading to the recent resignation" of Klein. For these shortcomings I was being reassigned to a position where I would be "less directly involved in research on the war." This meant I had to leave the Vietcong branch and join a small historical staff, where I was to take up the relatively innocuous job of writing a history of the Cambodian rebels.

Once again, I considered resigning from the CIA, but the job still had me hooked, and ever since the coup that deposed Sihanouk in March 1970 I had been wondering what was going on in Cambodia. Within a few weeks of that coup, the Communist army had begun to disappear from the southern half of South Vietnam for service next door, and I was curious to find out what it was up to. When I reported to the historical staff, I began, as usual, to collect documents. This was my main occupation for almost the next five months. I knew so little about Cambodia that I was fairly indiscriminate, and therefore grabbed just
about everything I could find. By late April 1971, I had gathered several thousand reports, and had divided them into broad categories, such as "military" and "political." In early May, I began to go through the "military" reports.

One of the first of these was an interrogation report of a Vietcong staff officer who had surrendered in Cambodia in late 1970. The staff officer said he belonged to a Cambodian Communist regional command with a code name I'd never heard of: C-40. Apparently C-40 had several units attached to it, including regiments, and I'd never heard of any of these, either. And, it seemed, the units were mostly composed of Khmers, of whom C-40 had a total of 18,000. Now that appeared to me to be an awful lot of Khmer soldiers just for one area, so I decided to check it against our Cambodian order of battle. Within a month I made a startling discovery: there was no order of battle. All I could find was a little sheet of paper estimating the size of the Khmer Communist Army at 5,000 to 10,000 men. That sheet of paper, with exactly the same numbers, had been kicking around since early 1970.

It was the same story as our Vietcong estimate of 1966, only worse. In Vietnam we had neglected to look at three of the four parts of the Vietcong Army; in Cambodia we hadn't looked at the Khmer Communist Army at all. It later turned out that the 5,000-to-10,000 figure was based on numbers put together by a sergeant in the Royal Cambodian Army in 1969.

From then on, it was easy. Right in the same room with me was every single intelligence report on the Khmer rebels that had ever come in. Straightaway I found what the VC Army had been doing in Cambodia since Sihanouk's fall: it had put together the largest and best advisory structure in the Indochina war. Within two weeks I had discovered thirteen regiments, several dozen battalions, and a great many companies and platoons. Using exactly the same methods that I'd used on the Vietcong estimate before Tet (only now the methods were more refined), I came to the conclusion that the size of the Cambodian Communist Army was not 5,000 to 10,000 but more like 100,000 to 150,000. In other words, the U.S. government's official estimate was between ten and thirty times too low.

My memo was ready in early June, and this time I gave a copy to John Court of the White House the day before I turned it in at the Agency. This proved to have been a wise move, because when I turned it in I was told, "Under no circumstances does this go out of the room." It was the best order of battle paper I'd ever done. A week later, I was taken off the Khmer Communist Army and forbidden to work on numbers anymore. A junior analyst began reworking my memo with instructions to hold the figure below 80,000. The analyst puzzled over this for several months, and at last settled in lowering the Vietcong estimate before Tet. He marched two whole categories out of the order of battle and "scaled down" what was left. In November 1971, he wrote up a memo placing the size of the Khmer Communist Army at 15,000 to 30,000 men. The CIA published the memo, and that number became the U.S. government's official estimate.

More Distortions

The present official estimate of the Khmer rebels—65,000—derives from the earlier one. It is just as absurd. Until very recently the Royal Cambodian Army was estimated at over 200,000 men. We are therefore asked to believe that the insurgents, who control four-fifths of Cambodia's land and most of its people, are outnumbered by the ratio of 8 to 1. In fact, if we count all the rebel soldiers, including those dropped or omitted from the official estimate, the Khmer Rebel Army is probably larger than the government's perhaps by a considerable margin.

The trouble with this kind of underestimate is not simply a miscalculation of numbers. It also distorts the meaning of the war. In Cambodia, as in the rest of Southeast Asia, the struggle is for allegiance, and the severest test of loyalty has to do with who can persuade the largest number of peasants to pick up a gun. When American intelligence downgrades the strength of the enemy army, it ignores the Communist success at organizing and recruiting people. This is why the Communists call the struggle a "people's war" and why the government found it difficult to understand.

I spent the rest of 1971 and a large part of 1972 trying to get the CIA to raise the Cambodian estimate. It was useless. The Agency was busy with other
matters, and I became increasingly discouraged. The Cambodian affair seemed to me to be a repeat of the Vietnam one; the same people made the same mistakes, in precisely the same ways, and everybody was allowed to conceal his duplicity. In the fall of 1972 I decided to make one last attempt at bringing the shoddiness of American intelligence to the attention of someone, anyone who could do anything about it.

Between October 1972 and January 1973 I approached the U.S. Army inspector general, the CIA inspector general, and the Congress—all to no avail. To the Army inspector general I delivered a memorandum setting forth the details of what had happened to the VC estimate before Tet. I mentioned the possibility of General Westmoreland's complicity, which might have implicated him in three violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The memorandum asked for an investigation, but the inspector general explained that I was in the wrong jurisdiction. Of the CIA inspector general I requested an investigation of the Cambodian estimates, but he adopted the device of neglecting to answer his mail, and no inquiry took place. In a last desperate measure—desperate because my friends at the CIA assured me that Congressional watchdog committees were a joke—I even appealed to Congress. To committees in both the House and Senate that watch over the CIA I sent a thirteen-page memorandum with names, dates, numbers, and a sequence of events. A staff assistant to the Senate Armed Services Committee thought it an interesting document, but he doubted that the Intelligence Subcommittee would take it up because it hadn't met in over a year and a half. Lucien Nedzi, the chief superintendent of the CIA in the House, also thought the document "pertinent," but he observed that the forthcoming elections obliged him to concern himself primarily with the question of busing. When I telephoned his office in late November, after the elections had come and gone, his administrative assistant told me, in effect, "Don't call us; we'll call you."

By mid-January 1973 I had reached the end of the road. I happened to read a newspaper account of Daniel Ellsberg's trial in Los Angeles, and I noticed that the government was alleging that Ellsberg had injured the national security by releasing estimates of the enemy force in Vietnam. I looked, and damned if they weren't from the same order of battle which the military had doctored back in 1967. Imagine! Hanging a man for leaking faked numbers! In late February I went to Los Angeles to testify at the trial and told the story of how the numbers got to be so wrong. When I returned to Washington in March, the CIA once again threatened to fire me. I complained, and, as usual, the Agency backed down. After a decent interval, I quit.

One last word. Some day, when everybody has returned to his senses, I hope to go back to the CIA as an analyst. I like the work.
BIBLIOGRAPHY PREPARED BY THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS FOR THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FUTURE FOREIGN POLICY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

THE FUTURE OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY BIBLIOGRAPHY: PART 1

(By Margaret Goodman; with most annotations from Foreign Affairs bibliographies)

A. GENERAL U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

   The author asks, and tries to answer, how free men can organize their power in a rational way.

   The argument that contemporary political, economic, and technological developments are transforming the nature of international relations. Disintegration of cold-war coalitions, increased salience of nonsecurity issues, and emergence of transnational actors are believed to hold promise for a more benign world. D843.B737.
   Chapter 11—"Policy Opportunities for the United States" presents several alternatives for U.S. policy—along lines of encouraging international organizations, restricted ideological role. May be considered as witness for fall hearings.

   Sections on Economics and Foreign Policy, Relations with Developing Nations, and Allocation of the World's Resources, useful as background.

   Papers of passing interest by historians and political scientists, originally prepared for a 1972 symposium on American foreign policy in the 1970s.

   A highly critical account of the interventions of Eisenhower in the Middle East, Kennedy in Africa, Johnson in Latin America, and Nixon in Asia. The author advocates nonintervention, but concludes with regret that most interventions have achieved the short-term, selfish objectives of the United States. Good brief on the doctrine of interventionism.

   An ambitious, diffuse effort to predict the shape of the world and its implications for American foreign policy. Only the future will reveal whether the effort is successful, although in 1975 some readers will not accept the argument that a principal characteristic of the future will be ever-increasing abundance.

   A first-rate collection by knowledgeable authors which serves as a timely reminder that there are existing and potential nuclear powers other than the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Two respected Indian specialists, Bhabin Sen Gupta and K. Subrahmanyam, discuss (in a 1978 context) how close India is to the bomb.

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- Chapter 1—The Nixon Doctrine—An Emerging U.S. Policy.
- Chapter 18—The Emerging Nixon Doctrine: Toward a New International System.


- Definition of Nixon Doctrine by Laird, with commentaries by Robert P. Griffin, Gale W. McGee, and Thomas Schelling.


- The author's theory is that while the United States may be retreating from globalism, other powers—Japan, Europe, China—are not strong enough to create a multi-polar world.


- Defines basic issues and principles of U.S. foreign policy—stressing common interests with Soviet Union, new definition of containment.


- Page 416—critique of Taylor's "Doctrine of Multipolarity."
- Page 426—"The Rhetoric of Nixon's Foreign Policy."


- Volume 2: The Military Dimensions of Foreign Policy.
- Volume 3: American Foreign Policy in the Age of Interdependence.
- Volume 4: The Requirements of Democratic Foreign Policy.


- A useful analysis, in language intelligible to the layman, of the many meanings of national interest, together with a seven-part prescription for judging whether an interest is vital, i.e. worth the use of force.


- Chapters on U.S.-Japanese relations, East Asia, (chaps. 2 and 4) and national security policy (chaps. 10, 11, and 12) of special interest.


- Nine weighty essays by eight authors who analyze aspects of the first four years of Nixonian foreign policy and attempt, unsuccessfully, to discern future trends. The answer to the question in the title is a qualified "no." Policies have changed less than rhetoric.

- First two chapters—"The Nixon Doctrine and Strategy" and "The American Outlook: Change and Continuity," and chap. 5 "Military Issues, Strategic Parity and Its Implications," raise potentially useful points.


- Review development of détente policies and discusses implications of their application in various parts of the world.

- A conservative view.


- "Nobody's Asia" 897–402.
B. U.S. POLICY TOWARD SOUTHEAST ASIA


These seven essays present a dissenting view of U.S. postwar policy in Korea. They find the rapid economic development of the South and the satisfaction of American strategic interests an insufficient counterpart to the failure of South Korean democracy. No alternatives are offered, save what seems a preference for the devil one doesn’t know (Kim) to the devil one does (Park).


Part Two, International Problems and the Conclusions and Recommendations, although dated, provides useful material from which to build questions.


Good outline of issues, including chapters on U.S. strategy in the post-cease-fire period, Chinese, Japanese, and Soviet perspectives of the region, and a summary chapter, “The View from Southeast Asia in the 1970s.”


A notably competent clutch of scholars and administrators of both nations have produced a set of papers on a complex and changing relationship which deserves, for the most part, to be read with care by those concerned.

In particular: Chap. 1—Overview (Reischauer) 9—Japan and China—Competitors in a Multi polar World (Donald Holm) 11—U.S.-Japanese Security Relations (Halperin)


The overriding theme of this incisive and constructively critical discussion of recent events is that “the United States has intrinsic interests of the highest order in only one East Asian country: Japan.”

The author seeks to provide a basis for new definitions of U.S. policy toward East Asia, with reassessment of U.S. security interests.


Why has South Korea become a praetorian dictatorship since the military coup that toppled its constitutional government in 1961? Is the failure to preserve democracy due to inadequacies in the liberal leaders, selfishness among politicians, or economic and social “underdevelopment”? This detailed analysis concludes that when polarization seems to force a choice between extreme left and extreme right, the military will usually win.


First third of book is review of recent history. Last two-thirds continues historical approach to analysis. Useful only as reference.


The discussions in this volume are dated, but many generalizations still valid. Possible full witness.

O. MILITARY/STRATEGIC INTERESTS


A wise contribution to the coming debate following the Vietnam settlement. Buchan sees the contemporary emergence of a pentagonal balance of military, political and economic influence, but acknowledges the restraints on power imposed by modern technology, social conditions and the wider international system.

Chapter III, “Options and Obligations” is especially relevant.

This comprehensive but succinct guide to defense and arms-control problems is of great value to all but the specialist.

Useful as reference.


Probably not as useful as his more recent articles.
VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF GEN. MAXWELL TAYLOR ON U.S. INTERVENTION IN INDOCHINA, OCTOBER 1961

(The following is a series of telegrams sent from General Taylor in October 1961.)

From Saigon:

White House eyes only for the President.
State eyes only for Rusk and Under Secretary Johnson.
Defense eyes only Secretary McNamara.
JCS' eyes only General Lemnitzer.

From General Taylor.

With regard to the critical question of introducing U.S. military forces into VN:

My view is that we should put in a task force consisting largely of logistical troops for the purpose of participating in flood relief and at the same time providing a U.S. military presence in VN capable of assuring Diem of our readiness to join him in a military showdown with the Viet Cong or Viet Minh. To relate the introduction of these troops to the needs of flood relief seems to me to offer considerable advantages in VN and abroad. It gives a specific humanitarian task as the prime reason for the coming of our troops and avoids any suggestion that we are taking over responsibility for the security of the country. As the task is a specific one, we can extricate our troops when it is done if we so desire. Alternatively, we can phase them into other activities if we wish to remain longer.

The strength of the force I have in mind is on the order of 6-8,000 troops. Its initial composition should be worked out here after study of the possible requirements and conditions for its use and subsequent modifications made with experience.

In addition to the logistical component, it will be necessary to include some combat troops for the protection of logistical operations and the defense of the area occupied by U.S. forces. Any troops coming to VN may expect to take casualties.

Needless to say, this kind of task force will exercise little direct influence on the campaign against the V.C. It will, however, give a much needed shot in the arm to national morale, particularly if combined with other actions showing that a more effective working relationship in the common cause has been established between the GVN and the U.S.

From the Philippines:

Eyes only for the President, from General Taylor.

1. Transmitted herewith are a summary of the fundamental conclusions of my group and my personal recommendations in response to the letter of the President to me dated 13 October 1961.

2. It is concluded that:

a. Communist strategy aims to gain control of Southeast Asia by methods of subversion and guerrilla war which by-pass conventional U.S. and indigenous strength on the ground. The interim Communist goal—en route to total takeover—appears to be a neutral Southeast Asia detached from U.S. protection. This strategy is well on the way to success in Vietnam.


* Italic for editor's emphasis.
b. In Vietnam (and Southeast Asia) there is a double crisis in confidence: doubt that U.S. is determined to save Southeast Asia; doubt that Diem's methods can frustrate and defeat Communist purposes and methods. The Vietnamese (and Southeast Asians) will undoubtedly draw—rightly or wrongly—definitive conclusions in coming weeks and months concerning the probable outcome and will adjust their behavior accordingly. What the U.S. does or fails to do will be decisive to the end result.

c. Aside from the morale factor, the Vietnamese Government is caught in interlocking circles of bad tactics and bad administrative arrangements which pin their forces on the defensive in ways which permit a relatively small Viet-Cong force (about one-tenth the size of the GVN regulars) to create conditions of frustration and terror certain to lead to a political crisis, if a positive turning point is not soon achieved. The following recommendations are designed to achieve that favorable turn, to avoid a further deterioration in the situation in South Vietnam, and eventually to contain and eliminate the threat to its independence.

3. It is recommended:

**GENERAL**

a. That upon request from the Government of Vietnam (GVN) to come to its aid in resisting the increasing aggressions of the Viet Cong and in repairing the ravages of the Delta flood which, in combination, threaten the lives of its citizens and the security of the country, the U.S. Government offer to join the GVN in a massive joint effort as a part of a total mobilization of GVN resources to cope with both the Viet-Cong (VC) and the ravages of the flood. The U.S. representatives will participate actively in this effort, particularly in the fields of government administration, military plans and operations, intelligence, and flood relief, going beyond the advisory role which they have observed in the past.

**SPECIFIC**

b. That in support of the foregoing broad commitment to a joint effort with Diem, the following specific measures be undertaken:

1. The U.S. Government will be prepared to provide individual administrators for insertion into the governmental machinery of South Vietnam in types and numbers to be worked out with President Diem.

2. A joint effort will be made to improve the military-political intelligence system beginning at the provincial level and extending upward through the government and armed forces to the Central Intelligence Organization.

3. The U.S. Government will engage in a joint survey of the conditions in the provinces to assess the social, political, intelligence, and military factors bearing on the prosecution of the counter-insurgency in order to reach a common estimate of these factors and a common determination of how to deal with them. As this survey will consume time, it should not hold back the immediate actions which are clearly needed regardless of its outcome.

4. A joint effort will be made to free the Army for mobile, offensive operations. This effort will be based upon improving the training and equipping of the Civil Guard and the Self-Defense Corps, relieving the regular Army of static missions, raising the level of the mobility of Army Forces by the provisions of considerably more helicopters and light aviation, and organizing a Border Ranger Force for a long-term campaign on the Laotian border against the Viet-Cong infiltrators. The U.S. Government will support this effort with equipment and with military units and personnel to do those tasks which the Armed Forces of Vietnam cannot perform in time. Such tasks include air reconnaissance and photography, airlift (beyond the present capacity of SVN forces), special intelligence, and air-ground support techniques.

5. The U.S. Government will assist the GVN in effecting surveillance and control over the coastal waters and inland waterways, furnishing such advisors, operating personnel and small craft as may be necessary for quick and effective operations.

6. The MAAG, Vietnam, will be reorganized and increased in size as may be necessary by the implementation of these recommendations.

7. The U.S. Government will offer to introduce into South Vietnam a military Task Force to operate under U.S. control for the following purposes:
(a) Provide a U.S. military presence capable of raising national morale and of showing to Southeast Asia the seriousness of the U.S. intent to resist a Communist take-over.

(b) Conduct logistical operations in support of military and flood relief operations.

(c) Conduct such combat operations as are necessary for self-defense and for the security of the area in which they are stationed.

(d) Provide an emergency reserve to back up the Armed Forces of the GVN in the case of a heightened military crisis.

(e) Act as an advance party of such additional forces as may be introduced if CINCPAC or SEATO contingency plans are invoked.

(8) The U.S. Government will review its economic aid program to take into account the needs of flood relief and to give priority to those projects in support of the expanded counter-insurgency program.

From the Philippines:

Eyes only for the President from General Taylor.

This message is for the purpose of presenting my reasons for recommending the introduction of a U.S. military force into South Vietnam (SVN). I have reached the conclusion that this is an essential action if we are to reverse the present downward trend of events in spite of a full recognition of the following disadvantages:

(a) The strategic reserve of U.S. forces is presently so weak that we can ill afford any detachment of forces to a peripheral area of the Communist bloc where they will be pinned down for an uncertain duration.

(b) Although U.S. prestige is already engaged in SVN, it will become more so by the sending of troops.

(c) If the first contingent is not enough to accomplish the necessary results, it will be difficult to resist the pressure to reinforce. If the ultimate result sought is the closing of the frontiers and the clean-up of the insurgents within SVN, there is no limit to our possible commitment (unless we attack the source in Hanoi).

(d) The introduction of U.S. forces may increase tensions and risk escalation into a major war in Asia.

On the other side of the argument, there can be no action so convincing of U.S. seriousness of purpose and hence so reassuring to the people and Government of SVN and to our other friends and allies in SEA as the introduction of U.S. forces into SVN. The views of indigenous and U.S. officials consulted on our trip were unanimous on this point. I have just seen Salgon 545 to State and suggest that it be read in connection with this message.

The size of the U.S. force introduced need not be great to provide the military presence necessary to produce the desired effect on national morale in SVN and on international opinion. A bare token, however, will not suffice; it must have a significant value. The kinds of tasks which it might undertake which would have a significant value are suggested in BAGU0005 (previous cable, 8b(7)). They are:

(a) Provide a U.S. military presence capable of raising national morale and of showing to Southeast Asia the seriousness of the U.S. intent to resist a Communist take-over.

(b) Conduct logistical operations in support of military and flood relief operations.

(c) Conduct such combat operations as are necessary for self-defense and for the security of the area in which they are stationed.

(d) Provide an emergency reserve to back up the Armed Forces of the GVN in the case of a heightened military crisis.

(e) Act as an advance party of such additional forces as may be introduced if CINCPAC or SEATO contingency plans are invoked.

It is noteworthy that this force is not proposed to clear the jungles and forests of Viet Cong guerrillas. That should be the primary task of the Armed Forces of Vietnam for which they should be specifically organized, trained, and stiffened with ample U.S. advisors down to combat battalion levels. However, the U.S. troops may be called upon to engage in combat to protect themselves, their working parties, and the area in which they live. As a general reserve, they might be thrown into action (with U.S. agreement) against large, formed guerrilla bands which have abandoned the forests for attacks on major targets. But in
general, our forces should not engage in small-scale guerrilla operations in the jungle.

As an area for the operations of U.S. troops, SVN is not an excessively difficult or unpleasant place to operate. While the border areas are rugged and heavily forested, the terrain is comparable to parts of Korea where U.S. troops learned to live and work without too much effort. However, these border areas, for reasons stated above, are not the places to engage our forces. In the High Plateau and in the coastal plain where U.S. troops would probably be stationed, these jungle-forest conditions do not exist to any great extent. The most unpleasant feature in the coastal areas would be the heat and, in the Delta, the mud left behind by the flood. The High Plateau offers no particular obstacle to the stationing of U.S. troops.

The extent to which the Task Force would engage in flood relief activities in the Delta will depend upon further study of the problem there. As reported in Saigon 537, I see considerable advantages in playing up this aspect of the Task Force mission. I am presently inclined to favor a dual mission, initially help to the flood area and subsequently use in any other area of SVN where its resources can be used effectively to give tangible support in the struggle against the Viet Cong. However, the possibility of emphasizing the humanitarian mission will wane if we wait long in moving in our forces or in linking our stated purpose with the emergency conditions created by the flood.

The risks of backing into a major Asian war by way of SVN are present but are not impressive. NVN is extremely vulnerable to conventional bombing, a weakness which should be exploited diplomatically in convincing Hanoi to lay off SVN. Both the DRV and the Chicom's would face severe logistical difficulties in trying to maintain strong forces in the field in SEA, difficulties which we share but by no means to the same degree. There is no case for fearing a mass onslaught of Communist manpower into SVN and its neighboring states, particularly if our airpower is allowed a free hand against logistical targets. Finally, the starvation conditions in China should discourage Communist leaders there from being militarily venturesome for some time to come.

By the foregoing line of reasoning, I have reached the conclusion that the introduction of a U.S. military Task Force without delay offers definitely more advantage than it creates risks and difficulties. In fact, I do not believe that our program to save SVN will succeed without it. If the concept is approved, the exact size and composition of the force should be determined by the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the JSC, the Chief MAAG, and CINCPAC. My own feeling is that the initial size should not exceed 8,000, of which a preponderant number would be in logistical-type units. After acquiring experience in operating in SVN, this initial force will require reorganization and adjustment to the local scene.

As CINCPAC will point out, any forces committed to SVN will need to be replaced by additional forces to his area from the strategic reserve in the U.S. Also, any troops to SVN are in addition to those which may be required to execute SEATO Plan 5. Both facts should be taken into account in current considerations of the FY 1963 budget which bear upon the permanent increase which should be made in the U.S. military establishment to maintain our strategic position for the long pull.

These cables, it will be noticed, are rather sharply focused on the insurgency as a problem reducible to fairly conventional military technique and tactics. Together with the cables from Saigon, the impression is given that the major needs are getting the Army to take the offensive, building up a much better intelligence setup, and persuading Diem to loosen up Administrative impediments to effective use of his forces.
VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF GEN. MATTHEW B. RIDGWAY ON U.S. INTERVENTION IN INDO-CHINA, MAY 1954

What is commonly referred to as the Ridgway Report to President Eisenhower in 1954 was an oral one. The thrust as well as the details of this oral report is to be garnered from several sources:

1. General Matthew Ridgway Memorandum for the Record of May 17, 1954 records the Secretary of the Army's request that General Ridgway's views be drafted for the Secretary's signature. (This memorandum has been donated to the subcommittee by General Ridgway.)

2. The Memorandum from Secretary of the Army Stevens (from the Pentagon Papers) dated May 19, 1954 and addressed to the Secretary of Defense which, according to information given to the subcommittee by former Secretary of the Army Stevens, was written by General Ridgway.

3. General Ridgway's memorandum on Indochina, April 22, 1954:


Memorandum for record:

1. At about 0915 this date I stated orally to Acting Secretary of Defense Anderson in his office, with Secretary Stevens the only other person present, that I felt in conscience bound to express my opinion as to the consequences involved in United States armed intervention in Indo-China. I pointed out that my opinion had not been asked. In substance I stated the following:

(a) The foregoing has highlighted the problem and difficulties which would be encountered by a large modern military force operating in Indo-China. The adverse conditions prevalent in this area combine all those which confronted U.S. forces in previous campaigns in the South and Southwest Pacific and Eastern Asia, with the additional grave complication of a large native population, in thousands of villages, most of which are about evenly divided between friendly and hostile.

(b) The complex nature of these problems would require a major U.S. logistical effort.

(c) They exploded the myth that air and sea forces could solve the Indo-China problems. If U.S. shore-based forces are projected any appreciable distance inland, as would be essential, they will require constant local security at their every location, and for their every activity. The Army will have to provide these forces and their total will be very large.

2. Secretary Anderson seemed receptive to my statement.

3. Following return to my own office, Secretary Stevens came in and informed him that at my quarters on Saturday afternoon, I had stated to General Persons and Lieutenant Colonel Schulz that the Army had a short, factual logistic briefing on Indo-China, highlighting the problems the U.S. would face if it intervened in that Theatre, and that in the event the President should like to hear it, I thought it would be of great interest and perhaps helpful to him.

4. Secretary Stevens agreed that this should be helpful, and further directed that I prepare a brief summary of the Presidential briefing, concluding with the remarks substantially as given to Secretary Anderson in his office this morning. This summary was to be addressed to the Secretary of Defense for Mr. Steven's signature, in order that the former might have the Army's written views.

(Signed) M. B. R.

GEORGE S. PAPPAS,
Colonel, U.S. Army,
Director, U.S. Army Military History Research Collection.

1 Both members of General Eisenhower's personal staff.
Memorandum for: The Secretary of Defense.
Subject: Indo-China.

1. I am becoming increasingly concerned over the frequency of statements by individuals of influence within and without the government that United States air and sea forces alone could solve our problems in Indo-China, and equally so over the very evident lack of appreciation of the logistics factors affecting operations in that area.

2. Indo-China is almost totally devoid of local resources which would be of use to our Armed Forces. It has a tropical, monsoon climate with pronounced wet and dry seasons and the disease and morale hazards are high for Caucasian troops. The population, when not hostile, is untrustworthy. However, the principal deficiency of Indo-China as a base for the support of large military operations lies in the inadequacy of its facilities for the movement of supplies.

3. The two principal ports are Saigon and Haiphong, with a combined daily capacity of 15,100 short tons. Both are inland river ports requiring considerable dredging before maximum potential can be obtained. There are nine secondary ports whose tonnage capacities vary from 100 to 1,400 tons.

4. Because of the inadequacies of the road, railroad, and waterway systems north from Saigon, this port would be of very little use for the support of operations in the Tonkin Delta. Haiphong could not be used without augmentation of its capacity including full use of secondary ports and all beaches. The tonnage capacity of the road and railroad system from Haiphong to Hanoi is even now less than the port capacity of Haiphong.

5. It would be necessary to make full use of the air for supply and evacuation as well as for tactical support. Much construction, to include lengthening and reinforcing of runways, of extreme difficulty during the rainy season, would be necessary. Only three airfields in Indo-China, Haiphong/Cat Bi, Tourane and Tan Son Nhut (near Saigon), have runways over 7,500 feet long and have reported pavement strengths which could support B-45 bomber operations. Eight fields can handle transport planes as large as a C-119; an additional seven fields can accommodate C-46's. Sustained operations could not be undertaken on most of these fields in the rainy season. Within the Delta itself, there are ten airfields of all types of which only one, Cat Bi, is currently being used by C-119's or C-46's.

6. Even were it decided to limit the employment of United States forces to naval and air, which in itself would be a basically faulty military decision, it would devolve upon the Army to perform the bulk of the logistical services and it is essential that the magnitude of the effort required be clearly understood.

7. The adverse conditions prevalent in this area combine all those which confronted United States forces in previous campaigns in the South and Southwest Pacific and Eastern Asia, with the additional grave complication of a large native population, in thousands of villages, most of which are about evenly divided between friendly and hostile.

8. The complex nature of these problems would require a major United States logistical effort. It explodes the myth that air and sea forces could solve the Indo-China problems. If United States land-based forces are projected any appreciable distance inland, as would be essential, they would require constant local security at their every location, and for their every activity. The Army would have to provide these forces, their total would be very large, and the time to provide them would be extensive.

ROBERT T. STEVENS,
Secretary of the Army.

INDOCHINA

MEMORANDUM BY THE CHIEF OF STAFF, U.S. ARMY, GEN. MATTHEW B. RIDGEWAY

1. Currently approved United States Government objectives would regard:
   (a) The passing of the countries of Southeast Asia into the Communist orbit as of grave concern to the United States, and
   (b) The loss of Indochina to the Communist orbit as leading to the loss of the other countries of Southeast Asia to the Communist orbit.
2. The attainment of the United States objective of keeping Indochina out of the Communist orbit is, therefore, of grave concern to the United States and to the free world.

3. The problem now confronting the United States and the free world is how to attain this objective.

4. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have a responsibility for stating the military measures which in their opinion it would be necessary to take to attain the foregoing objective.

5. Such military measures should be on as broad a multinational basis as possible. Only under the most extreme circumstances, if at all, should the United States take such military measures alone.

6. Moreover, while the retention of Indochina on the side of the free world is a major objective, it does not follow that the military measures required to attain that objective would find any decisive objectives in Indochina itself.

7. The immediate and major source of Viet Minh military power is Communist China. With that source destroyed or neutralized, the Viet Minh would cease to present a major military problem to the French in Indochina.

8. It therefore follows that consideration of the military measures required for the attainment of the objectives stated should go far beyond consideration of mere intervention by armed forces, both United States and allied, in Indochina. Such use of United States armed forces, apart from any local successes they might achieve, would constitute a dangerous strategic diversion of limited United States military capabilities, and would commit our armed forces in a non-decisive theater to the attainment of non-decisive local objectives. The greater the United States military forces so employed, the greater would be the advantage to the true sources of Communist military power—Communist China and the USSR. I can see no adequate military justification for such action, nor for the greatly increased risks of general war so incurred.

9. On the contrary, if the United States Government should determine the existence of a situation in which the loss of Indochina and in turn the rest of Southeast Asia to the Communist orbit to be so threatening as to require the use of allied armed forces, including our own, in order to avoid such loss, then I would conclude that:

(a) The United States Government, with the concurrence and support of as many of its Allies as it can obtain, should inform Communist China and the world of its intentions to take such military measures as circumstances dictate to neutralize the sources of Viet Minh military power.

(b) The United States enlist fullest possible military support of its Allies,

(c) Initiate appropriate mobilization and supporting actions.

10. I recommend that the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

(a) Note the views expressed above, and

(b) Forward them to the Secretary of Defense for his information.

EXCERPT FROM "SOLDIERS MEMOIRS OF GEN. MATTHEW B. RIDGWAY"

"We could have fought in Indochina. We could have won, if we had been willing to pay the tremendous cost in men and money that such intervention would have required—a cost that in my opinion would have eventually been as great as, or greater than, that we paid in Korea. In Korea, we had learned that air and naval power alone cannot win a war and that inadequate ground forces cannot win one either. It was incredible to me that we had forgotten that bitter lesson so soon—that we were on the verge of making the same tragic error."
The following memorandum, undated but probably from early April 1954, represents the Army position in regard to intervention in Indochina shortly before the fall of Dien Bien Phu in May 1954. The source: the Pentagon Papers.

ARMY POSITION ON NSC ACTION NO. 1074–A

1. There are important military disadvantages to intervention in Indochina under the assumptions set forth in NSC Action No. 1074–A.

2. A military victory in Indochina cannot be assured by U.S. intervention with air and naval forces alone.

3. The use of atomic weapons in Indochina would not reduce the number of ground forces required to achieve a military victory in Indochina.

4. It is estimated that seven U.S. divisions or their equivalent, with appropriate naval and air support, would be required to win a victory in Indochina if the French withdraw and the Chinese Communists do not intervene. However, U.S. military intervention must take into consideration the capability of the Chinese Communists to intervene.

5. It is estimated that the equivalent of 12 U.S. divisions would be required to win a victory in Indochina, if the French withdraw and the Chinese Communist intervene.

6. The equivalent of 7 U.S. divisions would be required to win a victory in Indochina if the French remain and the Chinese Communists intervene.

7. Requirements for air and naval support for ground force operations are:
   (a) Five hundred fighter-bomber sorties per day exclusive of interdiction and counter-air operations.
   (b) An airlift capability of a one division drop.
   (c) A division amphibious lift.

8. One U.S. airborne regimental combat team can be placed in Indochina in 5 days, one additional division in 24 days, and the remaining divisions in the following 120 days. This could be accomplished partially by reducing U.S. ground strength in the Far East with the remaining units coming from the general reserve in the United States. Consequently, the U.S. ability to meet its NATO commitment would be seriously affected for a considerable period. The time required to place a total of 12 divisions in Indochina would depend upon the industrial and personnel mobilization measures taken by the government.

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1 General Matthew B. Ridgway papers, Archives, U.S. Army Military History Research Collection.