

MACV COMMAND HISTORY 1965



Chapter 2 The Build-Up



VietnamWarHistoryOrg

~~TOP SECRET~~

CHAPTER II

THE BUILDUP

INTRODUCTION

(TS) The buildup of US/FWMAF in SVN was a response to many challenges. Although contingency plans (see Chapter III) had been developed to counter the insurgency threat, these plans could not be implemented without qualification because of the political considerations involved in the deployment of US forces to RVN, and the use of air power both in and out-of-country. Thus, each deployment, each operation, was the subject of considerable study, counter-study, and discussion among COMUSMACV, CINCPAC, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and the SECDEF. There was no clear-cut, long range basic plan that was adhered to during the first six months of the buildup. In fact, in some instances it was not possible to determine when a final decision was made on a particular deployment (e.g., even after the arrival of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Abn Bde) in RVN, strong consideration was given to its withdrawal, to the great consternation of CINCPAC and COMUSMACV).^{1,2}

(TS) On 1 September 1965, COMUSMACV published his concept of operations which, reflecting CINCPAC's concept, established a three-phased operation in RVN.³ The objectives of this "campaign" plan are discussed in Chapter III; the deployments are discussed in this chapter. This concept was the first attempt to promulgate a master plan for the further deployment of US/FWMA forces to RVN. Phase I concerned deployments through the end of 1965; Phase II: 1 January through 30 June 1966; Phase III: 12 to 18 months following completion of Phase II. In November 1965, Phase II was modified to cope with the increased NVA threat, thus adding Phase IIA to the plan. In fact, there were many modifications made in the deployment schedules of all three phases. The significant point is that a plan was developed, approved, and used as a definite guide for the buildup of US/FWMA forces in RVN.

US FORCES

(U) For the portrayal of the buildup of US forces during 1965 see Figure II-1 and Table II-1.

US Marine Corps

(S) In January 1965 there were about 700 Marines in SVN.

~~TOP SECRET~~

841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

Task Unit (TU) 79.3.5 (Marine Unit, Vietnam), dubbed "SHUFLY" and consisting of a staff, a Marine helicopter squadron and a sub-unit of Marine Air Base Squadron 16, had been on the ground since April 1962. Its mission was to support ARVN operations in IV CTZ. During its two and a half years in RVN, this unit developed valuable methodology, tactics, techniques and equipment and provided combat experience for hundreds of pilots, mechanics and controllers. It had also established a continuing tradition of almost 100 percent aircraft availability ever since its arrival in-country and a base of knowledge for future Marine activities in I CTZ.⁴

(S) In the latter part of 1964, hard-core VC strength jumped by 50 percent to approximately 9,000; guerrilla incidents reached a record high, and the flow of insurgents down the Ho Chi Minh trail neared a thousand men per month. Thus, 1965 portended a need for the US to provide assistance to GVN in a more concrete form than the established advisory and assistance effort. However, two obstacles had to be overcome before the US could act: the reluctance, if not animosity, of some Vietnamese leaders toward excessive foreign influence in their affairs, and the lethargy of the US public toward the "intangible" threat of a communist take-over in SVN. It was obvious to US military and government leaders, that unless the US acted, complete communist control over the country was imminent.

(TS) The President, SECDEF and JCS were in constant contact with CINCPAC, COMUSMACV and the Ambassador as the new year, heralded by VC terrorism started off with the Pleiku and Qui Nhon attacks on US forces. The initial US attacks on NVN in February were retaliatory acts. It rapidly became evident that "graduated reprisal" was not a satisfactory approach, and that "sustained reprisal" was required to give the US the initiative. COMUSMACV was constantly queried for his continuing analysis of the worsening situation which became so critical, that in February US government-sponsored dependents were evacuated to clear the decks for action.⁵

(TS) The possibility of unilateral intervention had been foreseen several years earlier in CINCPAC and COMUSMACV Contingency Plan 32-64. This plan specified that the III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) would land in the I CTZ to provide security of the Da Nang airbase and port and to act as a blocking force across Vietnam just south of the DMZ in anticipation of overt aggression by NVN. The III MEF was selected for this role due to its accessibility on Okinawa and its capability for a rapid landing over the beach in SVN.⁶

Page 29 of 438 Pages
THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841524

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

(TS) In late 1964, the JCS, after receiving COMUSMACV's assessment of the situation in SVN, considered strengthening the defense forces in the I CTZ by moving the US Seventh Fleet (7th Flt) Special Landing Force (SLF) to that area and moving a Marine Light Antiaircraft Missile (LAAM) (HAWK) battalion from Continental United States (CONUS) to Da Nang for air base security. At the same time, programs were initiated to deploy two USMC Battalion Landing Teams (BLT) or USA battalions to Saigon for local protection; to add more land and sea-based air power to optimize execution of courses of action; to send more CONUS or Pacific Command (PACOM) air-sea-ground units to the Western Pacific, (WESTPAC) and to alert CONUS units to be prepared to implement applicable portions of CINCPAC OPLANs 32-64 and 39-65. While none of these moves actually occurred in 1964, their feasibility was determined, alerts issued and patterns set for the future.⁷

(S) In February 1965, the Deputy Commander USMACV (DEP-COMUSMACV), surveyed the VC situation at Da Nang and the current defensive position of US/RVN forces there in order to determine the need for deployment of the programmed forces. Because of the vital importance of the Da Nang air base to COMUSMACV's plans, the high concentration of trained personnel and valuable equipment in that area, and the questionable capability of the RVNAF to stop a determined VC attack, he believed it necessary to deploy a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) ashore.⁸ COMUSMACV concurred with this appraisal.

(S) During the time DEPCOMUSMACV was making the survey of the Da Nang area, the JCS recommended to SECDEF that an eight-week program of graduated military pressures against NVN be initiated. This included movement of the 9th MEB from Okinawa to Da Nang and another MEB from Hawaii to Okinawa, both with necessary combat support and combat service support elements. Air and sea lifts were to be positioned for reaction purposes and the III MEF was to be in a state of readiness. These plans considered the possibility of NVN/CHICOM intervention, but hopefully concluded that strong action by the US plus international pressure might cause a reduction of VC activity as increasing damage was inflicted on NVN.⁹

(TS) COMUSMACV concurred with the JCS estimate of the situation and recommended that all deployments should first be cleared with the GVN, in order to insure that introduction of large US forces into SEASIA would not prejudice the US position of graduated reprisals. He urged the deployment of the 9th MEB as soon as possible. Based on COMUSMACV's reply to the JCS that the situation was worsening daily and on his rationale for deployment of the 9th MEB, Da Nang was stated as the objective for

~~TOP SECRET~~

841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

the MEB. COMUSMACV's rationale was substantially that previously stated by DEPCOMUSMACV. JCS notified CINCPAC and COMUSMACV on 27 February 1965 that approval had been granted to deploy the 9th MEB to Da Nang as requested. This decision indicated a determination by US leaders to press forward in achieving the limited objectives set by the US in SEASIA.¹⁰ To help justify deployment of sizable US combat forces into SVN, COMUSMACV was requested to forward all indications linking Hanoi with the direction of the VC effort in SVN.¹¹

(S) With the decision to land the 9th MEB at Da Nang, US authorities in Saigon were faced with the problem of Vietnamese acceptance of a foreign combat force on their soil. The US Ambassador met with Prime Minister Quat to inform him about US views and plans. Key Vietnamese Generals, Thieu and Minh, agreed with the US plans but expressed concern about the possible reaction of the populace. They requested that the force be brought ashore in the most inconspicuous way feasible.¹²

(S) Soon after, the Ambassador received a State-Defense message which commented that it was desirable to deploy the 173d Abn Bde from Okinawa instead of the 9th MEB.¹³ COMUSMACV quickly indicated that he did not understand this sudden change and could not support it militarily. He firmly recommended that the original plan be carried out because the Marines were logistically more self-sufficient and had more badly-needed combat support elements than the 173d. Evidently this conviction, shared by the Ambassador, was strong enough to overcome objections and no further changes were proposed.¹⁴

(TS) The JCS still doubted whether the deployment of the 9th MEB would be an adequate response to the deteriorating situation in SVN and asked COMUSMACV if there were any indications of an imminent collapse of the GVN war efforts. The Chairman, JCS (CJCS) feared that the VC gains might have reached the point where, regardless of US actions against NVN, the RVN would fall apart.¹⁵ COMUSMACV advised CJCS, that although the situation in all CTZ's was serious, he was confident that RVN leaders and citizenry could overcome political upheaval. COMUSMACV stated:

History may well record that the real significance of 1964, was not major VC advance and corresponding GVN retrogression but rather that South Vietnam's social and political institutions remained remarkably intact under the powerful disintegrating blows to which subjected - most of them not of VC making . . . Nonetheless, we do have the very real asset of a resilient people and this gives hope that

~~TOP SECRET~~

there is more time available than we might think; time in which if properly exploited, the needed national leadership could evolve . . . We cannot permit the battalions of the ARVN to be defeated in open combat . . . This will require an extremely high level of pre-strike bombing and close air support . . . the VNAF A-1H's . . . fully tasked now, simply haven't the capability to provide the intensified air support envisaged . . .

COMUSMACV felt that, because of these facts, the US must increase both air and ground forces to supplement ARVN forces and to aid them in overcoming their deficiencies. He concluded with a listing of the number and type of units needed to accomplish the mission of overcoming the VC threat; among them were the 9th MEB and additional USMC helicopter squadrons.¹⁶

(S) CINCPAC reinforced COMUSMACV's assessment by agreeing with it fully, and by reemphasizing the following requirements to give even stronger support to his own earlier recommendations:

- 1) The increased use of air in RVN.
- 2) Necessity for tighter control over coastal shipping.
- 3) Requirement for use of US forces in security missions in SVN.
- 4) Need for a logistics base within the country.

CINCPAC emphasized that in COMUSMACV's estimation, the war had moved out of the purely guerrilla phase and into a more formalized military conflict. It became essential, therefore, that this transition be recognized and that reaction to it be immediate, with the best in US weapons and tactics. He concluded by placing an even higher priority than COMUSMACV on deployment of the full 9th MEB to I CTZ rather than the MEB (-) which had previously been planned, because of the need for insurance should ARVN's ability to resist collapse in the critical area of Da Nang, where so much was already committed.¹⁷ CJCS informed COMUSMACV and CINCPAC that their recommendations had been forwarded to SECDEF and that the prospects for approval were excellent. Thus, step one in the buildup of forces had been taken and subsequent steps appeared to be assured.¹⁸

(U) The 9th MEB landed routinely at Da Nang on 8 March with no opposition from either the VC or the civilian populace.

Page 32 of 48 2 Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

8-11-84

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Girls with leis and a contingent of dignitaries welcomed the troops as they stormed ashore.¹⁹

(S) In early April, COMUSMACV completed a re-evaluation of force requirements, and the result was a request for two additional USMC BLT's; one to be positioned at Da Nang and the other at Phu Bai. In addition, he requested a USMC F-4 squadron and necessary MEB, Regimental Landing Team (RLT), and Marine Air Group (MAG) headquarters and control and support personnel.²⁰ On 3 April, JCS approved the deployment of the units requested and directed CINCPAC to expand the mission of the USMC elements to include engagement in counterinsurgency operations. This coincided with COMUSMACV's earlier rationale for the buildup, in which he had stipulated a need for US forces to supplement ARVN forces in the conduct of the war.²¹ From 4-12 April, the F-4 squadron deployed to Da Nang.²¹

(S) On 14 April the 3d Bn, 4th Marines, displaced from Da Nang to Phu Bai as scheduled, and occupied the airfield. On the same day CINCPAC requested in-country clearance for deployment of a naval Mobile Construction Battalion (MCB) to Chu Lai on or about 15 June and another MCB for Da Nang in July. The purpose was to provide support for priority engineering tasks at these two bases.²²

(TS) DOD informed the Ambassador that the deteriorating situation in SVN required greater US involvement and that the introduction of more battalions of Marines was being considered.²³ On 17 April, JCS notified CINCPAC that deployment of 5,000 additional Marines previously requested by Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) had been tentatively approved at the highest level. At this time, total US Marine strength in RVN was 8,767. The additional 5,000-man force was to include the Expeditionary Force HQ; HQ 3d Marine Division; 1st Marine Air Wing Advance Group, plus supporting logistical elements. D-Day for landing the Marines was not firm, but it was expected to be in early May. The landing was to take place at Chu Lai.²⁴

(S) CINCPACFLT had requested the above mentioned Marine force with the concurrence of COMUSMACV. However, after closer study COMUSMACV decided that the proposed forces were inadequate to provide security for Chu Lai and that reliance upon ARVN for outer security was unrealistic except for short periods. He therefore strongly recommended to CINCPAC that a full regiment be landed at Chu Lai, together with reinforcing elements to provide a combat potential adequate to the task.²⁵ CINCPAC informed JCS on 29 April that he concurred in

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED Page 33 of 482 Pages
CLASSIFIED BY DAAM per

841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

COMUSMACV's recommendation.

(TS) On 1 May, CINCPAC notified COMUSMACV that the JCS had authorized the deployment of the regiment, air elements and supporting logistical elements to Chu Lai upon receipt of country clearance from the Ambassador.²⁶

(S) Following a conference with CG, I Corps, which clarified command relationships and other matters pertaining to the occupation of the same area by US and ARVN forces, COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC that D-Day for the Chu Lai landing of the three battalions would be 7 May. JCS then notified CINCPAC that the Term III Marine "Expeditionary" Force was politically undesirable and that henceforth the word "Amphibious" would be substituted. On 6 May, Maj Gen W. R. Collins, USMC, reported to COMUSMACV as CG, III Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF). Later on that day, the 9th MEB submitted its last situation report and phased out.²⁷

(S) The amphibious task force entered the Chu Lai landing area at 070500H May 1965, and the signal "Land the Landing Force" flew at 0600H. The first wave touched down at 0800H. By 071900H May 1965, all major ground units were established ashore. These units consisted of two BLT's, one RLTHQ shore party, 3d Recon Bn (-), a direct support artillery battalion, and MCB-10. The MCB was under direct control of CG, III MAF, and was used to assist the Marine engineer group in constructing the air strip and performing other critical engineering tasks at Chu Lai. The ground units were to be followed by the approved air elements as soon as the Marine Short Air Tactical Strip (SATS) was completed. The Moresets (catapult and arresting gear) were installed and sufficient runway was prepared to accept aircraft by 28 May.²⁸

(S) On 16 May, CINCPAC reported to JCS his intentions to deploy to Chu Lai the three USMC A-4 squadrons of MAG-12 which were included in the task organization of the Chu Lai landing force. One squadron was to land early on 28 May, another was to land later the same day and one would stand by on call from Cubi Point, Republic of the Philippines (ROP), until the airfield was ready to accept it.²⁹ This was the last major deployment of Marine tactical units until early summer. In July, the expeditionary airfield at Chu Lai (made of AM-2 matting) was completed.

(S) By June 1965, seven battalions of the 3d Marine Division were in SVN. Of the remaining two, one BLT was ready to deploy from Okinawa at the request of COMUSMACV.

Page 34 of 48 2 Pages THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

8-1153411-8

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

The remaining BLT was the 7th Flt SLF. One RLTF (7th Marines), approved by JCS, had been deployed from Eastern Pacific during the month, and was poised at Okinawa for deployment into SVN. On 4 June Brig Gen L. W. Walt, USMC, relieved Maj Gen W. R. Collins as CG III MAF. By the middle of June there were 16,500 Marines in the three enclaves - Da Nang, Chu Lai and Phu Bai, with more to come.³⁰

(TS) On 7 June, COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC and JCS that the planned buildup of ARVN forces would not be realized, owing to excessively high desertion rates and high casualties. Several battalions had been decimated by the VC. These factors caused a moratorium on new accessions and caused the force ratios to continue to change in favor of the VC. COMUSMACV saw no alternative to reinforcing US efforts in SVN with additional US or other FVMAF. He therefore recommended deployment of the remaining two BLT's of the 3d Marine Division on Okinawa, and appropriate support and air elements (approximately 8,000 troops), previously programmed, and reconstitution of the SLF. He also recommended that planning be initiated to program an additional Marine brigade to reinforce the III MAF.³¹

(TS) JCS responded by disapproving the request for the two Marine BLT's on Okinawa and held up the decision to move the other requested US forces. In an unforeseen and perplexing move, JCS proposed that CINCPAC and COMUSMACV consider moving units out of SVN even before they arrived.³² CINCPAC promptly protested and stated that the situation in SVN was critical and that the two BLT's were needed immediately if US forces were to prevail.³³

(TS) On 27 June COMUSMACV submitted to JCS a new requirements forecast which included seven USMC helicopter squadrons, three fighter squadrons and three attack squadrons. These forces were in addition to his 7 June request which had included both ground and air units.³⁴ On 29 June, JCS informed COMUSMACV that the forces he had requested were on the way and would be in-country at the end of July. They included the two Marine BLT's requested in June and one F-4B squadron which would complete deployment of 3d Marine Div and the major part of 1st Marine Air Wing (MAW). An additional USMC brigade, a USMC fighter attack (VMFA) squadron and necessary supporting elements and the medium helicopter (HMM) squadrons would be provided later.³⁵

(S) On 14 August, the 7th Mar Regt (-), the additional brigade mentioned in the preceding paragraph, landed and raised the strength of the Marines to 30,500 in the three enclaves of SVN. At the end of September, USMC strength in SVN was 38,000: 2,000 at Phu Bai; 23,000 at Da Nang; and 13,000 at Chu Lai.³⁶

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED Page 35 of 482 Pages
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Coupled with combat support and combat service support units, the deployment of the Marine air units requested in June created the difference in strength figures between August and December. At the end of September, CG, III MAF, estimated the situation of his command and declared unequivocally to COMUSMACV that in order for him to perform his mission, the optimum US ground force requirement for the three enclaves would be two Marine Divisions and appropriate supporting air. Furthermore, he stated, "if III MAF is assigned the responsibility extending from Quang Ngai to the DMZ, at least three more battalions will be needed."³⁷

(S) October, November and December saw multi-battalion unilateral and combined US/ARVN operations against the VC. The Marine units also actively participated in pacification activities and civic action. The Tactical Areas of Responsibilities (TAOR) were constantly expanding, thinning out the Marine strength to a dangerous degree. In October, there were 292 Marine rotary-wing and fixed-wing aircraft in SVN which averaged 4,624 flying hours per month.³⁸ No additional battalions joined the III MAF during October and November, although there was an exchange of infantry battalions between I CTZ and Okinawa in accordance with CG, Fleet Marine Force Pacific's (FMFPAC) rotation program. As of 7 December there were 38,554 Marines in the III MAF area of responsibility.³⁹

(TS) In mid-December, the SECDEF approved COMUSMACV's previous request for accelerated deployment of Phase II combat forces. JCS approved deployment of one BLT for each of the first three months of 1966. This would give CG, III MAF, his optimum combat force of two Marine divisions and appropriate supporting air.⁴⁰ This accelerated deployment caused consternation in PACCOM due to the fact that programmed deployments had seriously depleted PACOM reserves. CINCPAC requested that both Army and Marine reserves be reconstituted.⁴¹

(S) On 20 December, the 2d Air Division (AD) was tasked with determining the feasibility of absorbing III MAF's requirements for ten fighter squadrons. After considering the results of these studies, COMUSMACV approved the recommendation for the deployment of ten fighter squadrons to SVN with eight of them supporting USMC ground forces and two to be allocated to support of other in-country forces.⁴² This was included in COMUSMACV's proposals to CINCPAC for the US force buildup in 1966.

(S) In December 1965, CG, III MAF, requested an expansion of the 1st Radio Battalion, an additional communication battalion and an MP battalion. He also requested that the III MAF HQ be expanded so that he could perform his many functions as CG, III

Page 36 of 48 2 Pages Order Sec Army By DAIM per
THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED

841334

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

MAF, Naval Component Commander (NCC), Senior Advisor I Corps, and Area Coordinator, in an efficient manner. This request called for an additional 80 officer spaces to the 81 then authorized and an additional 215 enlisted spaces to the 157 already authorized for III MAF HQ. COMUSMACV approved the request and recommended that CINCPAC concur.⁴⁵

(TS) At the end of 1965, the equivalent of nearly two USMC divisions was in SVN. When added to a supporting air wing, combat support elements, combat service support elements, and elements enroute, the total USMC strength was about 40,000. Plans for 1966 indicated that USMC strength would rise to about 65,000. If these plans were fully implemented, RVN would contain the largest concentration of USMC "Forces in Readiness" since World War II.^{44,45} (For the location of the major units of III MAF, see Figure II-2.)

US Army

(S) Of the 14,697 USA personnel in SVN at the beginning of the year, approximately one-third were working directly under COMUSMACV as field advisors or staff officers. The remaining two-thirds were assigned to USA units providing combat support and combat service support to RVNAF forces.⁴⁶ The 5th Special Forces Group (SFG) (Abn) and various Army aviation units were the major USA units in Vietnam at that time.⁴⁷

(S) With the VC attacks on the US installations at Fleiku and Qui Nhon in early February, it became increasingly clear that the war had entered a new phase. On 11 February, JCS recommended to the SECDEF that a brigade from the 25th Inf (Infantry) Div be deployed to Thailand; the 173d Abn Bde be alerted for movement to SVN, and necessary support elements be deployed to back-up the recommended forces.⁴⁸

(S) In early March, responding to a JCS message requesting his views on the situation in SVN, COMUSMACV stated that the VC held the initiative and continued to gain even greater control; the situation in all four CTZ's presented an unfavorable picture for the GVN. In predicting the future without additional US/FWMAF forces, he stated that in six months the RVNAF would be clustered around the main population centers and the GVN would be beset by "end the war" groups seeking a negotiated settlement. COMUSMACV's evaluation was that the VC would succeed if there were no changes to the direction and degree of US effort. He recommended the full use of all available US tactical air resources to support RVNAF, improvement of coastal surveillance, deployment of an MEB (-) to Da Nang and improvement of target acquisition and intelligence resources and capabilities in SVN. He also

Page 37 of 48 2 Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

stated that among other actions under consideration were the deployments of three more USA helicopter companies and three tailored companies of observation aircraft to increase the forward air control and surveillance capability. In summation, COMUSMACV felt that his recommendations would create a new basic US policy toward the war in SVN and that the US should be committed to do whatever was militarily necessary to prevent defeat. He said that the measures he suggested, if taken, might halt the adverse trends and present challenges which the VC would not care to meet.⁴⁹ CINCPAC concurred with COMUSMACV's views and recommended approval of the requested forces.⁵⁰ The JCS also supported COMUSMACV's views, and stated that the prospects for SECDEF approval of his recommendations were excellent.⁵¹

(S) The request for three additional helicopter companies was reiterated to the Chief of Staff US Army (CofSA) during briefings held in Saigon on 7 March and was approved later in the month.⁵² The need for additional O-1 aircraft was also mentioned at the briefing, and was subsequently approved.⁵³ Also presented to CofSA was the USMACV "enclave concept". This concept envisioned a series of well defended areas, with sea and airfield facilities, located in those areas that had the best potential for maintaining US presence in SVN, despite VC efforts.⁵⁴

(U) Following JCS's approval⁵⁵ of COMUSMACV's request⁵⁶ for additional forces to augment GVN security forces in greater Saigon, the first USA battalion-sized unit, a Military Police (MP) battalion, arrived in SVN during 19-21 March. One platoon was deployed to each CTZ pending arrival of additional security troops; the remainder of the battalion was stationed in Saigon.

(TS) In a message to JCS on 21 March, COMUSMACV stated, with CINCPAC's concurrence, that the US had to be ready to deploy combat troops in SVN in the near future in order to secure major airfields and ports. COMUSMACV had considered the use of a highly mobile Army brigade to be stationed at Bien Hoa and Vung Tau. He had also formulated a concept for the employment of a division along the Qui Nhon-An Khe-Fleiku axis, for which he favored the 11th Air Assault Division (later designated as the 1st Cav Div (AM)). COMUSMACV believed the enclave concept was essential to all deployment plans and designated Da Nang as a pilot operation. He also considered Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, Tuy Hoa, Phan Thiet, and Chu Lai as sites for future deployment.⁵⁷

(TS) On 26 Mar 65, COMUSMACV published an estimate which outlined the enemy capabilities and the courses of action open to the US. In his analysis, the assumption was made that the retaliatory and punitive actions would, in time, cause NVN to terminate its support to the insurgents in SVN. COMUSMACV

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

favored the adoption of a course of action which would include a maximum buildup of RVNAF, plus the commitment of a US division along the Qui Nhon-Pleiku axis, a separate brigade at Bien Hoa-Vung Tau and a MEB (+) in I CTZ, for a total US commitment of approximately 33,000 troops. The principal advantages of this proposed course of action would be the attainment of military objectives and the support it would contribute to GVN political stability. The estimate also dealt with the force ratios which would be obtained by the introduction of US units. A determination was made that ARVN and VC battalions were rated equal in combat power (ARVN air and artillery support offset the qualitative and motivational advantages of the VC); a USA battalion was equal to two ARVN battalions, while a USMC battalion was equal to three ARVN battalions. Deployment of these 33,000 troops would result in a force increase equivalent to 63 ARVN battalions by March 1966 (32 battalion-equivalents from USA-USMC forces; 31 new ARVN battalions from a buildup in ARVN strength). COMUSMACV recommended that the deployment of these forces be completed by June 1965.⁵⁸ On 30 March, COMUSMACV requested a field command headquarters to control planned US and FWMA forces in SVN.⁵⁹

(C) In early April, JCS concurred with COMUSMACV's estimate of the situation and his recommendations, and proposed that a conference be held in Hawaii to develop a plan for deploying combat and logistical units to SVN.⁶⁰

(S) At the Hawaii conference (8-10 April) CINCPAC recommended to JCS that a USA division be deployed as soon as logistically feasible, for employment in the highlands or elsewhere, as COMUSMACV directed. The 173d Abn Bde should expeditiously move from Okinawa to Bien Hoa-Vung Tau. Lastly, a USA corps headquarters should be deployed concurrently with the division, to assume operational control of US and certain FWMA forces planned for deployment in II and III CTZ (See Annex B). Thus COMUSMACV's earlier recommendations were all supported.⁶¹

(S) The 173d Abn Bde was approved for temporary deployment to SVN on 14 April.⁶² On that same day Commander-in-Chief Strike Command (CINCSTRIKE) was tasked to replace the 173d as soon as possible with a brigade from CONUS so that the 173d could return to PACOM reserve.⁶³ COMUSMACV expressed his desire for an airborne brigade to replace the 173d.⁶⁴ The unit scheduled to replace the 173d was the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div.

(S) The conference also established the need for a separate brigade to secure the enclave area of Qui Nhon-Nha Trang-Cam Ranh Bay and to extend the secure areas of Qui Nhon to allow the additional deployments of logistical units. It was recommended that this brigade be obtained from the 1st Inf Div.^{65,66}

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per 2

Page 39 of 48 2 Pages

8-11534

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~
~~SECRET~~

(S) At a subsequent conference in Hawaii later that month, attended by the SINGDEF, the US Ambassador to RVN, CINCPAC and COMUSMACV, it was decided that the 173d Abn Bde would deploy to Bien Hoa-Vung Tau by 15 June, with a corresponding increase of logistical units and personnel to support the buildup. The conferees also planned for the deployment of the airmobile division to Qui Nhon-Pleiku-Kontum by 1 August and the concurrent deployment of the USA corps hqs to Nha Trang. They also recommended the deployment of the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div and the 2d Bde, 1st Inf Div, to SVN. The results of this conference thus met fully COMUSMACV's previous recommendations.⁶⁷

(S) The main body of the 173d Abn Bde began to arrive on 5 May, and constituted the first US Army ground combat unit deployed to SVN. COMUSMACV directed that the brigade (-) be stationed at Bien Hoa, with a battalion task force in Vung Tau. The mission of the 173d Bde was to render combat support to RVNAF and to engage in combat counterinsurgency operations as directed by COMUSMACV.⁶⁸

(S) In early June, COMUSMACV again expressed concern over the deteriorating SVN situation and the need for additional US troops to offset the rising enemy capabilities. Earlier estimates of force ratios were no longer valid due to increased NVA infiltration and ARVN losses. He desired to retain the 173d in SVN and stated that additional deployments above the 23 maneuver battalions previously recommended should include the remainder of the 1st or 101st Divisions and additional helicopter, artillery, and HAWK units. He recommended that planning for deploying these units begin.⁶⁹

(S) Later that month the JCS concurred in the earlier proposal to deploy the 1st Cav Div (AM), and stated that, with the arrival of the separate brigades which had been requested earlier (identified as the 2d Bde, 1st Inf Div, to secure the Qui Nhon-Nha Trang-Cam Ranh Bay enclave and the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div, to replace the 173d Abn Bde), COMUSMACV would have 23 US maneuver battalions, the number he had requested earlier. Any decision to withdraw or replace units in or enroute to SVN would be made later.⁷⁰

(S) COMUSMACV took strong exception to any mention of withdrawing any troops from SVN⁷¹ and to any suggestion that 23 USA/USMC maneuver battalions was the upper level of commitment. He reminded the JCS that he had previously requested another division in addition to those forces they had recommended. He also asked for additional artillery units, particularly 175-mm gun battalions, and more airmobile companies to support the ground forces. COMUSMACV concluded with the statement that no novel arrangement would achieve quick results. More troops were needed in SVN, and soon.⁷²

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED ON 08-14-2009

Page 40 of 48 2Pages

841534

~~SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

(TS) On 22 June, CJCS stated that in addition to plans to deploy the airmobile division (eight bns) to SVN, consideration was also being given COMUSMACV's earlier request for additional forces resulting in the deployment of the remainder of the 1st Inf Div (six bns), one MAB (three BLT's), and a Republic of Korea (ROK) division (see Annex B), plus helicopter, artillery, and air defense units. The forces in-country, or scheduled for deployment added to those considered for deployment, would total 44 maneuver battalions. In reply to a CJCS inquiry as to whether this force would convince the VC/NVA that they could not win,⁷³ COMUSMACV stated that there was no evidence the VC/NVA would alter their intentions, no matter what the US did in the next six months, but the 44-battalion force should establish a favorable balance of power by the end of the year. He felt that substantial increases would be necessary in 1966, since the US would be too busy building our forces in 1965 to seize the initiative from the enemy during the year.⁷⁴

(S) On 27 June COMUSMACV expressed the need for 13 airmobile companies and several airlift platoons to support the infantry brigades and non-divisional artillery units. He realized the magnitude of his requirements, but felt they were necessary.⁷⁵

(S) The location of USA combat units in, or requested for, SVN was the subject of a message from COMUSMACV to CINCPAC on 2 July.⁷⁶ COMUSMACV's plan, which was concurred in by CINCPAC⁷⁷ and JCS,⁷⁸ was to deploy the 2d Bde (-), 1st Inf Div, to Bien Hoa; a battalion combat team (BCT) of this brigade to Cam Ranh Bay; the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div, to Dong Ba Thin, near Nha Trang-Cam Ranh Bay; 1st Cav Div (AM) to Qui Nhon; the 1st Inf Div (-) to III CTZ, and the 173d Abn Bde would be assembled at Bien Hoa as a rapid reaction force for use throughout the country.

(C) During July, two separate brigades arrived in SVN; the 2d Bde, 1st Inf Div, and the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div. The brigade from the 1st Div offloaded a battalion with supporting units at Cam Ranh Bay on 12 July to provide security, and the brigade (-) deployed to Bien Hoa.⁷⁹ The 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div arrived at Cam Ranh Bay on 29 July and relieved the battalion of the 2d Bde, 1st Inf Div, allowing it to join its parent organization at Bien Hoa. The 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div had originally been ordered to deploy to SVN to replace the 173d Abn Bde but, on 2 August,⁸⁰ approval was granted to retain the 173d in SVN on a permanent basis,⁸¹ giving COMUSMACV the two highly mobile brigade forces he had requested for rapid reserve/reaction operations throughout SVN.

(C) Arrival of the two separate brigades was followed closely by the establishment of a corps-size HQ, designated Task Force Alpha. This HQ, which had been requested by COMUSMACV on 30 March, was to control all US ground forces in II and III Corps. With the

THIS DOCUMENT IS UNCLASSIFIED
Order 5400.7-R, DATE 11/11/01

Page 41 of 482 Pages

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

arrival of additional forces, the HQ was later redesignated Field Force, Vietnam (FFORCEV).⁸²

(S) During the SECDEF's visit to SVN on 16 July, he was informed of COMUSMACV's⁸³ position concerning troop requirements for SVN, deployment schedules, expected results, and probable requirements for 1966. At this time there were 16 USA maneuver battalions in SVN or scheduled for arrival. The total JCS-recommended or approved additional deployments at the time included 26 US-FWMAF maneuver battalions which would bring the total number of US-FWMAF maneuver battalions to approximately 44; 22 of which would be USA battalions.⁸⁴

(S) COMUSMACV's concept, as presented to the SECDEF, indicated a need for 44 maneuver battalions in 1965, operating from enclaves and secure bases, with the largest possible proportion being held in a mobile reaction and combat role. The force development levels were based on force ratios, objectives and priorities, and the military tasks which were to be performed. The need for additional forces in the future was projected, contingent upon VC strength increases and/or increasing lags in the ARVN buildup.⁸⁵ In addition to the 44 maneuver battalions, COMUSMACV expressed a requirement for 22 artillery battalions, four Hawk battalions, 13 engineer battalions, 20 USA helicopter companies, seven USMC helicopter squadrons, and three helicopter battalion and service support units, some of which were then in SVN.⁸⁶ These forces were referred to as Phase I forces.

(S) COMUSMACV further informed the SECDEF during the conference that RVNAF had lost the initiative, and the people of SVN had displayed a loss of confidence in the GVN because of increasing VC attacks and the inability of RVNAF to hold and secure critical rural areas and lines of communication. It was apparent that RVNAF was unable to cope with the VC threat; and unless the requested US/FWMA forces were deployed, there was little chance of arresting the trend. If the forces were not deployed, the VC would attain more favorable force ratios, the stability of the GVN would be further weakened, and the introduction of even greater US resources on a more urgent basis, against greater odds, would be inevitable.⁸⁷

(S) In answering SECDEF's question as to what additional forces would be needed in 1966 to gain US objectives in SVN, COMUSMACV stated that it was anticipated that a need would exist for an increase of 24 maneuver battalions; 14 artillery battalions; three air defense (Hawk) battalions; eight engineer battalions; 12 helicopter companies; six helicopter battalions, and additional support units.⁸⁸

(TS) Another conference was held in Hawaii in early August to develop a deployment plan for those forces requested by COMUSMACV. The conference developed a coordinated program for the deployment of

Page 42 of 48 2 Pages THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAWN per

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

forces during the remainder of 1965 and into 1966. In early August, there were eight USA infantry (maneuver) battalions in SVN as well as 13 1/3 helicopter companies. An additional eight maneuver battalions were approved for deployment--the 1st Cav Div (AM)--and 17 1/3 helicopter companies were either enroute or had been approved.⁸⁹

(TS) The final plan developed at the conference called for movement of:

1) Remainder of the 1st Inf Div (six battalions) to III CTZ during the period 1-17 October. The 1st Inf Div had been alerted on 31 July.

2) Six artillery battalions (two 105-mm howitzer, two 175-mm gun, two 8-in howitzer) to locations in II and III CTZ's during 1-2 October. These units, with control elements, had received orders on 31 July to deploy to SVN.

3) 13 2/3 helicopter companies (light) and four helicopter companies (medium) to various locations in SVN from 15 November 1965 to 1 October 1966.

4) Two US Army air defense battalions (Hawk), (one to TSN and one to Qui Nhon) by 1 October. Both battalions received deployment orders on 31 July.

5) Three USA CV-2B (Caribou) companies by 31 December, for various locations in SVN.⁹⁰

(TS) COMUSMACV's concept of operations in SVN, published in late August, outlined a 3-phase program, each with its own time frame, objectives and military tasks, designed to achieve the US/FWMAF/GVN goals.⁹¹ (See Chapter III.) To support the concept, a force-requirements conference was held in Saigon in early September. The conferees outlined the tasks to be performed during the three phases and decided that the move from Phase I to Phase II operations would be a gradual shift from strategically defensive operations to a posture employing the strategic offensive. The major additional USA units needed for Phase II operations were two infantry divisions, an armored cavalry regiment, another field force HQ, another infantry battalion for the 173d Abn Bde, and support forces numbering about 30,000 US Army personnel.⁹²

(TS) The initial plan for Phase II forces was to employ an infantry division generally along the southern coastal plain in II CTZ, with a second infantry division operating largely in Hau Nghia Province, northwest of Saigon. The armored cavalry regiment was to operate closely with the division located

~~TOP SECRET~~

along the southern coastal plain and to secure the southern portion of Highway 1 in II CTZ. The field force HQ was to be established in III CTZ and assume operational control of US/FWMA combat forces operating there. ⁹³

(TS) The purpose of the CINCPAC conference in early October 1965 was to identify and program the necessary Phase II forces for deployment to SVN. The two divisions requested by COMUSMACV were identified as the 4th and 25th Inf Divs; the 4th Div to operate in II CTZ and the 25th in III CTZ. The initial element of the 25th Div, a brigade with support forces, was programmed to arrive in SVN by 31 January 1966, and was planned for attachment to the 1st Inf Div until the remainder of the division arrived in September 1966. The first element of the 4th Div, also a brigade-size force, was programmed to arrive during June 1966 and the division (-) scheduled to close in December 1966. The armored cavalry regiment was programmed to arrive during September 1966 with the remaining combat, combat support and combat service support units programmed for arrival throughout 1966 and, in some cases, into the middle of 1967. ⁹⁴

(U) By the end of October, nearly all of the combat forces requested for deployment during 1965 had arrived in SVN. The arrival of the 1st Cav Div (AM) on 12 September, and the arrival of the remainder of the 1st Inf Div on 7 October, completed the deployment of the then-planned major USA combat units in 1965. ⁹⁵

(TS) The planned buildup of USA units was substantially revised in late November largely because of new intelligence estimates, which indicated a large influx of NVA forces. ⁹⁶ COMUSMACV stated that the enemy was increasing his forces at a rate which more than doubled the previous estimate. The force ratios were taking an adverse trend and were then down to 2.8 to 1. Projecting this late 1965 enemy buildup rate into 1966, it was estimated that the force ratios would decline to 2.2 to 1 by the end of 1966, even if all Phase II forces arrived as scheduled. Earlier estimates had predicted a 3.3 to 1 ratio by the end of 1966. ⁹⁷

(TS) The SECDEF and CJCS, were back again in SVN on 28 November for discussions regarding the revised intelligence picture, the anticipated VC/NVA buildup, and the necessity for a greater commitment of US forces. During the briefings, COMUSMACV expressed a need for an additional division (which could be ROK) for deployment along the coastal plain in II CTZ, thereby freeing the 4th Inf Div, scheduled for arrival in 1966, for operations further inland. Another USA division

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

was needed for employment in the upper Delta in the area contiguous to Saigon, for a total of three USA divisions around the capital city. A separate brigade for FFORCEV was necessary to reinforce the 1st Cav Div (AM), and assist in the defense of the base area at An Khe. Two air cavalry squadrons were needed to support the 4th Inf Div and 1st Cav Div (AM), as was another airmobile infantry battalion for the 1st Cav Div (AM), to give that division a balanced force of three 3-battalion brigades. ⁹⁸ The revised deployment plan was referred to as Phase IIA (add-on).

(TS) The total number of USA personnel requested for Phase IIA was 52,000; this coupled with Phase I's 133,916 and Phase II's 82,106, called for an in-country USA strength of 268,022 by the end of 1966. ⁹⁹

(TS) In summarizing the additional requested deployments, COMUSMACV stated that even with approval of the Phase IIA forces, it was estimated that if the enemy continued to increase into 1967 at the projected 1966 rate, an additional requirement would exist for at least a three-division corps. COMUSMACV recommended that such a force be readied for deployment during 1966. He further recommended that the Phase IIA forces be approved and a deployment planning conference be held in Hawaii as quickly as possible to develop the full troop list and deployment schedules. ¹⁰⁰

(TS) After the briefings, COMUSMACV requested CINCPAC to dispatch two brigades of the 25th Inf Div to SVN as soon as possible. One brigade was needed to back up the 1st Cav Div (AM) in the vicinity of Fleiku and the other to strengthen the area around Saigon, specifically the LOC from Saigon to Vung Tau. COMUSMACV based his request on an intelligence estimate which held that there were five VC/NVA division-equivalents operating in I and II CTZ's and along the II/III CTZ boundaries. COMUSMACV expressed his desire that one brigade of the 25th Inf Div be airlifted directly to Fleiku; and that sealift of the second brigade previously scheduled for Saigon during January as a Phase II force be expedited so it would close the Saigon area not later than 20 January 1966. ¹⁰¹ The accelerated deployment request was approved on 11 December 1965. ¹⁰²

(TS) The 3d Bde, 25th Div, flown directly from Hawaii to Fleiku, began arriving in SVN on 29 December. ¹⁰³ The arrival of that brigade ended the USA buildup in SVN during 1965, with the strength of USA personnel totaling 116,755 at the end of the year. ¹⁰⁴ (For the location of the major units of the US Army, see Figure II-2.)

Page 45 of 48 2Pages

8 4 1 5 8 4

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

US Air Force

(C) At the beginning of 1965 the 2d AD's resources in SVN consisted of 6,901 PCS and TDY personnel and some 222 aircraft. This inventory of aircraft consisted of the following: 105

- 1) Two air commando squadrons at Bien Hoa with a total of 48 A-1E aircraft.
- 2) Four troop carrier squadrons equipped with a total of 72 C-123B aircraft, three squadrons of which were stationed at TSN and the remaining one at Da Nang.
- 3) Ten B-57 aircraft at Bien Hoa; three RB-57's at TSN.
- 4) A TDY squadron of F-100's based at Da Nang with approximately 30 aircraft.
- 5) Six F-102 aircraft at TSN.
- 6) Twelve RF-101 aircraft at TSN.
- 7) A tactical air support squadron of 22 O-1F's at Bien Hoa.

(C) In Thailand, 2d AD assets consisted of 22,719 PCS and TDY personnel and 83 aircraft. These aircraft were distributed as follows: 106

- 1) One squadron of 18 F-105 aircraft, located at Korat.
- 2) One squadron of 15 F-100 aircraft, located at Takhli.
- 3) Four F-102's, based at Don Muang.
- 4) Ten T-28's and ten RF-28's, based at Udorn.
- 5) Eight helicopters (Air Rescue), also based at Udorn.

(S) The changes in missions and great expansion of US Air Force in the RVN during 1965 are traceable to a COMUSMACV request on 24 January to Cdr, 2d AD, for a study of how the air effort in RVN could be increased. This analysis, completed on 17 March, summarized the factors which limited air force activities in the RVN. It also clarified the assumptions and listed the available resources which would be involved in considerations for an expansion of the air effort in RVN. On 24 March, COMUSMACV concurred with all the recommendations made by Cdr, 2d AD. Subsequently

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

approved by top US authorities, these recommendations thus formed the initial basic guidelines for USAF developments in RVN during 1965. The principal recommendation was that the JCS requirement for a VNAF pilot/observer on board A-1E "Farmgate" 107 aircraft be revoked, permitting the overt use of USAF in-country strike aircraft against targets in SVN.

(C) In the meantime, there were other developments which influenced changes in policies governing the use of air power in the Vietnamese conflict during 1965. On 7 February, USN aircraft bombed targets in NVN in retaliation for the VC bombing of a US Bachelor Enlisted Quarters (BEQ) in Pleiku earlier that day. On 8 February USAF and VNAF aircraft also participated in raids over NVN. On 19 February, B-57 jet aircraft based at Bien Hoa were committed against the VC in SVN. 108 F-100 aircraft based at Da Nang were also similarly used.

(S) In February, the JCS foresaw the need for deployment of nine additional tactical fighter squadrons from CONUS to WESTPAC and the deployment of 30 B-52 aircraft from CONUS to Guam to support the forces in SVN. JCS had recommended four strikes per week by US and VNAF aircraft against NVN targets south of the 19th parallel, 109 and requested CINCPAC and COMUSMACV for comments regarding the desirability of deploying six more fighter squadrons from CONUS. 110 Later in February COMUSMACV concurred with the buildup of airpower in SVN, 111 and stated that a large number of US aircraft was available in RVN and Thailand, and should be used in support of the RVNAF. COMUSMACV further recommended that an eight-week program of graduated military pressure against NVN be undertaken. 112

(C) On 18 March, three F-100 fighter squadrons from CONUS began rotational TDY operating out of Da Nang. 113 By mid-April, a squadron of F-104C aircraft arrived at Da Nang, the first F-104 organization to be assigned to SVN. 114

(C) In mid-April 1965, JCS directed through CINCPAC the ROLLING THUNDER bombing operations against NVN, using US aircraft based in RVN and on the 7th Flt aircraft carriers. 115 The ROLLING THUNDER strikes doubled the 2d AD's support requirements and severely taxed its resources. 116

(S) ROLLING THUNDER enabled the USAF to exploit a relatively new type of restricted warfare, bring into action new model aircraft and improved control systems. The mainstay of USAF's strike force against NVN targets was the F-105 aircraft (later joined in June 1965 by F-4C aircraft). 117 The Tactical Air Control Center (TACC) at TSN air base, which had been controlling the out-of-country air reconnaissance program since August 1964, was expanded

Page 47 of 48 2 Pages
THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIR/ler

841534

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~
SECRET

to direct the control of US-VNAF strikes against NVN in addition to SVN strikes. The 7th Flt provided a liaison officer at the TACC. To augment the 2d AD staff in handling the increased workload, USAF personnel were brought in-country on temporary duty status.

(S) Augmentation of US forces in SEASIA, approved in March by the JCS, called for deployment of five USAF tactical fighter squadrons ¹¹⁸ to the WESTPAC, of which one F-100 squadron was to be based at Da Nang AB. Other approved USAF units for deployment to RVN-Thailand had been: ¹¹⁹

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) One F-4C sqdn to Ubon/Udon AB, Thailand. | <u>ETA</u>
7 Apr 65 |
| 2) One F-105 sqdn to Takhli, Thailand. | 11 Apr 65 |
| 3) One Reconnaissance Task Force (RTF)
(six RB-66) to Clark/TSN, RVN. | 10 Apr 65 |
| 4) Three O-1 sqdns to RVN. | 20 Aug 65 |

(S) Furthermore, during March, COMUSMACV assisted in updating target selections and planned air strikes against NVN. ¹²⁰ COMUSMACV recommended to CINCPAC additional targets south of the 19th parallel in NVN, with attack requirements and proposed priorities for an eight-week pressure program. On 31 March, COMUSMACV also recommended to CINCPAC an air strike program to follow the eight-week series of strikes.

(TS) Eight tactical fighter squadrons were to be identified for deployment to SEASIA, initially on a rotational assignment, for beddown at jet-capable bases most accessible to SVN. ¹²¹ Missions would be flown in-country as well as out-of-country. Aircraft based in RVN and Thailand were designated to support the RVN in-country effort as directed by COMUSMACV, under operational control of the 2d AD. ¹²² They were also on call for air strikes against NVN under PACAF direction and control. Further deployment to RVN and Thailand was contingent upon availability and construction of jet-capable bases. ¹²³

(C) In order to make the necessary adjustments involved in these accelerated developments, a force deployment-support planning conference was convened by CINCPAC on 9 April at PACOMHQ ¹²⁴ in anticipation of the SECDEF's visit scheduled later in the month. Among the conferees were representatives of the JCS, CINCPAC, the component commands, COMUSMACV, COMUSKOREA (Commander United States Forces, Korea), COMUSMACTHAI (Commander United States Military Assistance Command, Thailand). The purpose of the CINCPAC conference was to develop deployment

841534

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

plans and movement schedules for the additional logistical and other supporting units required on a time-phased order of priority basis.¹²⁵ Insofar as USAF deployments were concerned, the conference served to clarify deployments of types of aircraft rather than to generate new requirements for deployment of squadrons.¹²⁶

(S) By mid-1965, the force buildup began to appear as a massive air effort in SEASIA, particularly in RVN. It provided the USAF (and through its advisory efforts, the VNAF)¹²⁷ both with a challenge and an opportunity to test its capability in a new type of fighting. Actions of previous years had not drawn heavily on USAF technological capacity but increased intensity of the war in RVN in 1965, and the consequent buildup, brought in a new range of aircraft and weapons. Although the conflict was still largely a ground action in a tactical theater of war, CONUS air commands other than USAF's Tactical Air Command (TAC) had become involved.¹²⁸ SAC used B-52's in attacks on enemy bases and concentrations. The Air Force Systems Command (AFSC) gave SEASIA requirements top priority. The development of the new F-5C tactical fighter was expedited by AFSC for operational tests under combat conditions in RVN. The AFSC established special teams to study new means of finding and destroying the enemy forces and protecting friendly elements.¹²⁹ Air Force Logistics Command (AFLC), charged with maintaining an 8,000 mile "pipeline," was keeping practically all SEASIA-based aircraft at an operational ready rate of well over 80 percent.¹³⁰ Force buildup efforts through mid-1965 already had changed the USAF role from a limited counterinsurgency action with emphasis on training, to a full-scale theater air effort employing the latest aircraft, weapons, and equipment.¹³¹

(S) In June 1965 it became obvious to COMUSMACV that the buildup of US forces programmed at the April conferences would not be adequate to cope with the deteriorating situation in SVN. He required additional ground troops and, to support a general increase in tempo of combat operations, additional tactical fighter squadrons were needed. Late in the month, COMUSMACV presented new requirements for fighter squadrons.¹³² Whereas earlier in June JCS had recommended increases of one USMC and four USAF squadrons, COMUSMACV felt that a squadron in addition to those recommended by JCS was essential to provide adequate support of additional US ground forces. To this, CINCPAC added the need to revitalize RVNAF, step up B-52 and other in-country sorties, maintain steady pressure on NVN by increased strikes and reconnaissance sorties, and lift the restrictions on bombing north and northwest of Hanoi, regardless of possible MIG reaction.¹³³ COMUSMACV and CINCPAC both supported an increase in B-52 sortie rate to 800 per month, although not all of these missions could be exploited by ground

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAİM per

Page 49 of 482 Pages

841534

~~SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

follow-up.¹³⁴ On 17 July, COMUSMACV informed the SECDEF, then in Saigon, that the rate of NVA infiltration into RVN had been increasing. This brought about a revision of USAF requirements in support of ground forces deployed to check infiltration through the southern Laotian Panhandle and the DMZ. The new requirement called for the deployment of a total of 18 fighter/attack squadrons with a total of 4,716 personnel. At that time, five fighter/attack squadrons and their reconnaissance task force located in Thailand, were to be moved to RVN upon availability of bases.¹³⁵

(TS) As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the July SECDEF conference generated the Phase I, II and III COMUSMACV concept of operations which subsequently was published on 30 August. A complete reevaluation of USAF deployment requirements was conducted during August in conjunction with other service requirements, and formed the basis for the deployment requirements contained in the concept of operations. Based on the buildup of US/FWMAF ground maneuver battalions and the projected sortie totals required to provide close support to these units, a total of 23 USAF/USMC squadrons were required by the end of Phase I (31 December). Seven more squadrons would be added during the first half of 1966 (Phase II) in order to raise this total to 30. It was recognized, however, that air base as well as squadron availability would not permit the buildup to progress according to the month-by-month schedule contained in the plan, but the projection of requirements versus availabilities intersected in June 1966.¹³⁶

(U) The USAF organization in SEASIA underwent some adjustments to meet the rapidly expanding missions of its various elements in support of COMUSMACV and CINCPAC. In July, six air bases in Thailand (Don Muang, Takhli, Korat, Ubon, Udorn, and Makon Phanom) were transferred from the 2d AD to the 13th Air Force, Clark Air Base, Philippines. Organizational unit designations in both Thailand and RVN were changed when tactical fighter wings were established at Bien Hoa, Da Nang and Korat. Other 2d AD and 13th Air Force combat support units were designated combat groups. In RVN, new combat support groups were established at Pleiku in central Vietnam and Binh Tuy Province. Later, tactical fighter wings were established at two new jet bases at Cam Ranh Bay and Phan Rang, in November and December 1965 respectively. With the addition of these two bases, COMUSMACV had five jet-capable bases in SVN,¹³⁷ when added to Da Nang, Bien Hoa and TSN.

(S) Throughout the summer, capability studies were made in Washington; HQ, PACOM; and HQ, USMACV, to identify measures by which USAF effectiveness could be improved in SEASIA and SVN. On 17 September, the SECDEF requested the JCS to recommend measures which would improve air defense and early warning capabilities to

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

protect adequately RVN and US forces in SVN.¹³⁸ On 21 September, the SECDEF announced that 12 F-5A aircraft would be sent to SVN during autumn so that a performance evaluation of this multi-purpose plane under combat conditions could be made under the code name SKOSHI TIGER.¹³⁹

(C) On 30 September, the JCS directed Chief of Staff, USAF (CSAF), to deploy four tactical fighter squadrons and necessary support personnel, totaling 5,607 personnel, to SVN by 1 November.¹⁴⁰

(TS) As USAF fighter squadrons deployed in and out of RVN and Thailand in increasing numbers, increased efforts were made to develop an appropriate enemy target list. Because of the base load problems in RVN, some reconnaissance units were based in Thailand. The Secretary of State (SECSTATE) on 7 October, requested the Government of Thailand to allow the deployment of a detachment of five RV-66B reconnaissance aircraft (Brown Cradle) and 110 personnel to Takhli in support of operations in SEASIA.¹⁴¹ Nine RF-4C aircraft, equipped with AN/AAS-18 scanners, arrived in SVN on 29 October as the first increment of a total of 18 RF-4C's equipped with the latest infrared reconnaissance equipment. They were used immediately upon arrival and by 30 November had flown 291 sorties. The remaining increment of this RF-4C squadron arrived in December.

(S) CINCPAC notified JCS and COMUSMACV on 29 October that authority had been granted for immediate deployment of one F-4C squadron to Clark Air Base in the Philippines. The squadron would be phased for later onward movement to Da Nang, for air defense and air escort duty in exchange for F-102 and F-104 detachments stationed there.¹⁴² As of 31 October, the USAF had 23 types of aircraft operating in SVN.¹⁴³

(TS) In early October, CINCPAC advised that the earlier planning factor of six sorties per day, to support each ground maneuver battalion used to develop Phase I and II fighter squadron deployments, was no longer considered valid. He stated that a figure based on four or five sorties per day per battalion should be considered. Using the latter factor, CINCPAC concluded that 15,400 sorties by US jet aircraft in support of 72 battalions would require 24 squadrons compared to the original estimate of 30 squadrons.¹⁴⁴ (end of Phase II projected strength).

(C) COMUSMACV indicated that the planning factors used appeared realistic particularly when viewed in terms of the additional capabilities afforded by increased B-52 strikes, armed helicopters and separate artillery. He conditionally concurred in the proposed reduction pending further study by his headquarters.¹⁴⁵

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

(S) Aircraft congestion and the limited number and space of jet-capable airfields were problems which delayed scheduled arrival of Phase I aircraft squadrons. COMUSMACV advised CINCPAC on 15 November that, because of airfield saturation in SVN, the F-105 squadron could not be accepted in-country if it were to displace another squadron required to support in-country air efforts. The F-105 aircraft which were scheduled for beddown at Da Nang air base in 1965 thus could not be accepted. Additional ramp space at Da Nang was expected to become available in April 1966.¹⁴⁶

(S) Following the SECDEF's late November visit to RVN, and the completion of the tactical air support program for Vietnam, COMUSMACV recommended to CINCPAC that: 1) a total of 23 US jet strike squadron-equivalents be deployed in-country, six USMC and 17 USAF, 2) one aircraft carrier (CVA) continue on Dixie Station (South China Sea, offshore SVN) for in-country strike support until sufficient aircraft were in-country to meet strike requirements, and 3) all services be requested to insure adequate flying hour program support to provide a 1.2 aircraft sortie per day utilization rate.¹⁴⁷

(TS) On 3 December, plans were formulated for an "action-list" requirements planning conference to be held at HQ, PACOM, to clarify troop lifts and deployment schedules for Phase II and IIA, resulting from the November¹⁴⁸ SECDEF conference. The conference was scheduled for 6-21 January 1966.¹⁴⁹ Sortie rates, to include B-52 sortie rates, munitions, CVA, airfield and tactical fighter squadron requirements were on the agenda.¹⁵⁰

(S) The increasing tempo of air action involving both USAF and VNAF aircraft in combination with the 7th Flt and USMC aircraft, necessitated a review of in-country strike aircraft requirements in November.¹⁵¹ In an early December USMACV staff briefing to COMUSMACV, the following conclusions were drawn:¹⁵²

1) That the VNAF could do better; while their strike capabilities trend was encouraging, USMACV advisors must continue to work on increasing their capability.

2) The A-1 aircraft appeared to be the best all-around strike vehicle if it could be properly stationed throughout the country.

3) The next best in-country aircraft was the F-100.

4) The A-4 aircraft would be fully competitive with the F-100 if it had sufficient ordnance and if spares were programmed to increase its capability.

~~TOP SECRET~~

8 4 1 5 3 4

~~TOP SECRET~~

5) The F-4C appeared to be an improvement over the F-100 both in bomb load carrying capability and in its dual role as an air defense weapon.

6) All factors considered, including offshore support, the carrier sortie was equivalent to the ground-based sortie.

7) USMC aircraft effectiveness was adversely affected by a shortage of ordnance.

8) Whereas the absence of B-52 strikes would have increased the requirement for tactical strikes, the B-52 strikes had not decreased the requirement for in-country tactical air strikes.

9) The average number of sorties per battalion could be reduced from six to five; however, plans would have to be ready to reinforce the existing tactical air capability should experience factors show this reduction to be an insufficient sortie rate. Plans would provide the beddown of at least three more tactical air squadrons in-country to meet a surge in air operations.

10) A number of factors could, singly or in combination, increase the sortie requirements. Further heightening of the war, an improving target acquisition capability and the substantial increase in VC anti-aircraft weaponry were noted as examples. It could be necessary, for example, to fly flak suppression missions in addition to the armed helicopter support being provided to airmobile operations. USMC experience had indicated this tactic contributed to fewer hits sustained by the escorted helicopters.

11) A stepped-up air campaign against NVN, a program beyond COMUSMACV's direct cognizance, could conceivably generate requirements for more tactical aircraft to be based in SVN.

(TC) In December 1965, the 2d AD priorities for ground air defense units were modified. Hawk unit site priorities were established in the following order: Phan Rang, Tuy Hoa, An Khe in SVN, and Udorn, Udon, Korat, Takhli, Don Muang and Sattahip in Thailand. This plan would necessitate diversion of some Phase II and IIA units to Thailand. Also, M-42/M-55 (40-mm gun and 50 cal. machine gun air defense weapons systems) priorities were listed in the following order: Da Nang, Chu Lai, Cam Ranh Bay-Nha Trang, Tan Son Nhut-Bien Hoa and An Khe. 53

(S) USAF strike and support forces experienced a significant increase in RVN during 1965. This resulted in a phenomenal increase in available firepower to meet the VC/NVA threat. At the end of the year, total USAF aircraft in SVN was 365.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

While USAF in RVN had a basic advisory function at the beginning of the year, it was actively engaged in combat operations at year's end, with 11 fighter squadrons, eight air commando squadrons, two tactical reconnaissance squadrons, one fighter interceptor squadron and eight combat support squadrons on eight bases in SVN. At the end of 1965, USAF personnel strength in RVN had risen to 20,620 of whom 18,394 were PCS in-country. (For location of the major units of 2d AD in SVN see Figure II-2.)

US Navy

(U) At the beginning of 1965, COMUSMACV's naval personnel were either assigned to an advisory role under the Chief, Naval Advisory Group (CHNAVGP), or were employed in an administrative and logistic support role. Thus, he had no operational naval combat forces under his control.

(C) The discovery of a VC mystery ship in Vung Ro Bay, in Phu Yen Province in February 1965, represented a major turning point in the history of naval operations in SVN. Infiltration by sea had long been a tantalizing but unconfirmed explanation as to how the VC successfully transported large quantities of men, arms, and ammunition undetected into RVN. This incident verified that infiltration by sea was taking place, though the scale of such operations was not known. The large arms cache found in the area indicated that more than one trip had been made or that more than one boat had made the journey. As a result of the implications of the Vung Ro incident, a planning conference was held at USMACV HQ on 3 March to develop a basic concept for a combined USN-VNN anti-sea infiltration effort. A committee, initiated by COMUSMACV and composed of USMACV, NAVGP and 7th Flt representatives developed a concept of operations based on the assumption that probable sea infiltration consisted of two categories: 1) coastal junk traffic mingling with the thousands of junks off the coast and 2) seagoing craft of trawler size or larger that approached the coast more or less perpendicularly. The first type was considered less susceptible to USN detection and it was thought best to inspire the VNN to increase the quantity and quality of its searches. It was believed that interdiction of the second type of infiltration could best be done by utilizing conventional USN ships and aircraft on patrol employing radar and visual techniques. The proposed patrol called for eight patrol areas from the DMZ to the Cambodian border with USN and VNN ships, junks, and patrol aircraft to be phased in on an incremental basis. The program was approved by JCS on 16 March and placed under the operational control of Commander 7th Flt (COMSEVENTHFLT) and designated Operation MARKET TIME. The original plan was to initiate the proposed patrol

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIA 107

~~SECRET~~

CONFIDENTIAL

with the following force levels: one destroyer, four minesweepers, two multi-engine patrol aircraft (SP-2), three single-engine carrier based aircraft, two photo-recce carrier based aircraft, 16 VNN patrol ships and 100 VNN junks. By the end of March MARKET TIME was in full operation with a total of more than ten USN destroyers and minesweepers, 126 VNN junks and patrol craft and ten USN surveillance aircraft.¹⁵⁵

(C) Operation MARKET TIME continued to grow during April as the USN ship total rose momentarily to 28 and then was reduced to a steady level of 15-20. While it had been intended that VNN would take care of close inshore patrolling, the consistently poor performance of the VNN coastal force commander; the need for improvement in efforts to interdict shallow water junk and sampan traffic; and the vastly superior capabilities of the SWIFT (PCF) patrol boat to any other craft available to either VNN or USN with its high speed, potent armament and radar detection gear, led to a discussion of plans for use of SWIFT's in Vietnam at the Honolulu Conference, 10-13 April 1965. Shortly after the conference the SECDEF approved the purchase of 20 of these boats to be manned by USN crews. Coupled with this decision was the subsequent announcement on 30 April by SECDEF that operational control of all US MARKET TIME forces would eventually be transferred to COMUSMACV with CHNAVGP acting as his agent for such direction. This resolved the problem which would have arisen if the SWIFT's had been operating under 7th Flt in conjunction with Coastal Forces of the VNN, which were advised by NAVGP personnel rather than personnel immediately responsive to COMSEVENTHFLT direction.¹⁵⁶

(C) Apparently the use of other resources to enhance MARKET TIME was discussed at the Honolulu Conference for, on 29 April, it was announced that a USCG squadron consisting of 17 small Patrol Boats (WPB) would be deployed to Vietnam in the near future.¹⁵⁷

(C) Subsequent to the deployment of eight WPB's to Da Nang on 20 July and nine WPB's to An Thoi (Phu Quoc Island, Gulf of Thailand) on 31 July, MARKET TIME forces consisted of nine destroyer-minesweeper patrol ships, two Landing Ship Tank (LST) support ships, five SP-2H patrol aircraft based at TSN, and the 17 WPB's. Earlier approval had been granted for the deployment of 20 SWIFT's but they had not yet arrived.¹⁵⁸

(C) During his July 1965 visit, the SECDEF expressed concern about the lack of progress being made in counter-

THIS PAGE RECORDED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841534

Page 55 of 482 Pages

CONFIDENTIAL

~~SECRET~~

infiltration operations at sea. He wanted to know if the recently expanded program had reduced infiltration; if not, why not and were additional forces needed? He was informed that according to a study directed by COMUSMACV, there was insufficient present and planned surface forces to patrol the long coastline adequately; patrol aircraft available were inadequate; harbor entrance control posts were required; VNN forces were needed for amphibious type raids; base development plans had not anticipated additional forces requested by the study; and there was little control over waterways and rivers at the Cambodian border. As a result the decision was made during the conference to procure 34 more SWIFT's, raising the total to 54, plus three patrol air-cushion boats (PACV) for use with the SWIFT's. 159

(C) In August, COMUSMACV requested an increase in patrol ships for MARKET TIME operations from nine to 25 in order to enhance significantly the surveillance capability. As a result of the request, representatives from CINCPAC, COMUSMACV, CINCPACFLT, CNO (Chief of Naval Operations) and CHNAVGP met in Saigon in early September and recommended the following actions: increase patrol ships from nine to 14; double patrol aircraft coverage by placing four aircraft on patrol at all times; increase inshore patrol coverage by increasing the number of SWIFT's from 54 to 84 and USCG WPB's from 17 to 26; increase the number of LST's providing radar coverage of the Mekong River mouths from three to four; and inaugurate an extensive river patrol with 120 patrol craft. 160

(S) Two increases in MARKET TIME forces occurred in October. Seaplanes based at Cam Ranh Bay were employed for the first time during the latter half of the month and provided continuous flights over the southern surveillance track. Secondly, SWIFT boats arrived at An Thoi on 30 October to provide inshore patrol capabilities for MARKET TIME operations. 161

(C) Following up on the recommendations of the September conference to review MARKET TIME requirements, GAME WARDEN was established on 18 December. Its mission was to assist the GVN in denying the enemy use of the major rivers of the Delta and Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ), a VC infested area southeast of Saigon. CHNAVGP and Commander, MARKET TIME Task Force, was assigned additional duty as Commander, GAME WARDEN Task Force. The task force was to consist of 100 river patrol boats (PBR) and 20 Landing Craft, Personnel Light (LCPL's) all manned by USN personnel and six HU-1B helicopters manned by the USA. VNN liaison personnel were to be attached to the surface units. 162

(C) Four LCPL's were in-country at the end of 1965 and

~~SECRET~~

841534

~~SECRET~~

it was expected that all 20 would arrive by mid-May 1966. The PBR construction had begun in the US and a training program for the crews was being conducted at Coronado, California. The first units were expected to arrive in-country about 20 February 1966 and would be assigned to RSSZ. The full force of 100 boats was expected to be in SVN by 1 May 1966.¹⁶³

(C) It was planned that the 30 PBR's patrolling the lower Delta would initially operate from an LST and Landing Ship Dock (LSD) anchored about six miles off shore. These units were undergoing conversion during December to comply with the requirements of the PBR's and to serve as landing platforms for the HU-1B's. The LSD was scheduled to arrive 15 February 1966, and the LST on 1 March. Four specially outfitted LST's were scheduled to eventually replace the LSD and LST in September 1966.¹⁶⁴

RVN FORCES

General

(U) In 1965, the combat organization of RVN consisted of three military and three paramilitary forces. The military forces were: a regular force made up of ARVN, VNN, VNAF, and VNMC (see Figure II-3); RF; and PF. The paramilitary forces were: NP; the CIDG; and vestiges of the Armed Combat Youth (ACY).

(S) Authorized strengths at the end of 1964 were 243,287 men in the regular forces, 107,983 in RF and 174,185 in PF. Paramilitary forces were authorized a total of 51,600 (see discussion of CIDG, NP and ACY below). In November 1964 a joint USMACV/RVNAF JGS survey of RVNAF structure was conducted. It was concluded that there was need for substantial increases in RVNAF personnel. Two alternatives were proposed.^{165,166} Alternative 1 provided for an increase of 30,309 men in regular forces, 35,387 in RF, and 10,815 in PF. It was believed these forces would provide for progress in the Hop Tac area (see Chapter IV) and would arrest VC operations in a number of high priority areas. Alternative 2 provided for an increase of 47,556 in regular forces and the same RF/PF increases as Alternative 1. This was considered adequate to permit substantial progress in pacification but would take considerable time to recruit, train and equip.¹⁶⁷

(S) Alternative 1 was considered preferable because of limited manpower resources, lead time required to procure and train leaders, training center limitations and equipment lead time. On 24 November 1964, COMUSMACV recommended to CINCPAC Alternative 1 be approved for MAP support.¹⁶⁸ The US could not

~~SECRET~~

limit the size of GVN forces, however, JCS approval was required to procure MAP support for any increases. GVN habitually recognized MAP support figures as authorized strengths.

(S) On 23 January 1965, Alternative 1 forces increases, with some modifications, were formally approved for MAP support by SECDEF. The force levels were fixed at 275,058 for regular force, 137,137 for RF, and 185,000 for PF.¹⁶⁹

(S) Because of the rapidly deteriorating situation, J3, USMACV, recommended to COMUSMACV that Alternative 1 increases be accelerated, and that Alternative 2 increases be implemented upon completion of Alternative 1.¹⁷⁰ On 20 March, COMUSMACV requested authority from CINCPAC to implement Alternative 2,¹⁷¹ and on 13 April, JCS approved the accelerated schedule and approved Alternative 2 increases of 17,247 spaces for RVNAF.¹⁷²

(S) On 5 November, COMUSMACV submitted a request to increase the force level of the regular forces to 311,458 in FY 66 and to 325,256 in FY 67.¹⁷³ The FY 66 increases were primarily to flesh-out existing structure in the areas of command, control support, power, and the pipeline to preclude units from absorbing the transient load. FY 67 increases included 3 infantry battalions (to replace those traded-off in FY 66 to form two additional airborne battalions), one infantry regiment, 1 artillery battery (105), 2 MP companies, 1 Marine battalion, 1 Civil Affairs company, 4 psywar companies, 81 RF companies (to accommodate an expanding rural construction program), 5,280 spaces to absorb 40 CIDG companies proposed to be transferred into the RF and 15,000 PF spaces plus augmentations to increase the capability of existing RVNAF units.¹⁷⁴ COMUSMACV felt a much larger increase was needed, but the available manpower would not support it.¹⁷⁵ These increases were verbally approved by SECDEF at a conference in Saigon on 28 November.¹⁷⁶

(S) COMUSMACV felt the requested force increases represented the maximum strength that the available manpower base could support.¹⁷⁷ It was estimated that accessions of 20,000 per month would be required to attain and sustain these levels, and that maintenance of these levels past 1969 would require recovery of significant manpower resources from VC controlled areas or the extension of military terms of service and recall of veterans.¹⁷⁸ The manpower shortage was qualitative as well as quantitative. It was difficult to obtain and train leaders for the rapidly expanding forces.¹⁷⁹

(S) Draft deferments for military age males considered to hold essential non-military jobs tended to reduce the available manpower pool. COMUSMACV urged the use of women, veterans, and personnel otherwise unqualified for military service, for these

~~SECRET~~

84153413

~~SECRET~~

jobs. He recommended that rural construction cadre, when drafted, be returned to their jobs after training to serve in a type of reserve status, available to the province chief if needed.¹⁸⁰ The SECSTATE expressed fear that the draft of essential people would adversely affect other programs.¹⁸¹

(C) The conscription of skilled technical personnel adversely affected operations in a number of areas. One such example, the object of a special study by the USMACV staff, pertained to employees of the VNN shipyard in Saigon and the control tower at Tan Son Nhut. Over the last nine months of the year, six percent of the total labor force at the shipyard had been lost but this loss included 20 percent of the section heads, 16 percent of the subsection heads, 10 percent of the gang leaders and 25 percent of the supervisors. A similar problem applied to the Civil Aviation Agency Air Controllers. At the close of the year COMUSMACV suggested that these specialists be exempted from the draft or that the shipyard and the Civil Aviation Agency be augmented with military spaces to permit personnel to remain on the job when drafted.¹⁸²

(C) During the year RVNAF was plagued with high desertion rates (see Table II-2). Approximate desertion rates for the year per 1,000 personnel were 14 for regular forces, 12 for RF, 28 for PF and 23 for CIDG. Studies indicated many causes for this high desertion rate.¹⁸³ Included were:

- 1) Overly restrictive leave policy.
- 2) Family separation.
- 3) Lack of command attention to personnel management and soldier welfare such as pay, housing and promotions.
- 4) General dissatisfaction with military life.
- 5) Tolerance of military and civil authorities toward desertion.
- 6) Apparent public apathy toward the war.
- 7) Increasingly heavy combat losses.
- 8) Poor apprehension and punishment of offenders.
- 9) Misuse of certain types of units (Ranger and PF) by higher headquarters.

(C) This desertion problem was the subject of a great

TOP SECRET UNCLASSIFIED
Code Sec. A11, B1, D1, E1, F1, G1, H1, I1, J1, K1, L1, M1, N1, O1, P1, Q1, R1, S1, T1, U1, V1, W1, X1, Y1, Z1
Page 59 of 482 Pages

841534

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

deal of advisory attention throughout the year, but at year's end little change had been noted, either in desertion experience or in public attitude.

(C) Extraordinarily high combat losses had an adverse effect on the buildup and caused further drain on the manpower base (see Table II-2). Losses were so high that 11 of the 15 battalions in training in July had to be temporarily disestablished to provide fillers for the older battalions of the regiments.¹⁸⁴

(S) The buildup placed a heavy strain on both training and transportation facilities. VC interdiction of the surface transportation nets placed a heavy load on air transportation. This, coupled with the US buildup, caused a reduction in the administrative troop lift available to RVNAF.¹⁸⁵ The influx of large numbers of trainees exceeded National Training Center (NTC) capacities. It was necessary to expand facilities and establish division training centers. Facilities and instructors were not up to standard.¹⁸⁶ RF/PF was dependent upon ARVN training facilities for specialist training. The increase in the ARVN training requirements resulted in a reduction of the number of allocations available to RF/PF and thereby hampered the RF/PF training effort.

ARVN and Paramilitary Forces

(C) The ARVN consisted of infantry, airborne, Ranger and support units, and was charged with the missions of destroying or driving off organized VC forces from areas planned for pacification; harassing VC bases and LOC's; controlling the borders of RVN; providing elements of general, corps, division and sector reserve, and other secondary missions.¹⁸⁷

(S) The ARVN force increases under Alternatives 1 and 2 consisted mainly of an increase from 119 combat battalions (93 infantry, 20 Ranger and 6 airborne) to 150, by adding one battalion to each regiment.¹⁸⁸ In August, JCS expressed a desire to activate two additional airborne battalions as add-ons. COMUSMACV concurred with the recommendation, but decided not to request additional MAP authorization for the units. He decided rather to use the already authorized spaces for three infantry battalions for them.¹⁸⁹ This dropped the 1965 authorization to 149 combat battalions.

(S) Three separate regiments, the 43d, 48th, and 52d, existed in the III CTZ. COMUSMACV and JCS felt it was desirable to create a new division out of these three regiments. On 5 May, COMUSMACV requested authority to support activation of the 10th ARVN Div.¹⁹⁰ On 9 June, JCS approved the activation and fixed the ARVN force ceiling support figure at 261,155.¹⁹¹

~~SECRET~~

84153418

~~SECRET~~

The 10th Div had been activated by JGS on 16 May.192

(S) At year's end, all 149 ARVN battalions that had been authorized under Alternatives 1 and 2 had been recruited and all except four had been deployed or were undergoing training. Three were in training centers but training had not commenced. One battalion had not yet been sent to a training center.193 (See Table II-4 and Figure II-4.)

(C) The RF consisted of rifle companies, river boat companies and support units. Its mission was to perform pacification, defense and security tasks. These included: protection of key installations and LOC's, providing public security, providing elements of subsector and sector reserve, assisting ARVN as required during the security subphase, harassing VC secret bases and LOC's, and identifying and destroying the VC infrastructure.194 RF companies were recruited within each province, and were to be employed within the boundaries of that province.

(C) The RF increases under Alternatives 1 and 2 were aimed at attaining a year-end FY 66 strength of 137,187. In July 1965, this figure was reduced to 134,999 as a result of transferring the Railway Security Group, formerly a part of RF, to ARVN. FY 66 strength consisted of 959 rifle companies. The request for force increase submitted by COMUSMACV on 5 November 1965 did not include any additional increases for the RF in FY 66; however, for the FY 67 program, 121 additional rifle companies were included (81 new rifle companies and personnel spaces to accommodate the transfer of 40 CIDG companies to RF).195

(S) RF buildup did not progress as rapidly as anticipated, since it depended entirely upon volunteers; however, it was able to reach approximately 98 percent of its authorized strength ceiling by the end of the year. Approximately 85 percent of the companies programmed were activated during the year.196 (See Table II-4 and Figure II-5.)

(C) The PF consisted of rifle platoons and separate squads to provide villages with organic troops to assist in pacification, defense and security. PF was charged with the same primary missions as RF and was to assume these missions upon relieving RF and until relieved by the NP.197 PF units were recruited locally and were to be used only as security forces at their home villages or hamlets. As mentioned earlier, PF were often misused, thus contributing to the high loss and desertion rates.

Page 61 of 482 Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841534

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

SANITIZED COPY

(S) Alternatives 1 and 2 fixed the PF strength of 185,000 for FY 66. No additional increases were requested in FY 66 although a ceiling of 200,000 was requested for FY 67. PF force ceiling for FY 67 was deliberately set at levels higher than those anticipated to be attained in order to insure that sufficient authorizations would be available within USMACV for expansion into high priority rural construction areas as these areas came under GVN control.198

(S) PF strengths showed a drastic decline, rather than an increase, in 1965. There was a decline of approximately 25,000, owing primarily to desertions. The inability of PF to offset the desertions with accessions was caused by severe recruiting restrictions placed upon PF by JGS. On 6 January, JGS issued Memo 22/TTL, which prohibited recruiting of personnel 20 to 25 years of age. On 2 July, JGS Memo 0815/TTL halted recruitment of all personnel between 17 and 30, and was made retroactive to 1 January, thus making the status of some 17,000 recruits in the restricted age group illegal. This placed many young men in the paradoxical situation of not being permitted to join local forces to protect their homes, unless they joined or were conscripted into the regular force and consequently, were left to be recruited or drafted by the VC.199

(S) Following a meeting on 14 September, recruiting restrictions were relaxed until 1 January 1966, and the status of the 17,000 recruits in the restricted age group was clarified, PF being permitted to retain them. These changes came too late to compensate for the losses of the first nine months of the year.200

(S) COMUSMACV expressed the belief that PF was one of the keys of the rural construction effort, and felt that they were not getting the proper attention from GVN.201 The largest authorized increases within the RVNAF buildup were in RF/PF forces, yet these were the forces which were most neglected in the recruiting effort, depending entirely upon volunteers. PF found itself competing with the National Police,

and the CIDG, all of which were undergoing expansion. (See Table II-4 and Figure II-6.)

(C) US-supported and advised, the CIDG was a paramilitary organization composed of civilians organized into companies and stationed in camps along the border or near VC infiltration routes. Its five primary missions were to

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~TOP SECRET~~

harass and block infiltration corridors, harass and block lines of communications between secret bases, harass VC secret bases, collect intelligence and to participate in special operations directed by JGS.²⁰²

(TS) CIDG was authorized 20,100 men at the beginning of the year. Force level increases brought their authorized strength to 200 companies and 27,500 personnel by the end of 1965. Force levels of 249 companies and 37,350 men by the end of FY 66 were requested and approved.²⁰³ The CIDG was successful in attaining and maintaining its year-end goals.

(C) In February 1965, COMUSMACV decided it would be wise to have all armed forces in RVN responsive to the central government and initiated a study on conversion of CIDG to RF. A group composed of representatives from the USMACV J1, J4, RF/PF Advisory Detachment, Comptroller and 5th SFG met on 11 May to formulate a detailed plan calling for this conversion by 31 December 1966. This study group recommended a tentative schedule for 20 CIDG companies to be converted by 1 July 1965, 69 more by the end of 1965, 45 more by the end of June 1966 and the remaining companies by the end of 1966. The USMACV staff agreed that this conversion could be supported. The 5th SFG felt that some camps were not suitable for conversion and pointed out a similar conversion attempt had failed in 1963.²⁰⁴ Due to the political situation at the time no action was forthcoming from JGS until 15 September 1965.

(C) On 15 September, JGS agreed in principle with the conversion, but recommended a phased conversion starting first with those camps in relatively secure areas; but by no means, they felt, should the project be completed before 1 January 1967. CIDG cadres would be absorbed into RF ranks in compliance with the same rules applied to cadres for religious sect units—namely, that appointments would be temporary, pending completion of qualifying schools. Conversion would be voluntary.²⁰⁵

(S) COMUSMACV felt there was sufficient agreement to warrant further action, and he recommended to JGS that a slow and deliberate attempt be made at conversion. He recommended two or three camps for conversion as pilot models to develop policies and procedures. As an alternative, he suggested placing CIDG directly under district chiefs. This would be less burdensome and would accomplish the goal of increased responsiveness to GVN.²⁰⁶

(S) A portion of the RF expansion requested by COMUSMACV in November (mentioned earlier in this chapter) was to be accomplished by conversion of 40 CIDG companies to commence

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

during the first quarter of 1966. Even though the ultimate goal of the conversion was to eliminate the CIDG, the 40 companies lost through the initial conversion were to be reconstituted in other remote locations to defend against VC/NVA infiltration.²⁰⁷

(C) At the close of 1965, the conversion question had not been fully resolved and all target dates had been withheld, pending completion of pilot conversions in 1966.²⁰⁸ (See Table II-4 and Figure II-7.)

(C) The NP is a national force, formed at province, district and village level, to maintain law and order and to provide security and public safety. They are charged with the missions of penetrating the VC infrastructure, developing informant networks, assisting the military as required, establishing population and resources control, assuming missions of PF on a progressive basis and conducting normal police functions. The NP are supported and advised by USAID.²⁰⁹

(S) NP were authorized 31,500 spaces at the beginning of the year. Force structure increases brought their authorized strength to 51,500 by the end of 1965, and would bring it to 72,000 by the end of FY 66.²¹⁰ They were successful in attaining and maintaining their authorized year-end goals.

(TS) The ACY, which had augmented PF in local defense, had been ordered disbanded in July 1964 with its members to be recruited into PF as soon as practicable. For the most part, this assimilation had taken place by the end of 1965. However, because of the PF strength ceiling, recruiting restrictions and other causes, it was estimated that some 39,000 ACY remained at the end of the year.²¹¹ No positive count existed, as this force was not formally recognized by GVN; it received no MAP support; and no records thereon were maintained.²¹² (See Table II-4 and Figure II-8.)

VNAF

(C) At the beginning of 1965, VNAF consisted of 10,521 personnel,²¹³ 282 aircraft (including helicopters), four tactical fighter squadrons equipped with F-4E aircraft, four helicopter squadrons equipped with UH-1H/CH-53A aircraft, two troop carrier squadrons equipped with C-47 aircraft and four liaison squadrons equipped with C-119/U-17 aircraft, plus other miscellaneous units and eight U-6

~~TOP SECRET~~

8 4 1 5 3 4

~~SECRET~~

~~_____~~
214,215
aircraft.

(C) Replacement of VNAF aircraft was well underway by the beginning of 1965. Some of the older aircraft were still on hand, but were in storage and/or were being phased out of the inventory. The T-28 was being replaced by the A-1H single-seat fighter aircraft and A-1G, the two seat version of the A-1 aircraft. These newer aircraft were far more versatile, had more speed and carried much more ordnance than the T-28. The last of the T-28's was transferred out of the inventory in April 1965.216

(C) Continuing the replacement program, the UH-19 helicopter was phased out and replaced with the more modern CH-34. This change-over was almost complete by the beginning of 1965. The last of the UH-19's was removed from the inventory in May.217

(C) Subsequent to SECDEF's visit to RVN in May 1964, and in response to his concern over VNAF's ability to cope with the increasing strength and activity of the VC, an expansion of VNAF A-1 squadrons from four to six was considered essential by COMUSMACV. This expansion was subsequently approved in 1964 and the two squadrons were scheduled for activation by 1 May and 15 September 1965, although considerable efforts were being made by VNAF to obtain B-57 jet aircraft as a substitute for A-1's in the sixth squadron.218

(C) In spite of VNAF's jet aspirations the two squadrons were activated with A-1 aircraft, thereby raising the January 1965 inventory from 89 to an end-of-year total of 146. The fifth squadron was activated in May, and the sixth in August.219

(S) The liaison fleet of aircraft increased considerably during the year. The O-1A fleet more than doubled in size from 37 in January to 84 in December. U-17 aircraft, a new off-the-shelf liaison aircraft, also increased almost 100 percent from 25 in January to 46 in December 1965.220

(S) The number of C-47 and U-6A aircraft remained relatively constant throughout the year. However, one additional transport squadron was authorized and programmed for MAP FY 66, making a total of three squadrons. The overall increase of the VNAF aircraft inventory amounted to 108 aircraft, for an increase of 28 percent during the period.221

(S) As mentioned above, the Vietnamese, particularly Prime Minister Ky, were vitally interested in the acquisition of a jet capability. Early in the year, Prime Minister Ky had

THIS PAGE REPRODUCED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

8-11584

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

pressed for acquisition of a B-57 capability within one of the A-1 squadrons. In August he was somewhat mollified when four B-57 aircraft were presented to VNAF.²²² It was not until toward the end of the year, however, that Vietnamese crews were trained to fly the B-57's.²²³ Therefore, interest in a jet capability continued, strongly backed by the fact that NVN possessed such a force as did Thailand and Cambodia.²²⁴

(S) Therefore, in September and October the Chief, Air Force Advisory Group (CHAFAG), studied methods of providing VNAF with a jet capability. In mid-October he proposed and Cdr, 2d AD, concurred in his plan for modernizing VNAF. This proposal provided for the following:²²⁵

- 1) Conversion of two A-1 squadrons to F-5's with the first squadron in FY 66 MAP.
- 2) Conversion of the two C-47 squadrons to C-119G (U/E 16) aircraft, one per year beginning FY 67.
- 3) Conversion of the four CH-34 squadrons to UH-1D (U/E 20) helicopters, one per year beginning FY 67.
- 4) Conversion of the RC-47 reconnaissance force to the reconnaissance version of the F-5.
- 5) No change in the allocation of O-1/U-17 aircraft to the four liaison squadrons and training center units.

(S) After a study, COMUSMACV proposed to CINCPAC that the additional transport squadron programmed for MAP delivery in FY 66 be equipped with the C-119G aircraft. CINCPAC approval was expected early in 1966.²²⁶

(S) Apparently, CHAFAG and Cdr, 2d AD felt that ultimately all A-1 squadrons should be converted to F-5 aircraft for, on 2 November, they so recommended to COMUSMACV during a briefing on the subject. COMUSMACV did not concur, however, because of the proven value of the A-1 to the counterinsurgency environment. On 6 November COMUSMACV strongly endorsed the original recommendation and submitted it to CINCPAC for approval.²²⁷

(S) During SECDEF's visit to SVN in late November COMUSMACV, as a result of further study of VNAF's ability to convert to an F-5 capability, recommended, and SECDEF tentatively approved, the conversion of one A-1H squadron in FY 67 rather than FY 66, as previously recommended. Prime Minister Ky agreed with this program when discussed

~~SECRET~~

841534

~~SECRET~~

with him in early December and stated that two squadrons of F-5's would be sufficient as the A-1H was particularly suited to the close support role.²²⁸ As a result, during COMUSMACV's meeting with CINCPAC in mid-December plans for modernization of VNAF were finalized and submitted to JCS for approval.²²⁹

(S) CHAFAG visualized that the two jet squadrons would be deployed in central Vietnam to provide quick reaction to the north or south as required and to assume a future air defense role. The four A-1 squadrons would be positioned so that one squadron would provide close air support for each corps. CINCPAC proposed therefore that one squadron of A-1's be converted during 3d quarter FY 67 and the other squadron be deferred until the 1st squadron of F-5's was fully operational. Justification of this specific conversion was based on the following considerations: ²³⁰

1) The A-1's ability to carry heavy armament and ordnance, plus its loitering capability over the target area, made its retention in VNAF highly desirable.

2) Conversion of some squadrons would reduce the requirements for A-1's, for which a deficit was foreseen in future years, and would prove to be a morale boost to RVNAF enhancing US-GVN relations.

3) While JCS had requested consideration of converting to F-84 or F-86 aircraft, their performance capabilities were significantly inferior to the F-5 and to enemy MIG's. These older aircraft were being phased out of US MAP inventories and, hence, their maintenance would pose a serious problem. The Vietnamese could also be expected to view such an offer as an affront since other MAP supported countries were receiving F-5's, yet RVN was the only such country engaged in hostilities.

(S) At the end of 1965, VNAF personnel strength had risen to 12,976 ²³¹ (see Table U-4) and the aircraft inventory had increased to 398; consisting of six fighter squadrons of A-1H aircraft, four helicopter squadrons of CH-34 aircraft, two troop carrier squadrons of C-47's, four liaison squadrons of O-1's, a flying school squadron of U-17A's and a detachment of U-6A's. ²³² This was about double the force strength of July 1962 when USAF was first committed in SVN. ²³³

VNN

(C) At the beginning of 1965, VNN was authorized 8,162 personnel for a Sea and River Force. The River Force consisted

THIS PAGE REGRADUATED UNCLASSIFIED Pages 17 of 48 2 Pages
Order Ref Army By 1011001

841584

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

of six assault groups (RAG's) located at bases throughout the Delta region of RVN. A paramilitary group known as the junk force, later called the Coastal Force worked in conjunction with the regular VNN forces. The junk force consisted of 25 divisions located along the coast and was a part of the RF organization. The River and Coastal Forces were designed specifically for counterinsurgency operations, while the Sea Force was organized similar to other small MAP-supported navies. The River Force was capable of conducting river-canal, combat assault operations; participating in amphibious landings within the river-canal complex of the Delta; sweeping electrically activated mines in rivers and canals, and providing river transportation and river transportation escort. The Sea Force participated in small amphibious landings, provided sealift and resupply for RVN forces, and conducted sea patrols in suitable areas. Coastal Force junks conducted coastal patrol (counterinfiltration) and participated in small amphibious landings. 234

(C) In late 1964, plans were made to expand the counterinsurgency effort along the inland waterways. These plans called for an expansion of the existing RAG's and the formation of a new group, RAG-27. The existing RAG's were expected to continue their utilization of the LCM-6 while the new RAG would be outfitted with LCM-8's and a new-design RPC. The new equipment and additional personnel were scheduled to be phased-in throughout 1965. 235 RAG-27 was ultimately activated at My Tho on the Mekong River on 1 July.

(C) Many research and development projects were undertaken to increase efficiency in search, detection and counterambush methods. A junk construction program was initiated and two large piers were completed during 1965. The An Thoi naval base was occupied by the VNN in March and the badly-needed repair facility at Rach Soi was completed in December. Additional LST/LSM (Landing Ship Medium)beaching facilities, completed at Da Nang during the year, were greatly appreciated by port authorities. 236 A determination was made that the Landing Ship Support Large (LSSL) and the Landing Ship Infantry Large (LSIL) were the ideal types of ships for counterinsurgency operations in the Delta. 237 During March Japan authorized the return of five MAP-furnished LSSL's to the US to be transferred to VNN for use as counterinsurgency ships. 238

(C) Because of poor security and curtailment of night patrolling, a junk division located in I CTZ, close to Chu Lai, was overrun by the VC in July 1965. Several personnel were killed, including two USN advisors and the junk division

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By David Per

Page 5 of 25 pages

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 41584

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

executive officer. As a result of this incident, better security in the form of 874 additional VNN spaces and artillery support were added for defense of five junk bases.²³⁹

(C) Plans to increase MARKET TIME operations resulted in new requirements for communications, junk repair, armament and night observation equipment, at a projected total cost of \$8,180,314.²⁴⁰ The effectiveness of the Coastal Force was improved by the consolidation of junk bases, improvements in dependent housing, expansion of psywar operations, revision of VNN command organization and enforcement of curfews.²⁴¹

(C) At the beginning of 1965 the Coastal Force was made up of RF personnel. However, because the Coastal Junk Force was considered to have significant potential, both militarily and for psywar purposes, the RVNAF JGS decided to consolidate the paramilitary force into full status as an integral part of the VNN. Integrated in July, it increased the VNN strength by 3,444 personnel.²⁴²

(C) On 29 September, CHNAVGP provided to Commander in Chief Vietnamese Navy (CINCVNN) the schedule for delivery of several new ships being procured under MAP. The ships, ranging from LSSL's to RPC's were scheduled for delivery from October 1965 to July 1966.²⁴³

(C) In May a team of technical experts arrived from the US Navy's Ship Repair Facility, Guam, and inspected older VNN ships. Two ships were determined to be unseaworthy and it was recommended that they be decommissioned after receipt of new LSSL's; however, when the two new LSSL's were turned over to the VNN during September, the old ships were not decommissioned and were still being used at the end of 1965. Also during the month, base development became an item of increased emphasis. In addition to the Cam Ranh Bay development, CHNAVGP selected Vung Tau and Qui Nhon and An Thoi as additional facilities for improvement and requested the VNN to enlarge the Cat Lo naval base. By providing for a PCF/WPB base at Cat Lo, USN personnel would be able to offer technical assistance to the VNN ships and craft supported from there.²⁴⁴

(C) At the end of 1965, the strength of the VNN was approximately 14,274; the integration of the 3,444 Junk Force personnel into the VNN accounted for over 98 percent of the increase of VNN personnel during 1965. (See Table II-4.) New ships, craft, and patrol boats gave it the material capability of performing effectively and efficiently. However, many adverse circumstances precluded maximum performance. Mutiny, incompetent leaders, and lack of discipline frustrated most efforts toward improvement.

Page 69 of 482 Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
ON 03/05/2001 BY 1045/MSJ

841534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

VNMC

(C) At the beginning of 1965, the VNMC consisted of 7,209 officers and men organized into one brigade of five infantry battalions and one amphibious support battalion. Although efforts were made to expand the brigade, no significant changes occurred during the year.

(C) In July 1965, the Vietnamese JGS proposed that the Marine brigade be increased by an additional battalion. They believed that an equally proportionate buildup among all the branches of the armed services was desirable for maintaining a political balance of forces within the RVNAF, among other reasons. However, the Senior USMC Advisor recommended that no expansion be authorized until middle or late 1966. He estimated that the additional personnel and equipment would not be available until that time. COMUSMACV agreed and recommended to the JGS that the expansion be held in abeyance until CY 66.²⁴⁵

(C) Included in the FY 67 RVNAF force structure plan was one additional Marine battalion for the VNMC Brigade. As a means to persuade the RVNAF to utilize the VNMC in amphibious operations, COMUSMACV directed that the authorized strength of the five existing Marine battalions be reduced from 931 to 876 since the VNMC was not being utilized in this capacity. Personnel spaces deleted from the existing five battalions plus an additional authorization of 635 spaces were to be utilized to form the sixth battalion and to provide an augmentation to the Amphibious Support Battalion. COMUSMACV agreed to reinstate the personnel spaces taken away from the battalions when the VNMC demonstrated an ability to perform amphibious operations. The sixth battalion was scheduled for activation in the 2d Qtr FY 67.^{246, 247, 248}

(S) In September 1965, a five-year MAP buildup plan was begun, which called for a long range, carefully controlled rate of growth leading to an eventual division-size unit with austere combat support, combat service support and staff elements. The planned gradual expansion envisaged a VNMC strength of about 13,000. However, there were also provisions which would allow termination at any point, while maintaining a balanced and effective structure. By the end of 1965, this long range plan had not as yet been finalized.²⁴⁹ The strength of the VNMC brigade at the end of 1965 was 7,519, or an increase of only 183 personnel during the year.²⁵⁰ (See Table II-4.)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

FREE WORLD MILITARY FORCES

(U) This section contains a brief synopsis of the military assistance rendered to the RVN by nations of the Free World other than the US. Annex B contains detailed information on this subject.

(U) During April 1964 the President publicly requested that other nations of the Free World contribute military assistance to the RVN in its counterinsurgency efforts.²⁵¹ Prior to this request Australia was the only nation, in addition to the US, that was actively supplying military assistance. In 1962, Australia had furnished a small Army training team of some 30 members which was integrated into the American advisory program.²⁵² Following the President's appeal, COMUSMACV established a special staff agency to deal with the international military assistance program. On 22 December 1964, the International Military Assistance Office (IMAO), later redesignated the Free World Military Assistance Office (FWMAO), was established under the staff supervision of J5, USMACV.²⁵³ One of the first accomplishments of the FWMAO was to prepare a Policy and Procedures Guide to be used in dealing with the military assistance forces from other nations. This guide was staffed and published as a CINCPAC manual in August 1965.²⁵⁴

(U) See Table II-5 for monthly figures on FWMAF buildup.

(S) During August 1964, Australia augmented her training advisors with an aviation detachment which was made part of the SEASIA air lift and was composed of six Caribou aircraft and 74 personnel.²⁵⁵ In May 1965, the Government of Australia (GOA) agreed to send a task force to SVN composed of the following elements: Headquarters, Australian Army, Far East; First Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) (+); 79th Signal Troop; and a logistical support company.²⁵⁶ This contingent arrived in SVN during the early part of June and was attached to the 173rd Abn Bde, operating from Bien Hoa.²⁵⁷ A military working arrangement had already been signed between Commander, Australian Army Forces, Vietnam (COMAAFPV) and COMUSMACV on 5 May that provided for overall operational control of the Australian troops by COMUSMACV and also for complete US administrative and logistical support.²⁵⁸ In a financial working arrangement, signed on 7 September, it was agreed that the GOA would repay the US for this support on a reimbursable basis.²⁵⁹ On 30 September, an augmentation to the battalion arrived, consisting of a 105-mm howitzer battery, a field engineer troop, an armored personnel carrier (APC) troop, and an air reconnaissance flight. An additional signal troop was also deployed, bringing the year-end Australian strength in SVN to 1,557.^{260,261}

(S) On 20 July 1964, New Zealand furnished a military engineer team that was assigned various civic action projects.²⁶² In May 1965,

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Under Sec Army P. 100-10

Page 71 of 482 Pages

1584

~~SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

the Government of New Zealand (GNZ) decided to replace this detachment with a combat force and announced the decision to deploy a 105-mm howitzer battery to SVN. This unit arrived on 21 July and was also attached to the 173d Abn Bde, under operational control of COMUSMACV, with a primary mission of support for the Australian battalion. 263 A military working arrangement was signed on 9 June and once again the US agreed to furnish field administrative support. 264 Although no financial working arrangement had been signed by the end of 1965, New Zealand also reimbursed the US for the cost of this support. 265 At the end of the year, 119 New Zealand military personnel were stationed in SVN. 266

(TS) COMUSMACV's long range objective was for the nations of Australia and New Zealand jointly to deploy a full Australia-New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) brigade during 1966. As a short range goal, he hoped for the immediate deployment of an additional Australian battalion. This matter was handled by the SECSTATE through diplomatic channels, but was unresolved at the end of 1965. 267

(TS) The nation supplying the greatest amount of assistance to the RVN in 1965, next to the US, was the ROK. In August 1964, in answer to the requests from the US President and the GVN, a ROK team, composed of a mobile army surgical hospital (MASH) and a small group of Taekwondo (Karate) instructors, was sent to SVN. 268 In early January 1965, the GVN requested that ROK deploy additional noncombatant forces to assist in civic action programs. In response, a task force composed of an Army engineer battalion (+) with associated support and self defense troops was deployed. 269 The main party of the ROK Dove unit, as this civic action element was called, arrived on 16 March and was based at Di An, Bien Hoa Province. 270 In a military working arrangement signed on 8 February between COMUSMACV and the ROK commander, it was stated that this task force would function under operating parameters established by what became known as the Free World Military Assistance Policy Council (FWMAPC) consisting of the CofS, USMACV, who was later replaced by COMUSMACV, the senior ROK commander and CJGS, the Council chairman. In addition, the Dove unit would be "responsive" to the overall commander in any given area. 271 In response to a GVN request and US exhortations, the ROK Government on 12 August approved deployment of an Army infantry division (-), one Marine Corps regiment, and one Field Support Command composed of Army and Marine elements with normal support troops, to SVN. Prior to arrival of the division, a new military working arrangement was negotiated, which contained no reference to command and control except for the clause that the FWMAPC would continue to provide operational guidelines; 272 COMUSMACV would furnish full logistical support. 273 The ROK Capital Infantry Division (-) and ROK Marine Brigade were completely deployed by 8 November, and were

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

274

assigned to security duties at Cam Ranh Bay and Qui Nhon. After discussions between the ROK commander and COMUSMACV, it was determined that CG, FFORCEV would have de facto operational control over the ROK forces although orders would be phrased as requests. 275 At the end of 1965 20,620 Korean troops were in SVN and there was considerable discussion regarding additional ROK troops for service in SVN. 276 Negotiations were underway in diplomatic channels. 277

(S) By the end of 1965 three other nations had given military aid to RVN in the form of noncombatant personnel to act in either advisory or civic action roles. These nations were the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of China (ROC) and the Royal Thai Government (RTG).

(S) The Philippines supplied medical teams and civic action/psychological warfare teams. The first contingent arrived in August 1964. 278,279 Action was taken throughout 1965 to obtain additional Philippine representation in the form of a 2,000 man civic action group (CAG); however, owing to domestic political problems a final decision on this matter by the Philippine Government was not made. 280,281 No formal working arrangement was signed between COMUSMACV and the commander of the Philippine contingent, although informal agreements did exist to enable day to day operations. 282 At the end of 1965, this team was composed of 72 Philippine personnel.

(S) The ROC provided 20 political warfare advisors who worked with counterparts in the RVNAF JGS. These individuals arrived in October 1964, in response to a request from the GVN. 283 Under a military working arrangement, COMUSMACV provided full administrative and logistical support for this contingent. 284 On 25 November the ROC furnished VNAF with two C-46 aircraft, on a trial basis, with Chinese crews, to serve as cargo carriers. 285 Additional support from the ROC in the form of shallow draft shipping and additional pilots and air crews was expected for 1966. 286

(S) The RTG provided a small group to aid in the training of VNAF personnel. These men arrived on 29 September and received no assistance from USMACV except for PX and commissary privileges. 287 There was no military working arrangement between COMUSMACV and the Thai element, although one had been proposed and was being staffed in Thailand. 288 Feelers had been received, indicating that Thailand was interested in providing additional assistance, perhaps in the form of cargo aircraft and shallow draft shipping. 289 Total Thai commitment at the end of 1965 was 17 men. 290

(TS) At the end of 1965, a new drive was underway in Washington to convince other Free World nations either to begin assistance,

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per Page 73 of 4 & 2 Pages

841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

or increase assistance presently given, to the RVN. As a result, the Free World buildup could be expected to continue during 1966.

THE US ADVISORY PROGRAM

(U) Although the spotlight shifted during 1965 from the advisory effort to the commitment of US combat power, advisors continued to work with counterparts at all levels. Rather than undergoing a reduction in strength, as might be expected, the advisory effort actually increased during the year as each of the US Services increased the level of advisory support provided the RVNAF.

USMACV Advisory Program Expansion

(C) In 1965, the USMACV staff was organized to perform three major roles: as advisory staff to RVNAF; as a subordinate unified command, and as the senior US ground command tactical HQ. The integration of Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), Vietnam, and USMACV in 1964, resulted in separate USN and USAF Advisory Groups but, as there was no separate Army HQ in RVNAF, the USA advisory effort, except for field elements, was integrated into the joint staff.²⁹² Each staff section had an advisory responsibility to a counterpart section of RVNAF JGS. Some sections were organized with separate and distinct advisory branches, while others, notably J2 and J3, were not. These sections had a coequal advisory and staff function. (See Figure II-9 for USMACV advisory organizational structure.)

(C) When 1965 began, HQ USMACV was operating under a proposed JTD of 1 September 1964, which covered the staff, the Army-Marine field advisory elements, the NAVGP and the AFAG. This document which authorized 1,128 spaces to the staff, was used as the basis for requisitioning personnel.²⁹³ Prior to the approval of the 1 September 1964 JTD, COMUSMACV requested an additional 461 spaces for the staff. These were requested to keep pace with the buildup of field advisory personnel and the RVNAF buildup which began late in 1964. The JTD was approved, with minor additions, on 6 April 1965.²⁹⁴

(C) Several recommended changes were incorporated into a JTD revision on 1 May 1965, which requested 1,819 military spaces for the HQ staff.^{295,296,297} This request separated the staff, the Army-Marine advisory elements, the NAVGP and the AFAG into four separate JTD's. Another revision to the HQ USMACV JTD was submitted on 15 November, which requested

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

2,439 spaces, but provided little change in the advisory structure within the joint staff. 298 By the end of 1965, neither the 1 May nor the 15 November JTD had been approved, but the HQ was operating under the latter JTD since, in August 1964, JCS had granted authority for COMUSMACV to requisition personnel concurrent with the submission of JTD change requests. 299 The HQ USMACV grew from a proposed authorized strength of 1,128 at the first of the year to a proposed authorized strength of 2,439 by year's end.

US Army Advisory Program

Army-Marine Field Advisory Elements

(C) At the beginning of 1965, the USMACV HQ JTD of 1 September 1964 authorized a total of 4,741 US military spaces for USA-USMC field advisory elements. 300 On 15 March 1965, Change 1 to the JTD requested 446 additional spaces to provide advisors to RVNAF units formed under Alternative 1 strength increase, 301 raising the total authorization to 5,187. Included in the request were 16 battalion advisory teams and 31 regimental staff advisors, as well as RF S4 advisors, administration and logistics company advisors, and assistant RF/PF advisors for each sector advisory team. These increases were prompted by the buildup and by the increasing role played by RF both in tactical and logistical fields. 302

(C) On 1 May, the JTD was revised and, at JCS request, the USMACV field advisory elements were incorporated into a separate document. 303 The 1 May JTD authorized 5,240 personnel for the USA and USMC field advisory elements. This JTD gave a field security section to each corps advisory detachment, to provide outlying advisory teams with security personnel, tailored to the requirements of each team. It also provided additional advisors to support the RVNAF Alternative 2 force buildup. 304 On 14 May, the USMC requested deletion of 129 enlisted security guard spaces, stating security for their field advisory elements would be provided from TOE (Table of Organization and Equipment) units. This adjusted strength ceiling of 5,111 spaces was approved by JCS on 12 August. 305, 306

(C) Change 1 to the 1 May JTD was submitted on 14 September, and consisted of an increase of 177 additional field advisory spaces. 307 Force increases placed heavy requirements on national training centers. This change provided additional training advisors, S4 advisors, and psychological warfare advisors to the training centers. It also provided for the 10th ARVN Div advisory detachment, and additional administrative personnel for the various advisory detachments to cope with the increasing workload that accompanied the increase in advisory teams. 308, 309 Change 2 to the 1 May JTD

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED

Order Sec Army By DAIRM per

Page 75 of 482 Pages

841534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

was submitted on 10 November, and requested 89 G2/G3 air advisory personnel. The rationale for this change was that these personnel were required at corps, division, special zone and sector level owing to the substantial increase in air support provided by all services during the year and the need for close control over such operations. ³¹⁰ JCS approved 176 of the spaces requested under Change 1 to the 1 May JTD on 2 December. This raised the authorized strength of USMACV field advisory elements to 5,287 spaces. ³¹¹ On 22 December, JCS approved Change 2 to 1 May JTD, and 90 additional spaces were authorized. ³¹² As 1965 ended, USMACV was authorized 5,377 personnel in field advisory elements compared to 4,741 at the beginning of the year.

Subsector Advisory Program

(U) Most of the area of the RVN is rural in nature and the people have little contact with the central government. Before 1964, the US advisory program extended no lower than province level. In early 1964, a decision was made to initiate a pilot program to place US advisors at district (subsector) level, and bring assistance closer to the people. In April and May 1964, 13 two-man teams were deployed. Early results were favorable enough for COMUSMACV and the US Ambassador to recommend expansion of the program during the Honolulu Conference of June 1964. The decision was made to expand the program with 100 additional subsector teams throughout the country. ³¹³ Initial assignment of teams to 45 subsectors in eight top priority areas was directed in August 1964. The standard team consisted of two officers and three enlisted men, but could be tailored to meet local requirements. ³¹⁴ By the end of 1964, 103 subsector advisory teams consisting of approximately 500 personnel deployed and were operational. ³¹⁵

(C) The program continued to expand in 1965. On 1 February, COMUSMACV directed that a sixty-day test be initiated at two CIDG camp locations in IV CTZ, to determine the feasibility of employing US Army Special Forces (USASF) detachments as subsector advisory teams. The requirements were that the CIDG be the dominant military element in the area and that the detachment must be collocated with a district HQ. Tests indicated this plan to be feasible without diluting the CIDG or other USASF missions. ³¹⁶ Of 181 subsector teams planned for deployment by the end of 1965, 152 were to be provided by USMACV and 29 by USASF. Assignment of eight teams was deferred to permit corps senior advisors to assign them as the situation required. ³¹⁷ The changing situation in many subsectors, and the increased participation of USASF in the program, necessitated up-dating requirements to a total of 186 teams required for FY 66, to include 145 USMACV teams by the end of 1965 and 41 USASF teams by the end of June 1966. ³¹⁸

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(C) The corps senior advisors exercised operational control over USMACV teams through the appropriate division and sector senior advisors, and over the USASF detachments assigned to sub-sector advisory roles through the sector advisor, except in matters pertaining to CIDG. Their control over CIDG matters was through the senior USASF commander in each CTZ. Corps senior advisors had authority to withdraw or redeploy subsector teams in the event they were endangered by VC hostile actions. 319,320

(C) At the close of 1965 a total of 169 subsector advisory teams had deployed, including 133 USMACV teams and 36 USASF teams, with a total strength of approximately 1,100. Advisory teams were assigned to all 43 sectors in RVN. USMACV teams were located in 38 sectors and USASF teams were located in the remaining five. 321

(U) Much effort was devoted in 1965 to improving the rural construction program. Most subsector advisory teams spent about 35 percent of their time on non-military programs such as rural construction and medical civic action. Subsector teams in more secure areas were estimated to spend as much as 80 percent of their time on these activities. 322

(C) A survey was conducted in March 1965 to determine personnel requirements needed if subsector teams were individually tailored to their mission. The survey produced a request for personnel possessing certain hard skills. However, it was not practical to attempt a broad infusion of these personnel without first developing more specific requirements. On 16 June, a pilot program was announced to augment the corps with additional medical advisors (E5 or E6), engineer advisors (E6 or E7) and MP operations advisors (E6), for a total of 49 men. The objectives of the pilot program were to determine actual requirements for these skills, and to determine the best means of assigning to subsector teams, e.g., by direct assignment of selected teams or extended TDY to selected subsectors, or to maintain a personnel pool or support team at sector level or higher. 323 The program was not completed at year's end, but on 27 November, corps senior advisors were asked for a preliminary evaluation by January 1966. 324 Preliminary recommendations were that these personnel be assigned at sector level and be sent on TDY to subsectors as requirements dictated. These findings were to be further examined in 1966. 325

Special Forces Advisory Program

(C) The USASF mission to advise the CIDG in RVN was conducted on a TDY basis prior to 1 October 1964. After that date 5th SFG (Abn) was assigned to United States Army Pacific (USARPAC) for permanent assignment in RVN. 326 On 1 January 1965, USASF in the RVN consisted of four C detachments, five B

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED 77 of 482 P. ges
CDAI Sec Army DAIM per

8-1-534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~
SECRET

detachments, 44 A detachments, and support units.³²⁷ The C detachments were assigned to each CTZ to provide command and control for all USASF elements in the CTZ. B detachments were intermediate control elements and A detachments were small 12 - 13 man teams which provided the major portion of the advisory support to CIDG.

(C) On 7 March 1965, a Troop Unit Change Request (TUCR) was submitted, requesting modification to 5th SFG (Abn) TOE's. Specifically requested were civil affairs and psychological warfare personnel for teams having a sector or subsector mission.³²⁸ These changes were approved by USARPAC General Order (GO) 196 on 28 June and USARPAC GO 287 on 10 September.

(C) On 20 June the 5th SFG (Abn) recommended to COMUSMACV that ten additional A detachments be requested. COMUSMACV recommended approval of this increase to SECDEF during his visit to Saigon on 19 July. SECDEF approved the request and directed that a plan be developed for further USASF increases of up to a total of 24 A detachments, if they were deemed necessary by COMUSMACV. At the same time he gave approval for 5th SFG (Abn) to commence the buildup employing TDY teams from Okinawa until PCS teams became available. As a result of SECDEF's visit a countrywide new camp location study was conducted with the corps commanders and their advisors which produced a requirement for five additional B detachments and 24 A detachments. A new TUCR was prepared for the requested changes, and was submitted 24 August.³²⁹ This would raise the total number of USASF detachments to four C detachments, 16 B detachments and 72 A detachments, plus necessary support elements.³³⁰

(C) As of 31 December 1965, there were four C detachments, 11 B detachments, and 62 A detachments deployed in RVN. Fifty-two of the A detachments were PCS and ten were TDY.³³¹ In terms of personnel buildup, the 5th SFG (Abn) increased nearly 50 percent with 1,264 personnel assigned on 1 January and 1,828 assigned on 31 December.^{332,333}

(S) In addition to providing advisory support to the CIDG program, and to the sectors and subsectors assigned to them by COMUSMACV, the USASF provided advisory support to five other programs. These programs were the Apache Force program, the Mike Force program, the Delta Force program, the CIDG motivational program and the SHINING BRASS program.

(C) The Apache Force concept envisioned using small, highly mobile teams of personnel indigenous to the area in which they operated, to work with US units and under the control of

~~SECRET~~
SECRET

~~SECRET~~

the US unit commander. Each team would be commanded by a USASF officer and would be used to find and fix an enemy force until larger and stronger units could be brought in. They would also be used to secure drop zones and landing zones, to locate enemy LOC's, and to provide intelligence to the US commander. Each team was to consist of four Pathfinder, Reconnaissance and Combat (PRC) teams to find the enemy, and three CIDG companies to fix him in place. When US forces were committed, the Apache Force would come under the operational control of the US commander for the duration of the operation.³³⁴ At year's end, the program had not been officially implemented but troops had been recruited in all four CTZ's and CIDG units in the II CTZ were providing this type of support on an informal basis to the 1st Cav Div (AM).³³⁵

(C) Mike Forces were Nung companies recruited and held in reserve by each of the C detachments and at HQ 5th SFG, (Abn), Nha Trang, to provide reaction forces in support of CIDG units within the zone. (Nungs were ethnic Chinese living in SVN, traditional mercenaries.) These units were not a part of CIDG; they were recruited and paid by USASF.³³⁶

(C) Delta Forces were similar in concept to Apache Forces. The Delta Force was advised by a USASF detachment, and consisted of 12 ten-man hunter/killer teams, each composed of two USASF and eight Vietnamese Special Forces (LLDB volunteers; and four ARVN Airborne/Ranger companies with USASF advisors down to platoon level. This force was supported by four VNAF H-34 helicopters and two VNAF C-47 aircraft. The mission of the Delta Force was to infiltrate VC-controlled territory, within the borders of RVN, and gather intelligence. The Airborne/Ranger elements permitted the force to exploit lucrative targets immediately. Throughout the year, the hunter/killer teams were used successfully in gathering target intelligence and in assessing B-52 airstrikes. The Airborne/Ranger companies were also used in support of besieged camps, notably Plei Me in Pleiku Province (see chapter IV).³³⁷

(C) The CIDG motivational program consisted of two groups of approximately 50 VC defectors recruited, trained and equipped by USASF, and used successfully in I and IV CTZ's to move into areas under pacification, provide their own security, perform civic action and provide motivational indoctrination to the indigenous population. Each team had eight USASF advisors.³³⁸

(S) USASF participation in SHINING BRASS operations is covered in Annex M.

Page 79 of 482 Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Class. Sec Army by DAM/100

48-11534

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Interaction - US Buildup & Advisory Program

(C) The introduction and rapid buildup of US combat units led to much press comment that the war in SVN was evolving into a "U. S. War" and that the advisory effort had become secondary.³³⁹ In fact, the US buildup had mixed effects on the advisory effort. The field advisory personnel of USMACV and USASF were increased, concurrent with the tactical unit buildup. The CO, 5th SFG (Abn), felt the introduction of US units had assisted the Advisory program. It provided increased air and engineer support as well as strike and reaction forces theretofore unavialable.³⁴⁰

(C) The buildup of both US and RVNAF units caused competition between the two for transportation, communication facilities, real estate, service facilities and supplies. It created competition between the US units and USMACV for personnel, and upon occasion, key personnel programmed for USMACV were diverted to US units. RVNAF troop movements were cancelled or delayed because troop lift priority was given to US units. Lack of transportation prevented advisors and their counterparts from making needed visits, thereby limiting their effectiveness. ^{341,342}

(U) In light of a growing tendency on the part of the joint staff to favor US units by diverting support and personnel from USMACV, the J1, USMACV, on 9 September, recommended to COMUSMACV that the staff be realigned and separated into different branches of US and RVNAF advisory effort, each branch having equal status.³⁴³

(U) On 12 September, COMUSMACV published a letter outlining his position on the advisory effort. In it, he stated the primary mission of USMACV was to:

aid RVNAF in the development and effective employment of combat-capable units . . . introduction of US units into RVN has added a new dimension to the mission. Nonetheless, the deployment and utilization of US forces in RVN is designed to supplement, and not to substitute for, the overall RVNAF effort and its US advisory adjunct . . . therefore, I desire that addressees take immediate and continuing action: to . . . insure that the advisory effort is fully responsive to RVNAF's needs.³⁴⁴

(C) On 18 September, the USMACV Comptroller submitted a staff study on the advisory program. This study included the policies and command structure under which it was being conducted; the effect of assignment of operational control, and possible future command, of the field advisory effort to senior US tactical commanders; the role of United States Army, Vietnam (USARV) in advising RVNAF JCS; and the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

841534

~~SECRET~~

role of the USMACV staff in advising RVNAF JGS. The recommendations of the study were: 1) in those staff sections where the principal staff officer deems it appropriate, to reorganize the section into two divisions—a US activities division and a VN advisory division; 2) to assign operational control of US field advisors to the senior US tactical commander in the CTZ; and 3) to transfer the logistical support responsibility for field advisors to USARV.³⁴⁵ Logistical support of the field advisory program was transferred to USARV on 1 September.³⁴⁶ The senior US tactical unit commander within I, II and III CTZ's was named senior advisor to the CG of each corps. This was done prior to its being formalized by USMACV Directive 10-11 on 10 November, and is discussed later in this chapter. Implementing the recommendation that staff sections be divided into two divisions was left to the discretion of the principal staff officer involved.

US Encadrement

(S) On 15 April 1965, DOD requested COMUSMACV's position regarding the feasibility of providing US cadres for ten ARVN battalions, as a measure to increase the effectiveness of RVNAF units.³⁴⁷ DEPCOMUSMACV considered three methods of encadrement: 1) assumption of officer and senior NCO command positions within the ARVN battalion by US personnel; 2) assignment of US personnel as staff officers, and in technical and specialist positions within the ARVN battalion, and 3) the employment of US troops as fire support elements within the ARVN battalion.³⁴⁸ These methods of encadrement were studied in relation to language, security, support, mutual US/ARVN acceptance problems, and conditions and capabilities within ARVN units. Problems common to all three methods were the language barrier, increased exposure of US personnel, the difficulty of US personnel adapting to ARVN living conditions and the greatly expanded support requirement that would be generated.³⁴⁹ DEPCOMUSMACV took the position that US assumption of command was neither feasible nor desirable, owing to the language barrier as well as the probable non-acceptance by the GVN. He felt that assignment of US personnel to ARVN staff and technical positions would not materially improve ARVN capabilities. Therefore, the assignment of US personnel in a fire support role appeared to be the only concept that would benefit ARVN and not significantly detract from GVN morale. A fire support element of six US officers and 49 enlisted men was suggested.³⁵⁰ Because of the difficulties in supply and service support, medical support, leadership in ARVN battalions, and anticipated morale problems among the US personnel assigned to ARVN battalions, DEPCOMUSMACV opposed the adoption of the principle of encadrement. He recommended that COMUSMACV not support the concept and, that if it were directed, it be initially applied to only one battalion.³⁵¹ COMUSMACV accepted DEPCOMUSMACV's recommendation and stated this position at

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 8-15-84 BY 841534

Page 81 of 82 Pages

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

the Honolulu Conference on 18 April.³⁵² The decision was made at that conference not to pursue the concept of encadrement.³⁵³

Infusion Program

(U) With the arrival of major US combat units in RVN, COMUSMACV recognized that they would be handicapped initially by a lack of familiarity with the climate, terrain, and customs of the country, and by a lack of experience with enemy tactics. To minimize the effect of this lack of experience, a program was set up to exchange experienced USMACV advisors with officers from newly arrived units. This was known as the "Infusion Program" and was designed to provide the tactical units with personnel having sufficient in-country experience to facilitate effective operation until the units acquired their own experience.³⁵⁴

(U) Between August and November, ten USMACV advisors were reassigned to 1st Inf Div and 25 were reassigned to 1st Cav Div, (AM) as part of the infusion program.³⁵⁵ COMUSMACV considered the program to have been highly successful and at year's end the USMACV staff was engaged in a study to determine if the program should be continued for new units scheduled to arrive in 1966.

US Air Force Advisory Program

(C) During 1965, personnel assigned to AFAG increased from 309 to 391.³⁵⁶ These additions, authorized by revised USMACV JTD, 1 May,³⁵⁷ were primarily due to an emphasis on training and plans for modernizing the VNAF to include new jets.³⁵⁸

(C) At a July 1962 conference in Saigon, SECDEF had directed preparation of a plan which would build VNAF, within three years, to a force capable of containing the threat imposed by insurgents. The then USAF section of MAAG formulated and implemented this plan to provide for the development of VNAF objectives and concept of operations. Completion of the VNAF fighter bomber program, which basically called for six A-1 tactical fighter squadrons, was essentially accomplished in 1965 with five VNAF wings approved and activated.³⁵⁹

(U) At the end of the year the CHAFAG noted that AFAG successfully coped with accelerated programming of VNAF forces and crew training. He stated that "much of the advisory effort during 1965 had been expended trying to keep pace with this (VNAF) explosive expansion."³⁶⁰

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

(U) AFAG sections and advisory teams were collocated with their respective VNAF counterparts during 1965. This integration brought about greatly improved working relations with VNAF. Keeping pace with VNAF's expansion, three additional advisory elements were established. ³⁶¹ Team No. 7 was activated at Can Tho air base on 28 January; Det 2, Team No. 6 was assigned to Pleiku on 1 August; and a directorate of management analysis was organized within AFAG at TSN air base on 13 November.

(C) AFAG assisted VNAF in the development of plans and requirements for activating two new fighter squadrons: the 522d at TSN in May, and the 524th at Nha Trang in August 1965. ³⁶²

(S) During 1965, the AFAG current operations function was reorganized and expanded. Transport and liaison staff officer positions were added and manned. HQ VNAF adopted a conventional chain of command organization. A concept of operations was developed by AFAG for VNAF UH-1B helicopters which were to replace H-34's on a basis of one squadron per year beginning in FY 67. ³⁶³

(C) Inclusion of VNAF in the visual reconnaissance program of RVNAF resulted largely from AFAG efforts during the year to improve the professional capability of VNAF's liaison aircraft force. In the field, AFAG team capabilities doubled when two additional advisors were assigned to each VNAF liaison squadron. This brought about the development of good liaison relations during October through December. ³⁶⁴

(S) Throughout 1965, AFAG concentrated on improving the professionalism of VNAF's fighter force. Increased training in instrument and night flying was initiated. AFAG developed an A-1H/G aircraft check list for VNAF crews. Selected VNAF personnel started jet training in August at Clark Air Base, Philippines. By the end of the year, four VNAF combat-ready crews were flying with the USAF B-57 unit at Da Nang. ³⁶⁵ This was VNAF's first capability in jet aircraft.

(C) AFAG did much to ensure proper utilization of VNAF EC-47 aircraft through use of navigational aids. An intensive training program was started and by the end of 1965, VNAF crews were actively engaged in flight checking these aids. ³⁶⁶

(C) Increased AFAG emphasis was given to the expanding VNAF training effort during 1965. AFAG prepared training objectives for VNAF to increase the number of its fighter, helicopter and liaison pilots. They also clarified the need for training an adequate number of airborne observers, mechanics, communications, electronics, and support personnel, to support the VNAF mission. AFAG considered and used every feasible means of

~~SECRET~~

MAP instruction. These included USAF units and field training detachments; USAF and USN mobile training teams; a USMC task element, and civilian contract technical service personnel. New courses and facilities were opened both at the Nha Trang training center and at base level. US instructors were assigned and more effective training aids were used. In turn, VNAF on-the-job training was used extensively to upgrade training. AFAG efforts resulted in an overall increase of training VNAF in-country, which was accomplished without a corresponding increase in offshore requirements. CONUS training provided through AFAG was limited to those skills in which indigenous assets were either unavailable or already totally committed to the SVN effort. The latter was particularly true of fighter pilot training, which was extremely important to VNAF growth and modernization. CONUS and PACAF (Pacific Air Force) training provided high quality graduates of both flying and technical courses.³⁶⁷

(S) In August 1965, AFAG obtained approval to train VNAF B-57 flying and maintenance personnel in PACAF, including six pilots, four navigators, four maintenance officers and 16 aircraft mechanics. This program was to continue into 1966. In another area of training, AFAG arranged through USAF for a team from the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) to conduct a course of OSI methods and procedures for 21 VNAF cadet officers. The course, completed on 18 December, was highly successful and provided a well-trained group for establishing a VNAF Office of Investigation.³⁶⁸

(S) Following is a summary of all training performed by and for VNAF during 1965:³⁶⁹

	Students			
	<u>Entered</u>	<u>Eliminated</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Graduated</u>
A-1 training conducted in VN:	221	32	8*	181
*Four were killed in training accidents and four killed in combat operations.				
Personnel trained off-shore:			317	
Personnel completing on-the-job training:			1,547	
		(1964 total: 1,231)		
Men taught 1965 in-country:			5,289	
		(1964 total: 4,334)		
Total VNAF personnel trained 1965:	7,153	(96% trained in-country)		

(C) An AFAG safety program for VNAF was formulated in September 1965. USAF advisors were assigned and collocated with the VNAF Director of Safety. An AFAG safety advisor and a VNAF safety officer were assigned to each wing. Regulations were published and VNAF accident/incident reporting procedures were initiated. An accident/incident analysis program for VNAF was

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

started in October.³⁷⁰ Trends disclosed, together with corrective action recommended, were forwarded to VNAF and the AFAG chiefs for information and necessary action. Pilot error was the primary cause of both major and minor VNAF aircraft accidents. In most instances, accidents resulted from loss of pilot control on take-off or landing. AFAG revealed that the VNAF overall accident rate during the first six months of the year, while flying 74,846 sorties and 87,366 hours, was 36.6. This represented one major accident for 2,338 VNAF sorties, or one per 2,730 flying hours. The VNAF overall accident rate while flying 91,744 sorties and 126,169 hours during the last six months of 1965 was 35.7. This represented one major VNAF accident for each 2,032 sorties, or one per 2,803 flying hours. VNAF experienced a heavy loss of H-34 aircraft during the last six months of 1965, with 18 destroyed in combat or by accident. AFAG requested an additional 18 replacement H-34's for the remainder of FY 66 in order to keep helicopter units at authorized strength. The safety program within VNAF was expected to decrease attrition in the months ahead. Any evaluation of this accident/incident record of a rapidly growing VNAF should note that VNAF flew a total of 118,120 operational sorties during CY 1965.³⁷¹

(C) A corollary to the AFAG advisory effort to equip VNAF with more professional personnel, was the requirement for improved RVNAF management of its military resources. At the close of 1965, COMUSMACV initiated through AFAG a program for military assistance training in this field. He proposed to CINCPAC the creation of an in-country management school to support VNAF. AFAG stipulated that the curriculum should be designed to teach basic courses of approximately one month duration. The courses should be applicable to junior and senior officers assigned to logistics positions or those in which logistical support is critical to mission accomplishment. The curriculum would consist of:³⁷²

- 1) Inter-relationship of supply requirements.
- 2) In-country movement of spare parts and equipment from depot to base.
- 3) Transportation pipeline times and means for shipping between base, depot, and/or CONUS for repair.
- 4) Techniques for developing qualitative and quantitative standards in logistics.
- 5) Principles of inventory management.
- 6) Supply, transportation and management.

(C) An activation team from CONUS was to work with AFAG

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 8-1-53 BY 34

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

advisors and VNAF personnel in RVN to develop the curriculum and instructional plans. Team members would be from USAF, since most procedures controlling VNAF material and systems were based on USAF directives. The team would be provided by the Air Force Institute of Technology. It would teach currently-established USAF resource management courses adapted for VNAF key officers, three-week basic management courses for VNAF lieutenant colonels and majors, and five-week management courses for selected potential instructors.³⁷³

(C) Activation of this program would obviate the need for special courses for VNAF in CONUS. COMUSMACV recommended, however, that USAF include a 50-hour air base level management course in all USAF logistical management courses in CONUS, applicable to SVN.³⁷⁴

(S) At the close of the year, CHAFAG commented that although the VNAF expansion . . . "had diluted its management level, skill level and leadership level across the board, now is the time to stabilize and professionalize the force. When this is accomplished we are obligated to a program of modernization."³⁷⁵

(S) This program of modernization was getting underway in late 1965 as the first squadron of the new F-5 jet fighters was approved for the VNAF inventory.³⁷⁶

US Navy Advisory Program

(C) At the beginning of 1965, 98 officers and 117 enlisted men were assigned to the NAVGP, USMACV. These personnel were engaged in advising the River and Sea Forces of VNN, the Coastal Forces and the VNMK. The NAVGP anticipated the need for additional advisory personnel and requested an increase of 172 spaces in January³⁷⁷ to be assigned to Junk Division bases and to individual units of the Sea Force.

(C) In support of COMUSMACV's responsibilities, the NAVGP assisted the VNN and VNMK to develop a high standard of fulfilling responsibilities for internal security, defeat of communist insurgency, and resistance to overt aggression in order to improve VNN and VNMK in all areas and to satisfy naval requirements for the RVN. To this end, advisors were attached throughout the VNN.

(C) A constant problem to CHNAVGP, during 1965, was the effective utilization of the Coastal Force. Decentralization of control of this force under province chiefs was the basic cause of this problem. Clear-cut zones and boundaries were lacking, and when efforts were made to reassign junk divisions, political considerations interfered. This resulted in the deployment of a few junk divisions in some zones and many in others. Strong support by CHNAVGP enabled

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

some coastal zone commanders to request and partially obtain equitable division of forces through the intercession of CINCVNN.³⁷⁸

(C) During March another request was forwarded by CHNAVGP for a total of 250 personnel to perform fleet-shore surveillance coordination duties and to intensify the Coastal and Sea Force Advisory effort.

(C) During April, three VNN force commanders, and several other officers mutinied against CINCVNN and charged him with graft. All interested parties were initially relieved from duty during the subsequent investigation, and the commander of VNNC, Brig Gen Khang, was temporarily placed in command of the VNN. On 26 April, the VNN Chief of Staff was designated acting CINCVNN. All mutineers were returned to their posts without disciplinary action during May except the River Force commander, who was replaced. The return of these officers illustrated one of the unfortunate facts of political life in RVN, namely, key leaders who failed actively to support the winner during a coup could expect to lose prestige and possibly their jobs shortly thereafter. The episode of the deposed CINCVNN was a good example.^{379,380} Although the mutiny had an initial debilitating effect on the VNN the incident passed and no continuing adverse effects were noted during the year.

(C) In order to assume operational control of MARKET TIME forces, a sizeable increase of NAVGP personnel and facilities was required. A JTD augmentation of 39 officers and 67 enlisted men was requested in May. Together with previous requests, these augmentations meant an increase of 145 percent over pre-MARKET TIME strength. The May augmentation requested 106 personnel, primarily to provide HQ, maintenance and operational support personnel, in order to plan and exercise operational control of MARKET TIME operations.³⁸¹

(C) Port security in Saigon was a matter of great concern to COMUSMACV. The possibility of sabotage in the river had been demonstrated in May 1964 with the sinking of the USNS Card. In order to improve security measures and controls within VNN a USCG Port Security Officer was assigned to the CHNAVGP staff.³⁸²

(S) From a beginning figure of 215 officers and men, the naval advisory effort grew in increments throughout the year. On 31 December the total strength of the NAVGP was 666 officers and men. Authorized strength was 1,548. The

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED

Order Sec Army By DAIM pur

8-41534

Page 87 of 432 Pages

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

sources of weakness and the April mutiny had had a severe adverse affect on VNN officer morale. In addition, CHNAVGP stated that the Coastal Force was the weakest link in the patrol effort because of its austere foundations and mission of passive information gathering and reporting.³⁸⁶

(S) In late 1965, the limited effectiveness of the Coastal Force indicated that the old problems of general lack of routine maintenance and untrained personnel still existed, with the result being a continued unsatisfactory status of VNN. One of the keystones to the effectiveness of each unit was the individual personality of its commander. Related to this was the fact that in most cases the executive officers of Coastal Groups suffered greatly from lack of experience and initiative. This was due to the attitude of senior officers that they must do all the thinking for their unit or suffer loss of face. The condition persisted that "if it's not my idea, it's no good." Coupled with lack of leadership this proved to be one of the most serious problems confronting the VNN.³⁸⁷

(S) The year-end evaluation of VNN by NAVGP, based on daily observation and close participation in VNN activities, was that the overall readiness of the VNN had not reached the standards set by CHNAVGP. Security for advisors was marginal in the RAG force; at other bases it was satisfactory. The overall readiness of the River Force had not met the expected level; maintenance was poor and ship utilization was minimal. The philosophy persisted that equipment operators operated and the shipyard repaired. The result was that equipment downtime showed no improvement during the year. The overall readiness of the Coastal Force was rated as satisfactory.³⁸⁸

(C) Naval advisors made strong efforts to improve the status and the standards of operation of the VNN. Some advances were made and the future looked brighter, but at the end of the year the best that could be said was that an overall evaluation found the VNN minimally satisfactory.

US Marine Corps Advisory Program

(C) As a component of the NAVGP, USMC advisors had been in RVN since 1954, guiding the development of the VMFC. In January 1965, the MARADVU, NAVGP, consisted of 20 officers and three enlisted men. There were also 27 Marine officers and 37 enlisted men advising ARVN units in the I CTZ, who were directly responsive to COMUSMACV. Plans for the VMFC to execute multi-battalion operations called for an augmentation of the MARADVU

PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED Pages 88 of 89 Pages
Sec Army B. DAIN

841534

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

difference between the present for duty and authorized strength was because of a requested increase of 791 personnel submitted during November to provide for USN support and for early delivery of new equipment and ships and 14 other spaces requested at earlier intervals.³⁸³ This expansion in the NAVGP was due primarily to expansion of roles to be played by CHNAVGP. From a purely naval advisory effort at the beginning of 1965 to the assumption of an operational command -- TF 115 in July -- and with the additional responsibility as Commander, TF 116, the requirement for personnel increases was obvious and gave promise of increased operations and responsibilities for the USN in SVN in 1966.

Evaluation of VNN

(C) As in most advisor/counterpart relationships, there existed the possibility of misunderstandings between members of NAVGP and VNN. Culture, education, sophistication, and personalities all combined to cause difficulty in communication. MARKET TIME units were an interesting illustration of this problem. The greatest single benefit from the advisory point of view, was that MARKET TIME gave VNN personnel the opportunity to observe US practices and techniques at work in the same mission assigned to the VNN. Advising proved to be best done by example, and MARKET TIME offered unique opportunities in that respect. Reports from coastal surveillance center advisors indicated that VNN officers returned from liaison duties with USN ships displaying unusual enthusiasm and a superior understanding of the job at hand. Although there might well be cases of friction in the future, past experience indicated that junk division commanders, in particular, were generally grateful for the psychological support provided by an advisor's presence.³⁸⁴

(S) Some of VNN's most pressing problems lay in the field of maintenance and repair. Reasons were similar to those encountered by all developing nations: shortage of technical and administrative talents; lack of mechanical-mindedness among the rank and file to operate equipment; rapid expansion of the navy; and inadequate resources.³⁸⁵

(C) In April 1965 CHNAVGP informed COMUSMACV of the lack of responsiveness and substandard patrol effort on the part of the VNN. In substance, CHNAVGP stated that VNN operations had never been aggressive in spite of advisory efforts. However, there were exceptions among individual units. Lack of command attention was one of the VNN's major

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

to insure adequate guidance. A tentative TOE for the Marine brigade field advisory HQ was submitted, and billets requested to augment this group on a temporary duty status. The augmenting personnel, consisting of five officers and eight enlisted men, were furnished by CG, FMFPAC.³⁸⁹

(C) Requests for authorization of a colonel and a lieutenant colonel for the two top positions in the MARADVU, and for an additional major and warrant officer were also approved.³⁹⁰ Part of the personnel requested, including a motor transport, an artillery and an engineer advisor, arrived in April 1965.³⁹¹

(C) On 1 May, the VNN and VNMC were officially designated as separate and autonomous services. The great regard of the JGS for VNMC Brig Gen Khang and the then unpopular and unwholesome condition of VNN, were the primary causes for this change. The RVN military authorities held the VNN in low regard largely because the VNN leaders had backed the wrong faction in each of several coups, and because the VNN leadership lacked competence and responsibility, as amply illustrated in the April mutiny against the CINCVNN. In the latter part of May, one officer and two NCO's were added to the MARADVU.^{392,393}

(C) Plans were formulated for a formal training program for FY 67 through FY 72 to support the long range force structure increase of the VNMC from a five battalion brigade to a nine infantry battalion division. This training was expected to be conducted either at formal schools or on-the-job training with US Fleet Marine Force or Marine Corps base units. This training program was to be paid for in its entirety by the US.³⁹⁴

(C) At the end of 1965, assigned strength of the MARADVU was 25 officers and five enlisted men. All requested officer increases were filled during the year, but six enlisted billets remained unfilled.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

(C) The vast changes in US involvement in the Vietnam conflict during 1965 necessitated sweeping revisions in command and control procedures at all levels. New missions were established for the USMACV staff and the other elements of the Country Team. A critical need for extensive improvement and expansion of communications media was revealed. The following is a discussion of the major changes in these fields during the year.

Pages 90 of 48 Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

8 4 1 5 3 4

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

USMACV Headquarters

(C) The dimensions and complexity of COMUSMACV's responsibilities during 1965 can be attributed to the expansions in personnel strength and base development and the problems and command relationships connected with the changing character of US involvement in the Vietnam conflict. Basically, the added responsibilities (discussed in detail throughout this history) resulted from: 1) COMUSMACV's deeper involvement in his advisory responsibilities (such as the increased subsector and sector advisory teams in the field), 2) the additional staffs necessary to effect satisfactory coordination among the increasing number of US and FVMAF units, 3) the many problems involved in the reorganization of the staff, 4) the buildup of RVNAF, 5) the new relations which followed the emergence of new agencies (such as the formation of Joint US Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO)), 6) changes in the role of US military forces in RVN, 7) actions related to the added intensity and changing character of enemy activities, 8) the extension of war activity into areas outside SVN, 9) the rapid evolution from a sub-unified staff with primarily an advisory mission to a full-fledged operational headquarters, 10) COMUSMACV's desire to control the US ground war from within HQ USMACV, 11) COMUSMACV's planning and other responsibilities as Commander, US Forces in Southeast Asia (Designate) (COMUSSEASIA) (D) and Commander Central Region SEATO Field Forces (Designate), (CURSFF) (D), and 12) problems related to troop morale and protocol, such as the overwhelming numbers of distinguished visitors to RVN during 1965 and Operation Christmas Star which involved the distribution of tons of gifts from CONUS to US personnel in Vietnam. 395

(C) The expansion of the USMACV staff continued at the same hectic pace that had characterized it in 1964. Two JTD's, dated 1 May and 15 November 1965, were out of date before they could be published. Many changes were submitted throughout the year, and personnel actions were initiated immediately upon submission. Thus, formal approval, while requiring many months, did not impede the flow of personnel. In this, as in so many other aspects of the buildup, COMUSMACV virtually had carte blanche and, naturally, the strain on resources was considerable. COMUSMACV recognized these difficulties but went on record as saying that he felt compelled to state his requirements without regard to availability. 396

(C) An examination of Table II-6 reveals that the major expansion took place in the J2, J3, and J4 staff sections, and included the creation of a Combat Operations Center (COC). J2 became actively engaged in the acquisition of intelligence as a

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order 544 Army By DAIS 1981
84434
Pages 91 of 482 Pages

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~
SECRET

consequence of the capability of many US units to collect information and the need to bolster the RVNAF system to provide intelligence for all US forces in-country. J3 found that the average workload per man had increased to 80 hours per week, and that an overall expansion to meet requirements was essential. In addition, a sizable element was needed to man the COC. The J4, in the throes of directing one of the largest logistical buildups in US history, in an extremely compressed time period, also found it difficult to accomplish his missions within existing personnel ceilings. Thus, HQ USMACV reflected the increased tempo of US commitment in Vietnam with its own expansion, both in functions and personnel.³⁹⁷

(U) Many reorganizations within staff sections took place during 1965 to meet the changing requirements. Such modification will not be treated in this history. There were, however, several reorganizations of the overall staff. The situation at the end of the year is reflected in Figure II-10. A comparison with Appendix 3 of the 1964 USMACV Command History indicates the changes, which are discussed below.

Deputy COMUSMACV

(S) In May 1964, then DEPCOMUSMACV Lt Gen Westmoreland, in anticipation of assuming command, stated that, while there was no strong requirement for a deputy, he agreed with the SECDEF that DEPCOMUSMACV should be a US Army officer as the war was primarily a ground operation. CINCPAC expressed disappointment, as he believed that a joint approach was necessary to encourage a similar organization on the part of the RVNAF.³⁹⁸ COMUSMACV considered that his Chief of Staff could also serve as deputy, but he later decided to defer such a combined assignment. He visualized the mission of the deputy to oversee matters of insurgency and basic ground combat, frequent negotiations with ARVN generals, and supervision of field advisors. The CSAF apparently had expressed a strong interest in appointing a USAF deputy, but COMUSMACV felt that such an officer would be more effective as Deputy Commander United States Military Assistance Command, Thailand (DEPCOMUSMACTHAI).³⁹⁹ Lt Gen J. L. Throckmorton was recommended as DEPCOMUSMACV by both DEPCOMUSMACV and the US Ambassador in July 1964.

(S) The discussion over a Deputy for Air continued, particularly within the JCS, until October, when a decision was made to appoint such an officer to promote inter-service harmony.⁴⁰¹ However, the appointment had not been made by the end of 1964 (notwithstanding the organizational chart shown in Appendix 3 of the 1964 USMACV Command History).

Pages 92 of 48 Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Arm; By DAIR; per
841534

~~SECRET~~
SECRET

~~SECRET~~ SECRET

(C) On 14 May, the JCS established the position of DEPCOMUSMACV for Air Operations, and assigned Cdr, 2d AD to this position as an additional duty.⁴⁰² On 25 August, COMUSMACV issued terms of reference for the DEPCOMUSMACV (Air).⁴⁰³ In this document, DEPCOMUSMACV (Air) was to provide timely advice and recommendations on matters related to air operations and coordinate all operations of air forces under COMUSMACV with VNAF. He recognized that command of the 2d AD would be enhanced by this additional role.

Joint Service Representation

(C) The issue over a DEPCOMUSMACV was actually symptomatic of a general feeling among many service officials that joint service representation on the USMACV staff was imbalanced in favor of the Army.⁴⁰⁴

(C) In February, a discussion over the replacement of Maj Gen C. A. Youngdale, USMC, J2, USMACV, ensued.⁴⁰⁵ USA authorities felt that USMACV's intelligence requirements would primarily be filled by USA units. When the USMC was unable to provide a successor for Maj Gen Youngdale, Brig Gen J. H. McChristian, USA, was appointed J2 on 13 July.

(C) In March the JCS had urged increased joint representation, particularly in the J2 and J3 sections.⁴⁰⁶ COMUSMACV agreed and proposed in early April that the position of Deputy Chief of Staff be established and filled by a USAF brigadier general and upgraded the position of CNAVGP to that of rear admiral.

(S) While the buildup was in progress, the HQ USMACV staff persistently tried to improve the joint service representation. The new Chief of Staff (CofS), Maj Gen W. B. Rosson, on several occasions stated that staff sections should be comprised of officers from all services.⁴⁰⁸ As reflected in the November JTD, COMUSMACV took pains to insure that there would be the best possible balance in utilizing experienced officers of all services in positions where they could best serve the Command.⁴⁰⁹ This was noticeably reflected in the reorganization of the J3 and J4 divisions. Subsequently, COMUSMACV also decided to designate the Assistant Chief of Staff (ACofS), J6 as a USAF position upon the expected transfer of the incumbent, Brig Gen W. E. Lotz, to USAFV as Signal Officer.⁴¹⁰

(C) However, in spite of all of these actions, the USMACV staff remained predominantly Army (see Table II-6). This was unavoidable as:

THIS PAGE REMAINS UNCLASSIFIED Page 93 of 482 Pages

Order Sec Army 15-11-1975

8-11-3-4

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The reorganization which combined USMACV and USMAAG, Vietnam, resulted in separate Navy and Air Force Advisory Organizations, but because there is no separate Army headquarters in RVNAF, the Army advisory effort, except for field elements, was integrated into the MACV Joint Staff. Much of the MACV Staff, therefore, consists of purely Army advisory effort and results in a staff which appears to be heavily weighted with Army personnel. The RVNAF and JGS organizations, both predominantly Army demand a large Army contingent in the MACV Staff. 411

Training Directorate

(U) In accordance with an agreement between the Director of Organization and Training (O&T) and J3, most of the functions of the Doctrine and Literature Branch, O&T, were transferred to J3 Force Structure Branch on 4 January 1965. Incumbents were released to J3 or assumed new functions as advisors to the Research and Publications Bureau, ARVN Training Command. 412 The Directorate of O&T was reorganized effective 26 April and redesignated Training Directorate, with the mission of advising the ARVN Training Command and providing command and control over subordinate advisory training units. 413

POLWAR Advisory Directorate

(FOUO) The Political Warfare (POLWAR) Advisory Directorate was established by USMACV GO No 931, dated 5 May. 414 It was placed under the staff supervision of ACoS J3, albeit with direct access to the CoS as appropriate. The Directorate was assigned primary staff responsibility for psychological warfare (psywar), for civic action, and for coordinating political warfare advisory activities. The Psywar/Civil Affairs (CA) Branch of J3 was discontinued.

Director of Army MAP Logistics

(U) Effective 1 May, J4 absorbed the functions and personnel of the Director of Army MAP Logistics (DANL). 415

Free World Military Assistance Office

(U) While other countries, notably Australia, had previously provided the GVN with military assistance, it was not until the President's call for "more flags for Vietnam" in mid-1964, that USMACV staff participation in the program was required. A nucleus of officers was formed in the J5 section

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIS per

841534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

to plan and program for such assistance as was offered. By December 1964, activities had increased to such a degree that a special staff section, under the supervision of the ACofS J5, was formed and called the IMAO.⁴¹⁶

(C) It became habitual to refer to those allies furnishing military assistance as Third Country forces. In the view of some contributing countries this term had some unfavorable connotations. COMUSMACV thus instructed that its use be discontinued⁴¹⁷ and redesignated the IMAO as the FwMAO on 1 October.⁴¹⁸

Combat Operations Center

(U) The COC was originally conceived as a FATOC (Field Army Tactical Operations Center) but COMUSMACV directed that the Center become part of the USMACV organization with minimum manning,⁴¹⁹ thus making it a Joint Tactical Operations Center (JTOC). One reason for its organization was to improve the tactical air control system. The JTOC was to provide guidance and instructions on air matters to the TACC.⁴²⁰

(C) As contained in COMUSMACV msg 40079 11 November 1965, (C), the JTD of 15 November included a JTOC

to serve as (a) focal point from which the supporting staff elements will accomplish operational planning and coordination. The basic . . . staff element . . . will be a part of (the) Command Section. It will act in the name of and to (the) extent authorized by COMUSMACV and the CofS. The ACofS J3 will have primary joint staff responsibility for supervision. It is proposed that the JTOC be headed by a Marine Brigadier General.

CINCPAC msg 270423Z November (C), approved its establishment; redesignated it as COC, and recommended approval to JCS of a USMC brigadier general to head this organization. On 1 December the COC was established. COMUSMACV believed that this position would improve the balance of USMC representation on the USMACV staff. The appointee to this position, Brig Gen W. K. Jones, USMC, was expected to arrive in Vietnam in early January 1966.

MAP Directorate

(U) The MAP Directorate, which had been supervised by the ACofS, J5, (as in PACOM), was formally placed under the direct supervision of the CofS on 15 December 1965.⁴²¹ This had substantially been a de facto arrangement because its mission differed from

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE BY DAAM PER
841534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

that of J5, which was concerned primarily with plans. The MAP Directorate was concerned with COMUSMACV's role as the representative of the SECDEF in maintaining surveillance over the MAP in RVN. 422

Command Relationships

US Army Vietnam

(U) At the beginning of 1965, USA advisory units were under the command and control of COMUSMACV. USA combat support and combat service support units were largely under the CO, US Army Support Command, Vietnam (USASCV). These arrangements were adequate for the number of personnel involved and the tasks assigned.

(S) In March, after the decision to build up US forces in SVN, the subject of reorganization of USMACV arose. The CofSA, proposed the formation of an Army Component Command (ACC) with Lt Gen Throckmorton, DEPCOMUSMACV, as its commander. This component would relieve COMUSMACV of as many of his non-tactical and non-combative functions as possible. COMUSMACV replied, in March, that such functions were not onerous and could be coordinated with the Vietnamese much better at the USMACV level. He emphasized that he foresaw only problems, with no attendant gains, by reorganizing his HQ at that critical juncture. 423 However, he did see a need for establishing a field command, to coordinate combined forces operations in a particular part of the country, with Lt Gen Throckmorton in command. As DEPCOMUSMACV, he would be in a position to serve in this role. As ACC, Lt Gen Throckmorton could not do so, as he would have no authority over other services' forces placed under the field command, because such services were represented by component commanders of equal stature. Thus, COMUSMACV preferred that he (COMUSMACV) should also be the US ACC in RVN. 424

(C) In March, the JCS proposed that the advisory organizations be placed under the ACC. 425 COMUSMACV was opposed, because it would reestablish a relationship which existed prior to the dissolution of the MAAG, a relationship which was so unsatisfactory as to form the basis for MAAG's inactivation. 426

(C) In April, COMUSMACV refined his concept of command arrangements. He proposed that a tailored corps HQ be deployed if three divisions were moved to Vietnam. Lt Gen Throckmorton would command this corps, but would be returned to Saigon when a qualified senior officer could succeed him. COMUSMACV

~~SECRET~~

841534

~~SECRET~~

opposed any change in the concept of the USASCV, stating that he did not want to exercise tactical command through this headquarters.⁴²⁷ Maj Gen Stilwell, his CofS, expressed the opinion that a new headquarters, USARV, acting as the ACC, could provide considerable assistance as coordinator between USMACV, USARPAC, and USASCV. ⁴²⁸

(C) In June, COMUSMACV re-emphasized his opposition to the establishment of an ACC, because it would result in two large headquarters, established in Saigon, dealing with the RVNAF JCS, which functions as joint staff and also as the ARVN HQ.⁴²⁹ COMUSMACV felt that the US organizational structure should be tailored to the situation and mission in SVN rather than rigid adherence to US joint service doctrine.

(C) On 20 July, USASCV was redesignated USARV with General Westmoreland as its commander and Brig Gen J. Norton, his deputy. The mission of USARV, in accordance with COMUSMACV's views, was to conduct US Army combat service support operations in SVN, including ACC support planning for COMUSMACV. Additionally, it was to exercise command, less operational control of USA combat units deployed to RVN.⁴³⁰ Thus, it was not an ACC in the standard sense since it did not exercise operational control over USA combat units.

(S) In November, COMUSMACV proposed that the general officer positions on the USARV staff be increased and that an Army-level headquarters be established to support the Phase II buildup with a lieutenant general in command.⁴³¹ On 27 December, it was announced that Lt Gen J. E. Engler would become Deputy CG, USARV, in early 1966, and Brig Gen Norton, the incumbent, would become his assistant. ⁴³²

US Army Field Force and Advisory HQ

(S) In June, JCS had proposed that the field force HQ (see discussion in the previous section regarding tailored corps HQ and field command) become a joint organization. COMUSMACV objected, stating it would control only USA and ROK ground forces. If III MAF subsequently were placed under its control, the staff would then, of course, be augmented with Marines. COMUSMACV visualized that the HQ would evolve from a provisional Task Force Alpha HQ under Brig Gen P. F. Smith commanding the two separate USA brigades, to a USA division level HQ, and then to a tailored corps (field force) HQ to command the USA and ROK divisions and the separate abn bde in II CTZ. ⁴³³

(S) In response to a CJCS inquiry, COMUSMACV stated that the possibility of III MAF passing to the operational control of field forces HQ could not be forecast as it was contingent upon escalation

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED 97 of 182 Pages
Order See Army By DIRM per

841534

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

of the war. In June, III MAF's operations were confined to the I CTZ and there was no advantage in placing it under field force HQ. However, if the conflict were to escalate to Korean conflict proportions, it might then be desirable to place III MAF under field force HQ and augment the HQ with Marines. He urged that the HQ be a stripped-down TOE corps HQ rather than a Table of Distribution (TD) organization, asserting that this was in full consonance with the Hawaiian agreements of April.⁴³⁴

(U) On 1 August, HQ USA Task Force Alpha, (USATFA) the field force HQ, was activated and assigned to USARV as a TD organization. A nucleus of experienced USMACV officers was assigned to aid in the establishment of the HQ.⁴³⁵ Maj Gen S. R. Larsen was appointed CG on 4 August.

(C) On 7 August, the I Corps Advisory Group was placed under the operational control of CG, III MAF, who was designated Senior Advisor, I Corps. This placed the advisory effort in I CTZ under the senior US ground commander in the CTZ, thus improving the total influence of US advice on ARVN.⁴³⁶ The former Senior Advisor was designated Deputy Senior Advisor. No restrictions were placed upon the scope of this operational control, but further integration of the Advisory Group into the III MAF structure was deferred pending additional study.⁴³⁷

(S) In August, COMUSMACV modified the initial scope of operational control for the field force HQ by excluding the 1st Inf Div. This modification was due to considerations of the seniority of the incumbent commanders, and the need to retain flexibility for future developments. He reiterated that Lt Gen Throckmorton would only temporarily command the organization, giving way to Maj Gen Larsen because of the need for Lt Gen Throckmorton as DEFCOMUSMACV.⁴³⁸ (As a matter of fact, Lt Gen Throckmorton was never appointed commander on orders; Maj Gen Larsen continued to command the organization for the remainder of the year and into 1966.) Subsequently, in Phase II planning, this was further clarified by providing for a US Marine Amphibious corps (MAC) in I Corps and three separate USA corps in the three remaining CTZ's.⁴³⁹

(S) On 25 September, USATFA was redesignated HQ, Field Force, Vietnam (FFORCEV) with operational control over USA units in II CTZ and the II Corps Advisory Group.⁴⁴⁰ Initially, the Senior Advisor retained his title, but because ARVN II CTZ commander, then sub-Brig Gen Vinh Loc, felt that he had lost prestige in that he was no longer advised by the senior US officer in the area, the CG, FFORCEV, on 21 October was

~~SECRET~~

designated Senior Advisor and the former Senior Advisor was designated Deputy Senior Advisor.^{441,442} The precedent established in I Corps obviously had considerable bearing on this modification. Also, this change in II Corps ended consideration, then pending, to modify the position in I Corps to conform to that initially adopted in II Corps. COMUSMACV was quite willing to encourage this effort on the part of the Vietnamese to enhance their prestige, feeling that such measures were essential to the eventual attainment of their ability to stand on their own feet.⁴⁴³

(C) On 1 November, CG, 1st Inf Div, assumed operational control of USA and FVMAF elements in III CTZ, but similar control over III Corps Advisory Group was delayed to allow CG, 1st Inf Div, to become thoroughly familiar with his many responsibilities.⁴⁴⁴ On 1 December, COMUSMACV designated CG, 1st Inf Div, as Senior Advisor to CG, III ARVN Corps, and the incumbent as Deputy Senior Advisor. The III Corps Advisory Group was concurrently placed under the operational control of the CG, 1st Inf Div.⁴⁴⁵ Thus, by the end of 1965, all of the corps advisory groups, except IV CTZ where no US tactical units were deployed, had been placed under the respective senior US tactical ground commander.

(C) In late November, COMUSMACV initiated action for the organization of a second field force HQ in the III CTZ in the event a second division was to be deployed to the area.⁴⁴⁶ This HQ was scheduled to become operational on 31 March 1966.⁴⁴⁷ The advance party was due to arrive in early January with the first deployed units of the 25th Inf Div. It was scheduled to operate under a modified TOE, and its commander would assume control over USA tactical and advisory units in the III CTZ.⁴⁴⁸

US Air Force

(C) Throughout 1965 the command relationships among COMUSMACV, Cdr 2d AD and CHAFAG remained unchanged. COMUSMACV retained command over the AFAG in order to carry out his responsibilities to advise VNAF. The Cdr 2d AD, exercised operational control over the AFAG in his role as the AFCC.⁴⁴⁹ Operational relationships between the 2d AD and other air elements in the command are discussed in Chapter IV.

US Navy/Marines/Coast Guard

(U) With the landing of the US Marines in I CTZ, the CG, 9th MEB, as the senior naval tactical commander ashore, became the NCC of USMACV.⁴⁵⁰ In May, the CG, III MAF, Maj Gen W. R. Collins, assumed this role. Maj Gen (then Brig Gen) L. W. Walt succeeded him on 4 June. However, the NCC did not command or control all naval forces in USMACV, as the NAVGP and TF 115 remained a separate entity directly subordinate to COMUSMACV.

THIS PAGE
ORIGINALLY CLASSIFIED
ON 08-13-84 BY DAIN

Page 99 of 482 Pages

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(C) On 30 July, Task Force 115, Coastal Surveillance Force (COSURVFOR) was activated under the operational control of the CHNAVGP. Thus, the direction of MARKET TIME operations and the resources, formerly the responsibility of CINCPACFLT, were transferred to COMUSMACV. TF 115 was the USN's first command integrating sea, air and shore based units for the primary mission of countering sea infiltration. In order clearly to distinguish between the responsibilities of COMCOSURVFOR and COMSEVENTHFLT, a memorandum of understanding was signed by both commanders, outlining the MARKET TIME area; forces available; and operational procedure for ships of one force operating in the area of the other.⁴⁵²

(C) The first USCG vessels to see action in a combat zone since World War II arrived at Da Nang on 20 July. Two divisions, 11 and 12, were formed under USCG Squadron One. Div 12, CTG 115.3, was assigned as the Da Nang Support Group and Div 11, CTG 115.4, arriving Phu Quoc Island on 31 July, was assigned as the Gulf of Thailand Support Group.⁴⁵³

(C) In late September, COMUSMACV, concerned with the existence of two naval component commands, III MAF and NAVGP, asked CHNAVGP to study the problem and present a proposal which would establish a single NCC. He would then compare this proposal with the status quo and inform CINCPAC of the results of the analysis.⁴⁵⁴ A firm proposal had not yet been developed at the end of 1965.

(U) For a listing of key personnel see Table II-7, and see Figure II-11 for command relationships within USMACV.

Combined Command Arrangements

(U) With the buildup of US forces in SVN, and the abandonment of the strictly advisory role of USMACV, it was logical that the subject of command relationships between US forces and RVNAF should arise.

(S) In mid-March, following the CofSA visit to RVN, a meeting was held at the highest level in Washington to discuss proposals for the deployment of US forces to SVN. Among these were combined command arrangements which would recognize that the US was no longer limited to the role of advising RVNAF.⁴⁵⁵ COMUSMACV considered labeling unit advisory teams as combat support teams, to reflect their true mission. The team commander would be appointed deputy for US combat support functions to the ARVN commander. The sector and subsector advisory teams would be labeled pacification support teams. Insofar as combined

~~SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

commands were concerned, COMUSMACV felt that a gradual transition would be more palatable to the GVN. Thus, the initial phase would consist merely of cooperation between the US and RVN forces, followed by the establishment of a small, combined coordinating staff, handling only combined operations matters, headed jointly by COMUSMACV and CINCRVNAF. 456

(TS) On 21 March, COMUSMACV formalized his concept on command relationships. 457 COMUSMACV and CINCRVNAF would act together on a coordinate/cooperate basis with a combined staff whose powers would be limited solely to coordinating combined operations under a US CofS with a VN deputy. Similar staffs would be established at lower levels, but only when collocation or common missions of units so dictated. This arrangement would be modified if and when it was acceptable to GVN and desirable for the US to take full command. DEPCOMUSMACV, would supervise the coordination process at all levels; he had the stature for this task and would be the logical commander of the combined field command if formed. 458 This concept was accepted by CINCPAC, who added that changes would be made only upon overt NVN/CHICOM aggression and implementation of a Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) or US unilateral contingency plan. 459

(C) In early April, COMUSMACV obtained the CofSA's approval to retain Brig Gen Collins, whose departure from SVN was imminent, in SVN. He intended to designate him a special RVNAF-US headquarters, since it seemed probable that this organization might be formed in the near future. However, he added that such plans could not yet be proposed to GVN, as the time was not yet ripe to insure favorable reception. 460

(S) On 12 April, COMUSMACV felt that the time was ripe for planning a combined staff for USMACV and RVNAF, JCS. 461 On 28 April, he brought up the matter of a combined staff with senior VN officials, Maj Gen Thieu, the Deputy Prime Minister and Maj Gen Minh, CINCRVNAF. Maj Gen Minh was particularly sensitive to the proposal. 462 As a result, it was put on the shelf for the remainder of the Quat regime.

(S) However, on 14 May, the JCS announced that SECDEF had authorized the creation of the combined coordinating staff as previously conceived by COMUSMACV, and the establishment of a formal combined authority in SVN, a concept which had not originated at USMACV. 463 In press statements, both the VNAF Commander, Air Vice Marshal Ky, and Deputy Prime Minister Thieu pointed out that they felt that a combined command was undesirable. Thus, for the US to submit any such proposal to GVN would be premature. 464 CINCPAC was so informed. 465

THIS PAGE REGRAD
Order Sec Army By 11/11/81

841534

Page 101 of 182 Pages

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

(S) The establishment of a formal combined authority was apparently intended for implementation only upon introduction of significant additional US combat formations. This would extend US influence beyond the combined coordinating staff, virtually to the point of de facto US control of the RVNAF. COMUSMACV intended to inform JCS that such a proposal should be aired with VN counterparts but it would require a discussion of future US troop deployments with the GVN, which he had no authority to do. However, local political considerations discouraged any attempt to bring this matter up with GVN.⁴⁶⁶ This fact was also relayed to CINCPAC.⁴⁶⁷

(S) For the remainder of 1965, the subject of combined coordinating staffs with RVNAF was not revived. The Vietnamese seemed to be basically opposed to such a relationship and COMUSMACV sensed that further discussion probably would be fruitless. US troop commanders, in their Letter of Instructions (LOI), were told that the basic concept underlying command relations with RVNAF commanders was to be one of cooperation and coordination in the mutual interest of both commands. While US forces were not to be placed under the command of operational control of allied commanders, this policy did not preclude the temporary tactical direction of US forces by RVNAF commanders under exceptional circumstances and by mutual agreement. The temporary direction of RVN forces by US commanders, under certain circumstances, was also authorized. This latter situation became particularly prevalent in I CTZ as PF units frequently operated under III MAF unit commanders.

COMUSMACTHAI

(S) In March, a study was made of the JCS proposal that separate commanders be assigned to USMACV and USMACTHAI, thereby eliminating COMUSMACV's second "hat" as COMUSMACTHAI, a role he had held since USMACV was activated in February 1962. COMUSMACV did not concur with the proposal and stated that the same officer should remain in command of both organizations. COMUSMACV's reply to CINCPAC noted that this was a reversal of his earlier position on this question but he stated that his change in thinking was due to a change in the situation, which placed military considerations above those of a political nature.⁴⁶⁸ This matter was again discussed at the April Honolulu conference with the SECDEF, who deferred decision on the matter until a later date.

(S) On 27 May, the SECDEF informed the JCS and CINCPAC of his decision to separate the COMUSMACV and COMUSMACTHAI commands, with COMUSMACTHAI to be established in Bangkok with a USA major general in command; COMUSMACV, as COMUSSEASIA (D), would retain policy planning control over SEATO/SEASIA matters.

~~SECRET~~

841534

~~SECRET~~

COMUSMACV recommended, and CINCPAC concurred, that the commanders retain assigned specific planning responsibilities and that any subsequent realignment be accomplished on an evolutionary basis. On 10 July 1965, United States Military Assistance Command, Thailand (USMACTHAI), was established as a separate command. 469

Communications

(C) With the US troop buildup in RVN in 1965 and the increase of COMUSMACV's span of control, it was to be expected that existing in-country and out-of-country communications facilities would require major expansion. These requirements, the actions taken to improve the communications systems, equipment and operations, and the problems which arose are discussed in Annex C. By the end of 1965 the groundwork had been prepared for an effective communications system in SEASIA. COMUSMACV obtained control over in-country communications. The major unresolved problem was that construction of communications facilities lagged behind requirements.

Inter-Agency Relationships

(C) COMUSMACV was a member of the US Mission Council under the direction of the US Ambassador to RVN. This Council developed US policies and insured the effective coordination of the complete spectrum of US activities in-country designed to achieve the multiple objectives necessary to conclude the war successfully. A discussion of COMUSMACV's interrelationships with the other members of the Mission is contained in Annex D.

EXPANDING THE BASE

(C) At the end of 1964, the then USMACV J4, Brig Gen F. A. Osanski, commented: "I believe the first principle of counterinsurgency strategy is to secure the base; and I think we neglected that until recently." 470

(C) At the end of 1965, the USMACV J4, Brig Gen J. D. Crowley, observed:

. . . on May 1st of this year, only seven months ago, we had a US military population of 36,000 consisting primarily of advisors, air units, and helicopter units. Our logistics system consisted of a commissary and a large supply room in Saigon . . . we now find ourselves having to support the equivalent of a field army. 471

THIS DOCUMENT IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE
BY DAIR 11534

Page 103 of 482 Pages

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(C) The developments in the logistic field in Vietnam during 1965 may thus be appropriately called "expanding the base." This development was unique in that it was the first time that the US had to develop a base of logistical operations in a combat zone with no fixed areas under complete friendly control and with no area close by to serve as a logistic base, such as Japan did during the Korean conflict. SVN was thus both the combat and communications zone at the same time. 472

(U) During 1964, at least 16 agencies provided logistical support for RVNAF operations and the US advisory program in RVN. Since plans at that time called for the withdrawal of all US forces during 1965, there were no attempts to establish a coordinated logistic effort. Agencies operating their own supply and support systems included: HSAS (Headquarters Support Activity, Saigon), USASF, USAF, USA, USMC, VNAF, VNN, ARVN, POL (renamed SAPOV, Sub-Area Petroleum Office, Vietnam), OICC (Officer in Charge of Construction), CARE, USAID, CAS, SOG (Studies and Observation Group), USMACV field advisors and the US Embassy. Some of these systems paralleled and overlapped each other, while in other cases, support functions were either not performed or were done in an arbitrary manner. For example, four of the systems provided utility repairs yet there was no depot level maintenance. During the latter part of 1964, much was done to consolidate and streamline the logistic function but no real base of logistic operations was obtained until 1965. 473

(S) COMUSMACV encountered many problems in expanding from a large supply room in Saigon to the support of a field army equivalent; they included: developing necessary logistics systems, obtaining the requisite manpower, funding the effort, bringing supplies and equipment in-country and actual construction of required facilities.

1st Logistical Command

(S) As early as 1962 the need for a centralized US logistical organization in SVN was foreseen by COMUSMACV (General P. D. Harkins) and a study was prepared recommending the deployment of a US Army Logistical Command (Log Comd). This study was disapproved by both CINCUSARPAC and CINCPAC who felt, at that time, that the requirement was not justified. 474 In August 1964, a new plan to improve the USMACV logistical capability was developed. An essential element of the plan was the prompt introduction of a log comd and an engineer construction group to remedy the lack of a retail supply and maintenance activity outside the Saigon area, as well as to improve the base wholesale system in Saigon and provide a US military construction capability. 475

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

~~SECRET~~

8-4-15-84

~~SECRET~~

(S) On 21 December 1964 the JCS indorsed COMUSMACV's plan and recommended that 230 men be initially dispatched to SVN as soon as possible. The SECDEF approved the plan in principle, but stated that additional justification was necessary, especially for the engineer construction group. 476

(S) To develop his position more fully COMUSMACV directed that a new study be made. Its conclusions were:

1) The log comd was required to fill two needs: a consolidated up-country common-user logistical system and a complete wholesale system in Saigon under HSAS.

2) Any additional buildup of US and other FVMAF could not be properly supported under the current informal system involving various US elements as well as RVNAF.

3) The existing system of transshipment from Saigon to other locations in-country was no longer practical.

4) The proposed log comd would provide a single source for all common-user items and gradually take over the supply and maintenance functions of HSAS, USMACV, HQ Comdt (Headquarters Commandant) and USMACV.

5) The recommended manning for this command was 3,800 logistical personnel. A 2,400-man engineer group would provide construction support. Up-country depots and maintenance shops would be established. 477

(S) The SECDEF felt that this subject was of sufficient importance for him to send a special representative to SVN. On 31 January 1965 an Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) group, headed by Mr. Glen Gibson, arrived in Saigon to discuss the deployment of a log comd and related items. This team was initially antagonistic to the idea of bringing a log comd to Vietnam; however, after four days of conferences, the team was prepared to recommend its establishment with an initial input of 350 men. COMUSMACV's objectives were thus largely achieved. The 350 men recommended could form the nucleus of the log comd and non-divisional technical service units could be assigned to this organization as they became available. The task force also recommended that the engineer construction group not be deployed at that time. 478

(S) Consequently, the SECDEF, in February 1965, approved the immediate deployment of 38 logistical planners and 37 operating personnel to become the nucleus of the 1st Log Comd. The 1st Log Comd

THIS PAGE RECLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By 1

Page 105 of 462 Pages

841634

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Type A, (reduced), was established by USARPAC GO 95 dated 29 March to be activated on 1 April. SECDEF did not approve deployment of the engineer construction group. 479 This decision was soon reversed and by the end of April, the SECDEF had not only authorized deployment of the engineers but also the necessary increments for a full strength Type A Log Comd. 480 The 1st Log Comd was increased to a Type B unit on 6 July. Other separate major logistic elements available to the ACC by the end of 1965 included the 2d Signal Group formed in May, and the 18th Engineer Brigade that was organized in September to provide a headquarters for engineer construction elements. 481

Logistical Support System

(S) The logistical support system developed by COMUSMACV during 1965 had its roots in a USMACV J5 study completed in March 1965. This study discussed the feasibility of establishing a series of enclaves in SVN to be secured by US troops. It envisaged the release of RVNAF from static security missions to full employment in offensive roles against the VC. These enclaves should be in locations anchored on the sea and containing port and airfield facilities. It was also recommended that detailed studies be prepared on the following locations in order of priority: Da Nang, Vung Tau, Nha Trang, Qui Nhon, Bien Hoa, Hue, Cam Tho, Cam Ranh/Phan Rang, Quang Ngai, Tuy Hoa, Phan Thiet, Soc Trang, Vinh Long, and Rach Gia. 482

(S) A serious problem in the logistic field in SVN was that of port congestion. COMUSMACV developed a support plan during the early summer of 1965 that was to result in the decentralization of logistic operations. The concept involved the development of both logistic areas and support areas.

Support areas are balanced groups of logistical units and activities which provide services and supplies to supported units and maintain up to 30 days stockage for troops supported from the particular complex. Logistic areas are balanced groupings of logistical units and activities which provide back-up to support areas, make issues and provide services to local units, and maintain a 30 day level of supplies. 483

(S) Initially, the 1st Log Comd was to establish support areas at Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, Vung Tau, and Bien Hoa with logistic areas at Cam Ranh Bay and Saigon. 484 Thus the recommendations in the enclave study were applied in logistical

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

concluded that in spite of some construction difficulties, it would provide an ideal location for an ammunition storage facility; however, the recommendations of the survey team were not favorably considered by the J4, USMACV.⁴⁹¹ At the Honolulu planning conference in April 1965 COMUSMACV recommended that Cam Ranh Bay be developed as a logistical base. In addition to the fine natural harbor the area was served by National Route 1 and the Vietnamese National Railway, two of the major land LOC's in SVN.⁴⁹² Development did not receive approval at that time.⁴⁹³

(S) At a 15 May briefing, the recommendation was made to COMUSMACV that Cam Ranh Bay be developed as a "a second major deep water port and logistics complex",⁴⁹⁴ to provide combat service support to the I and II CTZ's. Approval to use the land had already been obtained on 13 May.⁴⁹⁵ This briefing also described the decentralized logistic support system and base development at Qui Nhon and Nha Trang.⁴⁹⁶ It was estimated that initial construction would take one battalion-month and an additional 15 battalion-months would be necessary to achieve a standard IV level. The airfield portion was estimated to require 2.5 battalion-months of construction for emergency operations; six battalion-months for minimum operations; and 12 battalion-months to become fully operational.⁴⁹⁷ COMUSMACV approved the plan in concept; by the end of May, the SECDEF had concurred.^{498,499} On 9 June two battalions of USA combat engineers landed at Cam Ranh Bay and construction began.⁵⁰⁰

(FOUO) Another logistic problem of interest to COMUSMACV during 1965 was the transfer of the support functions for personnel in Saigon and field advisors from HSAS to USARV.⁵⁰¹ In January CINCPAC directed that plans for the development of the logistical command should include the phase-out of HSAS. As the II, III and IV CTZ's were Army oriented, it was only logical for all support functions to be under Army cognizance. The first step in this transfer occurred on 1 September when support for USMACV field advisors became the responsibility of the 1st Log Comd under USARV. On 14 September, COMUSMACV scheduled the phase-out of HSAS for completion by 30 June 1966. By 15 October a complete transfer schedule had been prepared. The HSAS mission was divided into 19 functions with a phased turnover to allow for smooth transition. Early in November the JCS approved the recommended concept. At the end of 1965 responsibility for four of the functions (translation service, port operations, dental care, and post exchange operations) had been transferred from HSAS to USARV.

~~TOP SECRET~~

Supply and Maintenance

(TS) As the buildup of US forces in the RVN progressed, the Command experienced many supply shortages. COMUSMACV had anticipated this and had prepared a document informing incoming units of expected supply problems among which were:502

- 1) Arriving units must be prepared to live in the field and be generally self-sustaining.
- 2) Only limited maintenance support would be available. Units must bring enough repair parts for 180 days of operation.
- 3) There would be no station property or field fortification supply available.
- 4) A double basic load of Class V supplies should be brought. Some types of ammunition were not available in-country.

(S) In order simply to maintain COMUSMACV's consumption and stockage requirements, 12,000 short tons of cargo, or two ship-loads, were required daily by the end of 1965. This was exclusive of AID, MAP, and military construction cargo.503 Problems of storage complicated the situation.

(C) The major incoming USA units and force packages were initially supported under a PUSH supply system which provided for 180 days of automatic resupply of all classes of supply except bulk petroleum. Items were automatically shipped in 15-day increments from CONUS. The first two increments were delivered directly to the supported units and the remainder were sent to the supporting depot or support command to facilitate establishment of supply control data.504

Class I

(C) Stockage of Class I perishables remained limited up to the end of 1965 because of insufficient refrigerated storage space. Even with two refrigerated barges, at Cam Ranh Bay and Qui Nhon, and one refrigerated ship with two additional barges at Da Nang, desired stockage levels had not been met. Stockage objectives and on-hand status of Class I as of 31 December were:505

Page 109 of 482 Pages

THIS PAGE RECLASSIFIED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAJMD
8 4 15 84

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CLASS I SUPPLY STATUS

	<u>Type Ration</u>	<u>Stockage Objective</u>	<u>On Hand</u>
I OTZ	A	60 days	19 days
(III MAF/NCC)	B	60 days	35.6 days
(49,000 personnel)	Meal, Combat Individual	45 days	35.7 days
		(Included 30 days mount-out stocks)	
II, III & IV	A	60 days	13 days
OTZ (USARV & HSAS)	B	90 days	22.7 days
(161,000 personnel)	Meal, Combat Individual		

In addition to the normal rations handled under the Class I system, COMUSMACV directed, in October, the distribution of sundries packs. These consisted of health and comfort items issued free to those units which did not have PX resources available and those deployed from base areas for more than two days.⁵⁰⁶

Class II and IV

(C) Class II and Class IV supplies were handled differently because of the numerous line items in these categories. There was no overall stockage objective for Class II and Class IV items. Rather, usage factors were computed on each item, re-order points were established, and individual stockage levels set. As each line item had to be handled on an individual basis, a great management problem was generated, and changes in demand caused large fluctuations in supply levels. Although component commanders had reported shortages of certain items, levels were generally adequate and shortages did not force curtailment of combat operations nor affect adversely the health and welfare of the Command. At the end of 1965, USARV had reported 105 different items as being in short supply, to include: tropical boots and fatigues; some items of field equipment; rough-terrain fork lifts; M-113 APC's; 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton trucks; field wire and cable; radio installation kits; M-16 rifles; M-60 machine guns; 4.2 mortars; almost all construction material; and certain aircraft and avionics maintenance items.⁵⁰⁷

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

841534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(C) In early September the USMACV Quartermaster recommended that enlisted personnel be placed on an issue-in-kind clothing system instead of the monetary clothing allowance system.⁵⁰⁸ Cash sales facilities were not available for most personnel since the one outlet in Saigon could not service those outside the immediate area. Following a study of this proposal, USAF elements remained on the monetary system. The USMC element of the NCC went under issue-in-kind on 1 September. Other USN and USCG elements remained on the monetary system (naval personnel serving with USMC followed USMC procedures). USARV adopted issue-in-kind procedures on 1 November and HQ, USMACV, on 1 January 1966.^{509,510}

Class III

(C) Highly specialized storage and shipping requirements for Class III created unique problems for COMUSMACV. Before 1965 all distribution and supply was handled by three civilian oil companies: Shell, ESSO, and Caltex. Because of relatively small requirements and no military system in existence, this procedure was adequate in support of the MAAG effort.⁵¹¹ During 1964, slightly over two million barrels (bbls) of fuel were consumed.⁵¹² For 1965, the total consumed reached almost seven million bbls (including JP-4, 115/145 avgas, diesel, and mogas).⁵¹³ Of this total, over one million bbls were consumed in December alone (see Figure II-13, POL Consumption 1965).⁵¹⁴ It was estimated that monthly consumption by June 1966 would reach a million and a half bbls.⁵¹⁵

(C) As the US buildup increased during 1965 many changes became necessary in POL handling procedures. In January, for example, military users at Nha Trang and Vung Tau consumed double the forecasted amount of aviation fuel.⁵¹⁶ During March - April, Shell, one of the major suppliers, ran out of JP-4; it was only by borrowing from ESSO stocks that the existing requirement was filled.⁵¹⁷ By May, even though a dual contract system had been initiated with ESSO and Shell to make country-wide resources available, the commercial contractors had reached their maximum supply capability.⁵¹⁸ At a PACOM conference in late April, it was decided that large contracts would be made with commercial suppliers, involving untouchable reserve stocks at various locations within SVN, which were to be subject to delivery on 24 hour's notice. The stock level and the rate of delivery would be such as to force these companies to build additional storage facilities.⁵¹⁹ Other items discovered included the need for organizing a military POL system and establishing a strong centralized control under SAPOV. At the time, some PACOM component commanders felt that giving SAPOV too much authority would impinge on service prerogatives.⁵²⁰

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED Page III of 489 Pages
Order Sec Army By DAIR

841534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(C) In early June, with shore-based storage capacity still a major problem, an MSTTS T-1 tanker, USNS Petaluna, was stationed off Da Nang to provide a floating reserve and to discharge products directly to the consumer.⁵²¹ By 31 December, two MSTTS T-2 tankers were also serving in this capacity. In addition, the civilian suppliers were maintaining two T-2 tankers in a floating storage configuration at the end of the year, with replacements provided as they were offloaded.⁵²² In order to augment the available storage capability, civilian contractors started construction of new facilities in June: Shell at Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, TSN, Nha Be, and Can Tho; and ESSO at Lien Chieu, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, and TSN.⁵²³

(C) During July, as US logistical forces became available, and in consonance with the overall logistic support plan, component commanders were given responsibility for receipt, storage, and issue of common-user Class III products. The NCC thus became responsible for POL services in the I CTZ and the ACC in the II, III, and IV CTZ's. Because of the special nature of Class IIIA (aviation POL), each component commander operated on-base storage and dispensing systems in areas where his service was the dominant user.⁵²⁴ SAPOV maintained overall responsibility for management of the entire system. The basic supply system throughout the year continued to rely on commercial capability, augmented by military resources.⁵²⁵ The commercial contractors could not supply lubricant and grease outside the Saigon area because of the lack of cargo vessels. As a result, handling of these products was completely taken over by the military during July.⁵²⁶

(C) The supply points of Nha Be, just south of Saigon, and Lien Chieu, north of Da Nang filled almost all in-country POL requests.⁵²⁷ The Da Nang area proper was supplied by truck, tank car, and coastal tanker, all operating from Lien Chieu. An amphibious assault fuel system was installed at Da Nang and Chu Lai, providing the capability to pump products from small tankers to collapsible tanks ashore. This system consisted of underwater flexible pipeline terminated at a mooring buoy, enabling tankers to discharge into normally unusable locations, and proved to be extremely valuable in augmenting permanent storage facilities. Qui Nhon was supplied by coastal tankers from Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay and an amphibious assault fuel system. An Khe was supplied from Qui Nhon by military truck. Distribution to Pleiku over the road was possible only when VC activity permitted. Nha Trang was supplied from the Nha Be tank farm by coastal tanker, where although there were no commercial storage facilities, installation of an amphibious assault fuel system made limited collapsible bag

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

storage possible. Cam Ranh Bay was to be the site of a major POL storage and distribution point. Pending completion of this projected facility, a temporary Army pipeline from the beach to a collapsible bag storage area was installed. TSN, Bien Hoa, and Vung Tau were supplied by tank trucks operating from Nha Be, and the Delta area received necessary POL support via barge convoys escorted by VNN. All other locations were supplied by air, using either 55-gallon drums or 500-gallon collapsible tanks. At the end of 1965, total in-country commercial bulk storage capacity was 880,000 bbls, of which approximately 60 percent was utilized for military requirements. 528 Planned future construction would provide an additional 607,000 bbl capacity. 529 The total military storage capacity was 382,300 bbls, out of which only 30,833 was permanent; the remainder being collapsible bags. 530 Planned military construction called for an additional 2,300,000 bbl permanent storage capability. 531

BULK CLASS III & IIIA⁵³²
Days of Supply
End 1965

	<u>Stockage Objective</u>	<u>On Hand* Average</u>
<u>III MAF</u>		
AVGAS	30	10
JP-4	30	5
MOGAS	30	7
DIESEL	30	8
<u>USARV</u>		
AVGAS	45	10
JP-4	45	5
MOGAS	45	3
DIESEL	45	6
<u>2d AD</u>		
AVGAS	30	10
JP-4	30	4

plus 15 deep reserve in commercial and floating storage.

THIS PAGE REQUESTED UNCLASSIFIED
CLASSIFIED BY 60144 per 1534
8 1 5 3 4

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Class V

(S) Class V supply support, ammunition, was relatively satisfactory with about 70 percent of the stockage objective on hand at the end of the year.⁵³³ Most of the problems involved nine items that were in world-wide short supply: 1) Cartridge 40-mm HE (M 384); 2) cartridge 40-mm HE (M 406); 3) 2.75-in rocket HE; 4) 81-mm mortar illuminating round; 5) 105-mm howitzer illuminating round; 6) 250-lb bomb Mk 81; 7) 500-lb bomb Mk 82; 8) 500-lb, 750-lb, and 1000-lb GP bombs; and 9) 20-mm HE ammunition. ⁵³⁴ Expenditure of these items was handled on a controlled basis, and, where necessary, substitutions were made to assure combat availability. End-of-year average daily consumption of all types of ammunition was 960 short tons per day.⁵³⁵ In addition to its normal reserve stock, the 2d AD established the "Special Express" system and normally had three floating ammunition depot ships stationed in Vietnamese waters to provide an additional 9 to 12 days' supply of USAF munitions. ⁵³⁶ On 15 June 1965, COMUSMACV established the USMACV Ammunition Officer under the staff supervision of the J4. This office held overall supervisory responsibility for ammunition requirements, storage, and distribution for all customers in SVN.⁵³⁷ End of year Class V and V-A status is shown below. ⁵³⁸

CLASS V AND V-A

	<u>STOCKAGE OBJECTIVE</u>	<u>ON HAND</u>		
	<u>Days of Supply</u>	<u>Short Tons</u>	<u>Days of Supply</u>	<u>Short Tons</u>
USARV	60	59,000	47	47,163
III MAF	45	37,500	35	28,102
2d AD	30	32,500	14	16,174

Shortages

(TS) Shortly after the arrival of major US troop elements, considerable unfavorable publicity was created as a result of allegations of supply deficiencies in SVN. A Senate investigating sub-committee which visited SVN in October, found evidence of definite shortages in repair parts and construction material.^{539,540} COMUSMACV's feeling at the time was that several of the complaints made to the committee were based on incomplete knowledge of the

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per
841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

situation. The logistical system was still in the process of shaking down and the alleged supply shortages had in no way affected combat operations. Many of the difficulties had been caused by problems in distribution and by some world-wide item shortages.⁵⁴¹

(S) COMUSMACV and higher HQ undertook measures to insure that critical items of supply and equipment would be available when required. In October the SECDEF established a task force in his office to monitor critical shortages and institute corrective action as necessary.⁵⁴² This task force was not to serve as another requisition channel but rather as an agency to expedite solutions to logistic support problems. A reporting system known as "Flagpole" was established to keep this task force advised as to current supply shortages with specific designators applied to the various commands.

(S) Soon after initiation of the Flagpole system, COMUSMACV found it necessary to submit six items for consideration.⁵⁴³ Three of these dealt with logistical problems and three with operational and construction difficulties. The first Flagpole item, B-1, submitted in September, was a request for assistance in expediting release of funds for the military construction program in SVN.⁵⁴⁴ Flagpole B-2 requested assistance in obtaining additional U-8 aircraft for the use of COMUSMACV and CG, USARV. DA was to furnish the 15 requested aircraft by January 1966.⁵⁴⁵ A serious shortage of uniforms for ARVN and RF soldiers prompted the submission of Flagpole B-3 in November. This problem was complicated by the need to provide replacement uniforms for ROK elements. As a result of this request, OSD approved offshore procurement of the required uniforms and initial shipment was expected in January 1966.⁵⁴⁶ The continued shortage of shallow draft coastal shipping, as reported in November by Flagpole B-4, resulted in the negotiation of a contract with a commercial shipper to provide part of the necessary service. Item B-5 and B-6 were submitted in late December and had to do with delays encountered in construction of the Integrated Wideband Communications System (IWCS).⁵⁴⁷ Action on these items was still pending at the end of 1965. In addition to the items submitted by COMUSMACV, two were initiated by CINCPAC and eight by CINCSARPAC.⁵⁴⁸ The Flagpole system proved to be a valuable assistance to COMUSMACV in obtaining rapid reaction to his logistic problems at the highest level.

(S) COMUSMACV established a reporting procedure for subordinate commanders to inform him personally of any supply shortages, so that rapid command action could be initiated. On 19 November, the Secretary of the Army directed formation in

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Under Sec Army By DAIM per Page 11 of 48 2 Pages

841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CONUS of quick-reaction assistance teams oriented to SVN. These teams were to be prepared to leave CONUS on a 48-hour notice and to remain in SVN up to 90 days. Each team was composed of experts in specific areas of supply and maintenance assistance. These teams could be requested by COMUSMACV or deployed directly by Department of the Army (DA) if necessary.^{549,550}

(S) After his visit to SVN, in November 1965, SECDEF directed DA to establish a Red Ball Express System as a temporary method of expediting the flow of repair parts to remove equipment from deadline in SVN. Main features of this system were streamlined requisitioning procedures and reserved predictable airlift capability.⁵⁵¹ Between its initiation on 6 December 1965 and 3 January 1966, USARV submitted approximately 8,000 Red Ball requests, of which 3,700 were filled. This action made possible the removal of 612 major items of equipment from deadline, including 481 aircraft, 12 bulldozers, 33 trucks, 51 generators, and five pieces of material handling equipment (MHE).⁵⁵² The percentage of selected items of equipment operated by USARV on deadline status on 1 January 1966 was: 1st Cav Div (AM) aircraft 16 percent; other USARV aircraft, 20 percent; bulldozers, 38 percent; trucks at Cam Ranh Bay, 24 percent; LARC's (Lighter Amphibious Resupply Cargo), 67 percent; and MHE, 21 percent.⁵⁵³

(S) The other component commanders also established special supply systems to insure that the necessary repair parts were obtained for SVN as expeditiously as possible. The 2d AD utilized the "Speed Thru Air Resupply" (STAR) program, through which requests for critical parts were sent to Air Materiel Area 8 in California, necessary parts were obtained from direct support and general support depots, shipped to Travis Air Force Base (AFB) and flown to SVN. Using this system, 2d AD had an aircraft operational rate of 84.5 percent at the end of 1965, with 9.1 percent of aircraft deadlined for supply and 6.4 percent for maintenance. This exceeded USAF's world-wide standard of 71 percent aircraft operational capability.⁵⁵⁴ The CG, III MAF/NCC, also had a high priority resupply system, initiated on 22 September, also known as Red Ball.⁵⁵⁵ Under this system, critical items were airshipped from the USMC Supply Center at Barstow, California. Year-end deadline rate for the III MAF was: overall, 14 percent; electronic 11 percent; engineer, 32 percent; motor transport, 11 percent; and ordnance, 5 percent.⁵⁵⁶

Page 116 of 48 Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841534

~~SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Logistic Troop Support

(TS) During the series of high level conferences that took place before and during US troop deployment, the necessity for adequate logistical troops to support combat forces was discussed in detail.⁵⁵⁸ During the conference in Honolulu, 3 - 5 August, a preliminary Phase I troop list was prepared, including logistical support elements. A study of this proposed troop list revealed that the number of service support troops was insufficient and COMUSMACV directed the development of a new logistical troop list, the Phase I add-on. This list noted that logistical support elements, totalling some 9,863 men, were required by the end of CY 65 -- the majority being engineer and medical personnel. Projected availability dates for desired elements were such that, by the end of CY 65, only 262 men would be in-country and complete fill could not be expected until 1967.

(TS) At a subsequent Honolulu Conference, 27 September - 1 October the Phase I add-on list was presented. A decision was made, concurred in by all agencies, including JCS, DA, CINCPAC and COMUSMACV: "To accept combat forces as they became available over an extended period even though logistical support would be marginal . . ." This crucial decision was based on the fact that both combat and logistical elements could not be made available during the necessary time frame and the situation in SVN was serious enough to require immediate commitment of US combat power. During the period September through December a series of actions was taken to develop the Phase II force requirements. The initial Phase II troop list was prepared at the Saigon conference 1 - 10 September and presented at a CINCPAC conference in early October. These force requirements were incorporated into CINCPAC Phase II Program and at that time represented USMACV requirements for CY 66. The Phase II add-on list presented to CINCPAC in early December included the logistical forces required to support the added combat strength and to provide adequate combat service support. The complete Phase IIA troop list was a requirements list and included those logistical units required to overcome the shortcomings in the logistical support structure.

(TS) The COMUSMACV position at the end of 1965 was that if our logistical forces were not brought into balance with our combat elements, and unless this balance were maintained with future deployments, logistical support would become sub-marginal and sustained combat operations could not be conducted. This change in position after the October Honolulu Conference was due to the increase in combat intensity that resulted from the accelerated buildup and NVA infiltration. The calculated risk, in October, to accept the nonavailability of logistical troop elements, could not, by December, be adopted.

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army BY DAW/VA Page 117 of 482 Pages

841534

~~SECRET~~

(TS) The effect that the lack of prompt logistical deployment would have on operations was described to the SECDEF during his briefing by the USMACV J3 on 28 November: ". . . unless we receive by March (1966) the high priority logistic units which the J4 has described, we cannot support any add-on until the third quarter of CY 66, with all of the consequences associated with such a delay."

Port Congestion

(S) The port congestion problem consisted basically of two factors; the lack of port facilities, and the irregular schedule of shipping.⁵⁵⁹ In all of SVN there were only 12 deep-draft berths available. Ten of these were in Saigon; the remaining two at Cam Ranh Bay were located alongside a pier which was too narrow to permit efficient discharge of even one ship. Two additional berths became available in December upon completion of a DeLong pier. (See Annexes E-F). The magnitude of the problem may be judged by the fact that on 30 Oct 65, 17 vessels were awaiting discharge at Cam Ranh Bay and 25 at Saigon.⁵⁶⁰ At the end of December there was a total cargo backlog of 164,164 measurement tons (M/T) at the various ports.⁵⁶¹ This situation may be summed up in the words of the Chief of the USMACV Traffic Management Agency (TMA) on 24 November 1965 as follows.. . . ten first class ports in CONUS are shipping material to SVN as fast as they can -- we have four second class ports to receive it." ⁵⁶²

(U) There were six types of cargo that moved to SVN, during 1965, consisting of the following: ⁵⁶³

- 1) Push cargo - 180 days of automatic resupply for troop units deployed to SVN from CONUS.
- 2) Pull cargo - material that had been ordered by US and Vietnamese forces using normal requisitioning procedures.
- 3) Unit equipment - equipment normally accompanying a unit upon deployment.
- 4) Construction material - ordered by civilian construction contractors, USA, USN, USAF and USMC.
- 5) USAID ordered supplies.
- 6) Normal civilian cargo.

~~SECRET~~

(C) The shipping agencies did not coordinate with each other during 1965 and as a result there was little connection between material being shipped and the ability to receive. Ships were often forced to remain outside ports for days or weeks before port space could be assigned. The major port of Saigon was operated by a civilian agency, and as a result, military shipping could use, on the average, only about 50 percent of the available wharf space. Shipping companies in CONUS frequently mixed various types of cargo of differing priority on one ship, resulting in the necessity of unloading low priority cargo to get at badly needed material. Shortage of adequate lighterage and coastal shipping made the movement of cargo after unloading slow and unresponsive. 564

(S) The only real long range solution to the problem was identified early in the year as being the development of additional ports along the coast, to take the pressure off Saigon. 565 Ports to be developed included Da Nang - Chu Lai, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, Cam Ranh Bay, Vung Tau and Saigon. Tuy Hoa would be added in 1966. By April 1965, plans were being completed for the development of these alternate ports and JCS had approved work at Da Nang, Qui Nhon and Nha Trang. 566

(S) During the early part of November, a joint study team composed of representatives from USMACV and CINCPAC made a complete survey of all ports in Vietnam. In general, this team recommended the following for all ports: 567

- 1) Unitized packaging for all CONUS-originated and intra-theater cargoes.
- 2) Expedited delivery of MBE and MBE repair parts.
- 3) Use of full shiploads for single port offloading.
- 4) Maximized block segregation/stowage at CONUS terminals by consignee to facilitate loading/unloading.
- 5) Assurance that all shipboard cargo handling gear would be operational.
- 6) Loading of vessels for ease of discharge, not maximum gross tonnages.
- 7) Furnishing of tonnage forecasts to CONUSMACV for 30-, 60-, 90-day periods on a monthly basis.
- 8) Insurance that all ships destined for RVN would top off fuel and water bunkers at the last port before in-country arrival.

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army BY OAIM per Page 119 of 119 2 Pages

~~B 41534~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(S) In addition to construction of port facilities and requests for changes in current shiploading practices, COMUSMACV recommended, on several occasions, the establishment of a Vietnamese National Port Authority.⁵⁶⁸ This authority would be independent of the Minister for Public Works and would take over functions of management for port operation at Saigon, Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang and Can Tho. As of the end of the year these ports were still under individual management. The possibility that COMUSMACV would take over all Saigon port operations was also discussed in December and the COMUSMACV position was that this step was, for the present, neither necessary nor desirable.⁵⁶⁹ In October 1965, COMUSMACV asked the GVN for exclusive use, on a lease basis, of the three Messageries et Maritimes civilian quays with associated warehouses located in Saigon. The GVN took over the area and USMACV expected to begin operations after 1 January 1966.⁵⁷⁰ Project Newport, also developed during October, was a new deep-draft port plan for Saigon, to be built by USARV. It would ultimately provide two LST berths, additional lighterage facilities, and four more deep-draft berths.⁵⁷¹ USMACV would have sufficient port capability in Saigon when scheduled construction and the take-over of the Messageries et Maritimes facility was completed. These actions would provide seven deep-draft berths within the Saigon harbor for the exclusive use of USMACV. (For the year end status of all ports in RVN see Annex E. Port Status.)

Lines of Communication

(S) As the US buildup progressed, the requirement for intra-theater shallow-draft shipping increased sharply. Because of the lack of adequate deep-draft ports, much material had to be unloaded in the few ports available and then forwarded to other destinations. The lack of land LOC's necessitated transport by coastal shipping.

(S) In August 1965 a joint USMACV-MSTSFE (Military Sea Transport Service, Far East) board studied the situation and established the requirement for 22 LST's to be deployed to SVN later than 15 October, in order to relieve the shallow-draft shipping problem. However, this requirement was never met; by mid-December only seven LST's were actually available to COMUSMACV for coastal shipping.⁵⁷² Commander Military Sea Transport Service, Far East (COMSTSFE) explained that his entire fleet of 25 LST's was being used in support of SVN, but could not be used continuously to move cargo along the coast because of other commitments including maintenance, shuttle runs to the Philippines, tactical troop movement requirements, and return to Japan for crew home leave.^{573,574} COMUSMACV believed that even if all 25 LST's were available, they would still be inadequate to handle the shipping requirements which

~~SECRET~~

by December had reached a 78,479 M/T backlog at Saigon. Nevertheless, COMUSMACV felt that any change in deployment of LST's in the Vietnam area should be coordinated with him, to insure maximum use of limited resources. This had not been done in the past.⁵⁷⁵ CINCPAC directed that maximum coordination be effected between COMUSMACV and COMSTSFE and considered the need for a possible redefinition of CINCPAC priority criteria.⁵⁷⁶ Additional LST's from both theater and CONUS reserve fleet resources, were expected to arrive in early 1966.^{577,578,579}

(S) A positive approach to the problem was made by COMUSMACV in November when he recommended that a commercial concern, Alaska Barge and Transport Co., be placed under contract to supply part of the much needed coastal shipping capability. This company, experienced in supplying material for DEW Line sites, had the capability to move cargo in SVN within 60 days of the contract date. A cost analysis study indicated that unit cost using this service would be less than 50 percent of that applied to equivalent MSTS LST operations.^{580,581} By the end of November, SECDEF approved this concept and directed MSTS to send a representative to Saigon to negotiate a contract.⁵⁸² By 8 December a contract had been signed, and the company was scheduled to begin operations in SVN shortly, early in 1966. It was estimated that about 7,000 tons of supplies⁵⁸³ per month would be moved along the SVN coast by using this service.

(U) On 15 October 1965 the USMACV TMA was activated and assumed operational control of the airlift coordination center, the sealift coordination center, the tri-service Air Transport Coordinating Office (ATCO), and five movement control teams stationed throughout SVN. It provided coordinated management of all inter-theater and intra-theater transport assets and adjustments in priorities and carriers as necessary, to obtain optimum utilization of available resources.⁵⁸⁴

(S) In November, CINCPAC recommended that the shifting of construction emphasis from expeditionary airfields to ports might be an additional solution to this problem. COMUSMACV did not concur because: ^{585,586}

1) Available funds were committed and could not be reprogrammed. Most delay was due to the fact that certain construction funds (described as Table B and Table C funds), had not been approved by Congress.⁵⁸⁷ The problem was not construction effort, but lack of money. The new funding required congressional authority.

2) Long lead time was needed for construction facilities and material.

Page 121 of 48 THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIRM per

8 4 1 5 3 4

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

3) Contractor capability had been tailored to the current effort. The plant and equipment available, therefore, were not suitable for shifting to other programs.

4) Concrete runways then under construction were to be completed expeditiously because aluminum matting (AM-2) did not seem to be as durable as had initially been thought.

(C) Normally larger amounts of supplies would be moved by rail; however, in 1965 only 30,201 short tons of cargo of all types were moved by this method.⁵⁸⁸ This was due to several factors, the most important of which was VC interdiction. Constant sabotage made it impossible to rely on rail service for any massive military transport requirements. In addition, severe floods washed away many tracks in the I and II CTZ's and repair was very difficult because of VC actions.⁵⁸⁹ Even though December showed a marked reduction in railway sabotage incidents (56 percent less than November), there was no indication that this would become a trend. Only with a greater degree of security could meaningful rail capabilities be projected.⁵⁹⁰ US military cargo was moved over the Vietnamese railroad system for the first time in October 1965. At that time, the railroad was open from Saigon to Bien Hoa, Nha Trang to Phan Rang, and Da Nang to Hue. Maximum rail capacity at the end of the 1965 was approximately 1,000 tons of military cargo per week over short routes.⁵⁹¹ The development of the railroad could materially reduce the dependence on coastal shipping or intra-theater transport.⁵⁹² (For the status of the railroad at year's end see Figure II-14.) In mid-December, COMUSMACV was approached by Vietnamese officials who suggested that the US take over operation of the railroad on a rental basis. At the end of the year, no decision had been made.

(S) Over-the-road transport of supplies, normally a major method of logistic movement, was also limited in SVN. Outside of major cities, convoys were always subject to ambush and many of the road nets were interdicted by the VC. In addition, many of the roads in SVN were not of suitable construction or quality for substantial military traffic. At the end of 1965, Route 1, the major north-south artery, was closed in Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa, Ninh Thuan, Binh Thuan, and Dinh Tuy provinces. Route 9 was closed in Quang Tri province and Route 14 in Kontum, Pleiku, and Quang Duc provinces. Route 19 was closed west of Pleiku; Route 7 in Phu Yen province, and Route 11 in Tuyen Duc province. Interprovincial Route 1 was closed in Binh Duong and Phuoc Long provinces, and Route 20 in Long Khanh and Lam Dong provinces. Provincial Route 10 was closed in Hau Nghia province.⁵⁹³ The limited availability of the highway net precluded the use of non-divisional truck companies in

~~SECRET~~

811534

~~SECRET~~

their normal long-haul mission. Therefore these truck companies were used largely in support of port and beach clearance efforts within the US/FWMAF enclaves.⁵⁹⁴ (See Figure II-15 for location of major highways.)

(S) During 1965 a total of slightly over one million tons of cargo was moved by road, mostly on a short-haul basis.⁵⁹⁵ Truck capabilities available to COMUSMACV at the end of 1965 included 15 1/3 non-divisional truck companies under USARV and five non-divisional truck companies under CG, III MAF.⁵⁹⁶ This provided an optimum daily capability of 15,360 short tons of cargo and 2,400,000 gallons of POL movement on a short-haul basis.⁵⁹⁷ This capability was augmented to a limited extent by divisional organic vehicles and some commercial contracts.⁵⁹⁸

(S) With the lack of reliable land LOC's, there was a general reliance on airlift for much of the logistical movement capability. During 1965, aircraft cargoes included live stock as well as ammunition. This was especially true in case of supply of small, isolated, detachments and for emergency resupply of units engaged in combat operations. The major source of aircraft was the 315th Air Commando Group operating C-130 and C-123 aircraft. Other aircraft notably the USA and RAAF (Royal Australian Air Force) Caribous, were also used extensively. During December, cargo aircraft moved a total of 40,744 tons of cargo, making a total of 250,834 tons for the year.⁵⁹⁹ Without this airlift capability, many of the USMACV detachments could not have been supported. In December, CINCPAC ordered an increase in C-130 aircraft, bringing the average daily availability of this type of aircraft from 22 to 29.⁶⁰⁰ Figure II-16 shows the airfields in RVN capable of accepting C-130 aircraft and Figure II-17 shows the total cargo moved in-country by all means during this year.

Base Development

(S) The only lasting solution to the supply congestion problem was port and base development. This program was hindered in 1965 by lack of funds, lack of construction equipment and material, and lack of necessary trained engineering troops.

(S) In November 1964, the USMACV J4 briefed the US Ambassador on plans for construction of a new jet airfield at Chu Lai, just south of Da Nang, and an additional parallel runway at Da Nang airstrip. This briefing was the starting point for major US base development in SVN. In December 1964, SECDEF approved construction of the second jet airstrip at Da Nang and an expeditionary airfield at Chu Lai.⁶⁰¹

~~SECRET~~

Page 123 of 482 Pages 8 4 1 5 3 4

~~SECRET~~

(S) In order to develop US bases in SVN, substantial real estate requirements were generated. During 1964, there were no major US base complexes in SVN. Construction efforts were intended to support advisors and to provide necessary facilities for expanding USAF base requirements in support of VNAF and contingency missions. Real estate acreage requirements were minimal, although some 150 requests for land usage were processed.⁶⁰² During 1965, by way of contrast, 347 requests were submitted.⁶⁰³ The US owned no land in SVN. All facilities were either leased from private owners or provided by the GVN. In the case of government land, the RVNAF Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics (DCSLOG), JGS, was asked to provide the required acreage for US use. Normally, authority was granted by letter, with no time limit. If there were squatters on the land, the US paid the cost of indemnification and relocation. In the case of privately owned land, the government purchased the required land and was reimbursed by USMACV. Title was retained by the GVN even though USMACV paid the bill.⁶⁰⁴ This system was relatively effective as long as small plots were involved and time was not a factor. Some of these transactions took up to nine months to complete.⁶⁰⁵

(S) With the date set for the arrival of a USMC regimental landing team at Chu Lai on 7 May, the real estate situation became even more acute. Several thousand US troops were scheduled to come ashore with the mission of constructing an airfield, and, as of two weeks before their arrival, no arrangements had been made to obtain the necessary land area.⁶⁰⁶ The problem was solved on an expediency basis by sending two USA captains from HQ USMACV, an engineer and a finance officer, to inspect the required land with Vietnamese provincial officials. These officers covered an area of 24 sq kms and negotiated with the owners on the spot, paying indemnification for everything there, "each fruit tree, each banana tree, rice paddy, thatched hut and grave."⁶⁰⁷ This involved payment of some \$620,000 to 1,800 different property owners. These indemnification negotiations took place in a nominally VC-controlled area ten days before the Marines landed. Assistance in kind (AIK) piasters were used for the indemnification payment.⁶⁰⁸ These piasters are generated by GVN from the sale of goods given to GVN through USAID. GVN furnishes AIK piasters for certain US requirements such as real estate for military installations and BEQ/BOQ's.

(S) The real estate procedure followed in the case of Chu Lai was unsatisfactory. It placed the US in the position of appearing to buy land, which actually was not the case, since the payments made were for indemnification only and the GVN retained title. Also, sufficient AIK piasters were not available to finance future projects. Discussions took place on the ambassadorial level and Prime Minister Ky agreed, in July, that the GVN should be responsible for

~~SECRET~~

all land acquisition, funding for payments, and relocation of owners. The land involved was to be furnished for the use of USMACV at no cost to the US. Funds were to be provided from the GVN budget. 609,610

(S) By September, details of the program had been worked out by GVN and a firm procedure established for land acquisition necessary to support US and FVMAF. All tabulation of owners, decisions on amount of indemnification and actual payments were being made by GVN with no overt US participation. Procedures had also been established for emergency procurement of land before proper indemnification procedures could be set in motion. 611

(S) As planning got underway for massive base development in Vietnam, COMUSMACV was faced with the problem of how payment for the necessary construction material and civilian construction effort could be made. By April 1965, carry-over funds available consisted of some \$33 million for the most part from MAP and Military Construction (MILCON) appropriations. 612

(S) Following the April planning conference at PACOM, a world-wide reprogramming by all services made an additional \$37.0 million available for construction needs in SVN. An additional \$74.9 million became available for the FY 65 supplemental appropriation. 1966 appropriations included \$12.6 million from the regular funded budget and \$89.9 million under the so-called Table "A" from the second special Vietnam war appropriation. 613 Total funded construction appropriation for 1965 and 1966 totalled \$214.2 million by 31 December 1965. 614

(S) COMUSMACV was not satisfied with the funding procedures; additional flexibility was desirable and construction funding was not under a wartime criteria. He felt that the responsible commander should have the authority to shift funds and reprogram projects as dictated by the situation on the ground. One of the basic problems was that funds were allocated by Congress for specific projects and, in some cases, for parts (line items) of projects. As a result, the field commander had very limited prerogatives in reacting to rapidly changing situations. 615,616,617,618

(C) COMUSMACV's recommendations on construction funding made to SECDEF on 28 November 1965 were: 619

1) Immediately fund the balance of the construction program to include overruns from FY 65 and FY 66 approved funds in the amount of \$696 million. This was essential because of

Page 125 of 482 Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841534

~~SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

long lead times of procurement for material and contractor services.

2) Ease the then current line item authority and funding restrictions.

3) Change the construction reprogramming system to provide additional flexibility.

4) Establish country-wide bulk funding for the majority of the program, with provisions for an adequate contingency fund.

(TS) The initial reply to these recommendations was:

You can't get action if you don't have Congressional authorization and you can't get it when Congress is out of session unless we anticipate our needs and get a blanket authorization. We are talking about a tremendous construction program--you just can't take care of these things overnight. We have to look ahead and handle these future problems. Congress does not, and should not, give a blank check. We have to have items in the sense of reasonably defined projects...620

(S) Evidently, considerable additional planning and restatement of requirements had to be made before COMUSMACV could expect receipt of funds for his construction program.

(S) Although there was little time for planning, a lack of trained personnel, insufficient funds and limited availability of material, significant progress was made by COMUSMACV in initiating a construction program during 1965. The magnitude of the effort may be judged by comparing the construction efforts at the beginning and the end of 1965. At the beginning of the year, total construction effort available to COMUSMACV was the 2,000 personnel hired by the civilian firms of Raymond-Morrison-Knudsen (RMK) and Brown-Root-Jones (BRJ) (operating under the supervision of the OICCVN) and the limited capability of local Vietnamese contractors. At the end of 1965 there were 15 military engineer battalions (USA, USN and USMC) in-country and the RMK-BRJ payroll had grown to more than 22,000 workers. 621

(TS) The USMACV construction effort was directed toward three major goals during 1965: 622, 623, 624, 625, 626

1) The construction of tactical airfields to support 2d AD, 1st MAW and USA aviation units in-country with provisions for future contingency plans. Major airfields undergoing improvement were TSN, Bien Hoa and Da Nang. Jet-capable expeditionary airfields were completed at Chu Lai and Cam Ranh Bay; one was under construction at Phan Rang and one was planned for Tuy Hoa.

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAAM per

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~
~~TOP SECRET~~
Numerous other airfields were under development for USA aviation, re-supply and deployment purposes. SECDEF indicated that he was considering two additional airfields of the expeditionary type. There was also the possibility that a third strip might be added to those expeditionary airfields already under construction.

2) The construction of ports and depots to support major logistical elements at Saigon, Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay and Qui Nhon with other less extensive port construction throughout the country.

3) Construction of cantonment and logistical facilities in support of major troop concentrations, such as the 1st Cav Div (AM) establishment at An Khe.

(U) Soon after the need for base development became obvious, COMUSMACV made the decision that decentralization of effort was required. It was impractical, and an unnecessary duplication of effort, to have a large planning board at the HQ USMACV level, since the component commanders actually received the funds through service channels, and would have to carry out any program approved. The USMACV J4 Base Development Branch, Engineer Division, served as an approval agency for COMUSMACV to assure proper coordination of base development between component commanders. ^{627,628}

(U) Component commanders were charged by COMUSMACV for base development responsibility as indicated: ⁶²⁹

1) ACC: Base development responsibility for the II, III, and IV CTZ's to include specific planning for Saigon-Cholon, Vung Tau, Cam Ranh Bay, Nha Trang, Pleiku, Kontum, Can Tho, Soc Trang and Vinh Long.

2) NCC: Base development responsibility for the I CTZ to include specific planning for Quang Ngai, Chu Lai, Da Nang and Hue.

3) AFCC: Base development responsibility for airfield development to include TSN, Bien Hoa, Nha Trang, New Can Tho, Cam Ranh Bay, Qui Nhon and Phan Rang.

(C) COMUSMACV also decided that, as a matter of policy, no component command cantonment construction would exceed Standard IV, that is, tents with wooden frames and concrete floors. This would result in equivalent living conditions for all assigned troops and maximize use of available manpower, equipment, and supplies. ⁶³⁰

(S) The base development effort during 1965 started at Chu Lai. As part of the initial planning for jet-capable expeditionary airfields, a site had been selected at Qui Nhon. In late September, PACAF cancelled construction at this location because of the

~~TOP SECRET~~

excessive amount of earth moving required and recommended that Tuy Hoa or Phan Thiet be selected as an alternative.^{631,632} During October, a CINCPAC-directed coastal survey team recommended that Tuy Hoa be selected as the best available location with logistic support provided from Vung Ro.⁶³³ After much staff discussions over priorities for airfield construction, COMUSMACV convened a joint board to determine when and where the airfield should be built.^{634, 635, 636, 637} On 1 December, the board recommended that Tuy Hoa be selected as the site for the airfield to replace Qui Nhon. Construction, however, could not be started until late in the first quarter 1966.⁶³⁸ Phan Thiet was eliminated because of overriding difficulties in construction and future support.⁶³⁹ COMUSMACV concurred and notified CINCPAC, who approved the new site and directed transfer of funds from the discarded project at Qui Nhon.^{640, 641} Tuy Hoa was thus scheduled to become, in 1966, the fourth jet-capable expeditionary airfield in-country.

(U) Figure II-18 shows the locations of large construction projects at year's end. Figure II-19 shows the port facilities under construction at that time.

(TS) By 31 December there was a construction backlog of 212 battalion-months.⁶⁴² It was evident that, during 1966, construction efforts would continue to expand at an increasing rate to meet the ever-growing US troop requirements. (For the year end status of each base under development see Annex F, Base Development.)

Military Assistance Program

(S) In addition to providing logistical support for US troops, COMUSMACV was also charged with administering the MAP. All combat service support for RVNAF was financed through this program. MAP for RVN was conceived in terms of training, motivating, and equipping the RVNAF to enable them to create a secure climate within which the GVN could increase control over its territory and people. Long-term MAP plans envisaged that, when a stable and viable GVN was created, the emphasis would shift toward creating a strong RVNAF which would be able to defend the nation from either internal or external aggression and, militarily to aid allied nations if necessary. A peculiar characteristic of the MAP for RVN, because of the nature of the conflict, was its direct involvement in, and support for, unconventional and psychological warfare activities, civic action programs, and the mission of paramilitary forces such as the CIDG.⁶⁴³

(S) The original FY 65 MAP for RVN, totaling \$214.9 million, was based on plans in the Military Assistance Planning Reference Book, RVN, which was approved by COMUSMACV after coordination with

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECRET~~
the country team in RVN, and published by CINCPAC on 21 August 1964. On 23 January 1965, DOD approved Alternative 1 force increase, which programmed an RVNAF total strength of approximately 796,000 for FY 65.⁶⁴⁴ A revised cost outlay included an additional \$87.4 million.⁶⁴⁵

(S) Before FY 65 ended, the dollar level of the FY 65 MAP stood at \$372.3 million, an increase of \$70 million, caused largely by price changes, increased communication requirements, equipment add-ons, and packing and crating costs in support of Alternative 1. The FY 65 MAP provided RVNAF with material and training support; developed and maintained military and supporting logistical bases; assisted RVNAF in conducting an aggressive land, sea and air offensive against the VC on a national basis; and supported the GVN's Rural Construction Program.⁶⁴⁶

(S) COMUSMACV clearly saw that the increase in the tempo of the war logically led to the need for an additional increase in RVNAF strength and thus a corresponding increase in the MAP. An adjustment was also necessary for the FVMAF program, particularly with reference to forces of the ROK and the Philippines. The MAP had to be a flexible instrument to cope with the changing complexity of the war. The FY 66 MAP, as projected by the August 1964 plan, totaled \$181 million, excluding \$19 million for packing and crating. On 29 November 1964, CINCPAC requested COMUSMACV's submission of \$30 million in additional requirements, to raise the FY 66 MAP to \$230 million, for congressional presentation. In addition to a 2 December 1964 requirement list totaling \$30 million, COMUSMACV forwarded another list totaling \$70 million on 22 December. FVMA support costs were additionally estimated at \$22 million.⁶⁴⁷

(S) By May 1965, changes in the FY 66 MAP were again necessary. The accelerated activation of Alternative 2 force increase, which had been submitted to CINCPAC on 5 April 1965, required revision of the FY 66 MAP planning to cover the force buildup. In addition to personnel costs this plan included funding for the buildup of stockage levels of ammunition and other consumables, the construction of additional facilities, the modernization of equipment, and increased support for an anticipated high level of war expenditures. This resulted in a MAP value of \$505.2 million, an increase of \$305.2 million over the initial program level of \$200 million.⁶⁴⁸ After review and revision, CINCPAC submitted a \$481.7 million MAP for RVN to the OSD.⁶⁴⁹

(S) The MAP dollar value at the end of May, \$493 million, was decreased by \$7 million of undistributed International Military Assistance funds. However, additional requirements, totaling \$75 million, raised the MAP dollar value to \$561.2 million by

~~SECRET~~

the end of August.⁶⁵⁰ Owing primarily to the programmed costs of equipping ARVN with M-16 rifles and also necessary support for the ROK forces, the FY 66 program level stood at \$761.7 million as of 31 December 1965.⁶⁵¹

(S) The significant point concerning the MAP during 1965 was that the RVN continued to receive priority for operational requirements. Only one major area, the modernization of VNAF, was not handled as a COMUSMACV requirement. However, COMUSMACV's recommendations regarding VNAF were treated favorably by CINCPAC and DOD. Following COMUSMACV's updating of Joint Strategic Objectives Plan (JSOP) 70 to JSOP 71 on 10 September, a more realistic force structure was developed and forwarded to CINCPAC and JCS on 16 September. This force structure included 12 ARVN divisions, with support elements, additional artillery battalions, and miscellaneous units. In view of this force increase, the adjustment of operating costs by new experience factors was necessary. By 27 September the FY 67 MAP was estimated to require \$795.4 million, or \$322 million more than the May projected level of \$437.7 million.⁶⁵²

(S) Subsequent to this estimate, COMUSMACV undertook a personnel acquisition study. As a result, the "armed" RVNAF force structure for FY 67 was reduced to ten divisions plus one separate regiment. The formation of an artillery battalion and other miscellaneous support units was also delayed. Should acquisition of manpower permit, activation of additional units in accordance with JSOP-71 would be requested. The personnel strength programmed for the FY 67 MAP was 675,298 including 350,042 RF/EF personnel.⁶⁵³ This can be contrasted with the 631,457 supported by the FY 66 MAP.

(S) Based on this revised force structure, an adjusted FY 67 MAP was computed at \$715.1 million in early November 1965. In the meantime, CINCPAC had sent COMUSMACV a message on 5 October, providing the following reasons for the great concern by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs (OASD/ISA) over the proposed increase:⁶⁵⁴

- 1) New construction of the type requested should be eliminated.
- 2) Long lead time items such as LST's and LSM's were not considered appropriate.
- 3) Future MAP should include no further investment costs, only operating costs.
- 4) Additional requirements over the FY 67 program must have valid justification.

~~SECRET~~

41534

~~SECRET~~

5) Ability to attain revised FY 67 program in-country was suspect.

(S) COMUSMACV responded to CINCPAC on 7 October, providing further detail and rationale for the proposed FY 67 increases. He advised that the new requirements were based on the assumption that JSOP-71 would be approved as recommended, and that additional forces contained therein were necessary to accomplish the US objectives in SVN. CINCPAC was further advised that if overriding considerations imposed limitation on FY 67 RVN MAP requirements, additional guidance was required in order to permit COMUSMACV to arrange priority within limits.⁶⁵⁵

(S) On 18 November OASD/ISA advised CINCPAC and COMUSMACV that the FY 67 RVN MAP budget ceiling was established at \$633 million. This total was based on SECDEF planning guidance which assumed, for budget planning only, that the VN inventory was to be phased down from combat to normal levels at the beginning of FY 68. The data for the \$633 million FY 67 VN MAP was furnished to the military departments for inclusion in the DOD FY 67 budget estimates. No data changes could be made to the \$633 million program until after the congressional presentation material was prepared. CINCPAC advised COMUSMACV on 20 November that OASD/ISA guidance precluded submission of his program of \$715.1 million to DOD at this time. On 24 November the CINCPAC message was acknowledged with the assumption that neither budget ceiling nor phase-down from combat to normal levels would limit delivery of FY 67 programmed requirements. It was also pointed out that the planned transition from combat to normal levels was considered valid only for ammunition resupply and major item attrition. The range of situations conceivable in the post-hostilities period would require RVNAF forces, in being, highly active and adequately equipped for the numerous tasks vital to ensure enduring success.^{656,657}

(S) In summary, 1965 was a turbulent year for programming military assistance requirements. Military assistance plans and programs had to be adjusted to accommodate accelerated requirements and increased force structure. With regard to the MAP funding, investment costs generally paralleled the force increases, and could generally be estimated and planned with reasonable accuracy. The operating costs, however, fluctuated with the level of operations in SVN, hence, as combat and related activities increased, so did the requirement to support the economic and military effort. The year 1965 was a unique year for MAP. There never was, nor could be, a static program--no matter how well estimated and planned. In spite of the rapid acceleration of the battle in SVN, the MAP was quickly adjusted to respond to the requirements for fighting the war.

Page 131 of 48 2Pages

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

~~SECRET~~
841534

UNCLASSIFIED

RVN Defense Budget

(U) USMACV reviewed the RVN Defense Budget for 1965 and US Mission approval was received in late 1964. However, on order of the Ambassador, due to the political situation existing at the time, the budget was not released to the RVN until 13 January 1965.⁶⁵⁸

(U) The Budget approved by the US Mission totaled 26.0 million piasters of which 9.1 billion or 35% was financed with AID generated piasters (CIP & PL 480), and 16.9 billion piasters were provided from RVN resources. Of the total, 67% was for military pay and allowances. The USMACV received 1.554 billion piasters from the budget for support of US forces.⁶⁵⁹

(U) At the time of review and approval of the 1965 Defense Budget it became apparent that a major revision would be necessary due to the RVNAF force increases (Alternatives I & II) being considered by USMACV and the RVN. Development of a revised budget began on 6 March 1965 when guidelines for budget preparation were furnished the RVN Ministry of Defense.⁶⁶⁰

(U) The proposed budget revision was received from the RVN in May and June, and USMACV and the US Mission completed review and approval on 12 July. The revised 1965 Defense Budget totaled 30.4 billion piasters of which 10.5 billion, or 34%, was financed by AID and 19.9 billion was RVN financed. Of the total, 63% was for military pay and allowances. USMACV received 2.257 billion piasters from the revised budget for support of US forces.⁶⁶¹

(U) Guidelines for the 1966 RVN Defense Budget were developed by USMACV and approved by the US Mission on 11 September 1965.⁶⁶² The 1966 budget proposed by the RVN began to be received and USMACV review began in November. By 31 December, all of the chapters of the proposed budget had not been received from the RVN and review and US Mission approval could not be accomplished until 17 January 1966.

(U) The 1966 budget was developed in an atmosphere of austerity in an attempt to limit its inflationary impact on the VN economy and yet provide optimum support to the maximum force levels within VN manpower resource capabilities.⁶⁶³ During October-December 1965, USMACV participated with USAID, the US Embassy, and the RVN in detailed studies of budget requirements and effects on the local economy.⁶⁶⁴

(U) The 1966 budget approved by the US Mission totaled 35.0 billion piasters of which 13.6 billion, or 39%, was AID financed and 21.4 billion was VN financed. Of the total, 74% was for military pay and allowances. The USMACV would receive 2.5 billion piasters from the 1966 Defense Budget for support of US forces.⁶⁶⁵

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Comptroller Advisory Efforts

(C) The Joint Financial Management Team,⁶⁶⁶ which was represented on the RVN side by the Director General for Finance and Audit, Ministry of National Defense; the Director General for Budget and Foreign Aid; and on the US side by USAID, USMACV J3, and Comptroller, ceased to function as a unit after December 1964. The purpose of the Team was to resolve financial problems and streamline financial procedures in the Rural Construction Program. The Team was unable to function, despite the fact⁶⁶⁷ that COMUSMACV considered it to be a great asset to the pacification effort, because of the tacit opposition and continuing negative responses on the part of the two RVN agencies involved.

(U) In June 1965 it was agreed between the Comptroller and the J3 that better results would be obtained by J3 assuming full responsibility for the financial aspects of the Rural Construction Program. An officer space was transferred from the Comptroller to the J3.⁶⁶⁸

(C) After the loss of responsibility in the Rural Construction Program, much greater Comptroller emphasis was placed on pay, audit, and general financial programs. The orientation of the Comptroller's field advisory effort at year's end was in that direction. It was obvious that there are significant and continuing difficulties in this regard. A few examples illustrate this forcefully: continuing complaints with regard to slowness of payment of RF/PF; complexity of personnel procedures for conscripts and enlistees; and problems in paying death gratuities. In many instances, although sufficient money was available for vital programs, the agonizing slowness in accomplishment clearly indicated serious constraints to effective budget execution in both high and low places.

(C) During the latter part of 1965 special emphasis was given to advising the Audit Division of the Office of the Director General for Finance and Audit, RVN. Within this area, emphasis was placed on visiting VN regiments and Training Centers to insure that troops were being paid on a regular basis. In the 25th ARVN Division, for example, a special audit was performed of all the regiments and separate administrative units. Payment time for new recruits was reduced from three months to one month through adoption of new procedures and vigorous follow-up. Timely death gratuity payments were also strongly emphasized resulting in a drop in payment time from above two months to under two weeks with many payments within five days.

(U) The advisory effort at the RVN Finance School was responsible for eliminating duplicate financial training in RVNAF. The school effort was redirected from an average of three classes in

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED 133 of 48 2Pages
Order Sec Army By DAIM per

841334

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

session to a program for 1966 of over six classes in session at one time.

Logistic Staff Changes

(U) The shift from a purely advisory role, to what was in effect a joint logistical staff for a theater of operations, resulted in several functional changes for the USMACV J4.⁶⁶⁹

(U) During early 1965, technical service advisors within HQ USMACV were assigned to the DAML. DAML was a separate staff agency operating under the staff supervision of the J4. Within the J4 organization, there was no pure technical service representation. As a result, the J4 was forced to rely upon DAML for technical assistance in the preparation of contingency plans and general assistance in planning for the Phase I buildup. In the spring of 1965, a staff study was prepared by the Deputy Chief of DAML, recommending that his organization become an integral part of the J4. This change would give the J4 a technical staff, eliminate a special staff agency and provide COMUSMACV with a single point of contact on all logistical matters.⁶⁷⁰ COMUSMACV approved this study, and on 1 May, the J4 was reorganized to include the personnel and functions previously assigned to DAML.⁶⁷¹

(U) Additional logistical consolidation was effected in July when the Corps logistical advisory teams were established as independent agencies reporting directly to the J4. Before this, they had been under the command of the Corps Senior Advisor.⁶⁷²

(C) A programmed reorganization of the staff logistical function was pending at year's end. Because of the different areas of major importance, and problems in staff supervision thus created, it was proposed to establish three deputy J4's: one for US logistics, one for RVNAF and FVMAF assistance and one for engineering. This decentralization of authority would enable the MACV J4 to better manage his diverse and extensive staff activities. In late 1965, implementation was pending approval of the newly proposed JTD.⁶⁷³

(TS) Along the same lines, the JCS recommended, on 4 December, that a major general, US Army Corps of Engineers, be added to the USMACV staff as the assistant chief of staff for construction. His function would be to supervise all engineering and base development within the RVN. This recommendation would add an augmentation of some 70 men to the joint staff.⁶⁷⁴ COMUSMACV preferred that the then existing command and staff arrangements remain in effect. As a counter proposal, COMUSMACV recommended consolidation of all construction programming under his headquarters. This was expected to

~~TOP SECRET~~

841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

result in a more effective operation to include the pooling of all construction resources.⁶⁷⁵ In spite of this position, CJCS, again urged acceptance of a "construction czar" to relieve the heavy load on the J4 and nominated Brig Gen C. H. Dunn (major general designate) for the position.⁶⁷⁶ COMUSMACV still did not concur and stated that he thought the USMACV J4 should be upgraded to the rank of major general and perhaps be designated as an engineer position.⁶⁷⁷ During this period, COMUSMACV convened a board of officers at his HQ to examine all facets of the situation. This board concurred in COMUSMACV's position and said that the J4 should remain in overall charge of the construction field as it could not be separated from the other logistical problems of transportation and real estate.⁶⁷⁸ COMUSMACV's position was summed up on 10 December when he stated the belief that the on-the-scene commander was in the best position to determine the most suitable staffing for the HQ.⁶⁷⁹ In another message, on 18 December, CJCS continued to recommend the appointment of the "construction czar" and stated that, as the effort in SVN was in excess of one billion dollars, and more than half of the total worldwide Army Engineer construction program, a powerful organization was necessary. Moreover, a construction coordinator, of the rank envisaged, would provide complete flexibility in authorizing, funding, and conducting the MILCON program in SVN. It was also mentioned that the experience and competence of the recommended individual would be recognized at the highest level, and that without his appointment it was doubted that the flexibility desired by COMUSMACV in the construction program would be granted.⁶⁸⁰ Although this situation had not been resolved by the end of the year, it appeared that the USMACV staff soon would have a new member.

(FOUO) A description of the development of logistics during 1965 would not be complete without reference to the construction of a new USMACV HQ.

(C) On 31 March 1965 a conference was conducted by COMUSMACV relative to the construction of a new headquarters complex. The USMACV staff was scattered all over Saigon, creating serious problems in communications and security as well as making staff coordination cumbersome and time consuming. Several suitable sites were considered and the consensus was that a new headquarters complex should be constructed within the RVNAF JGS compound.⁶⁸¹ Maj Gen Minh, CINCRVNAF, recognized the desirability of locating the USMACV HQ in close proximity to the RVNAF HQ, but did not agree with this particular site because he felt that it might indicate a "takeover" by the US.⁶⁸² A site near the entrance to the JGS compound was selected instead and was approved by JCS on 31 July. Further study revealed that the small size of the site would require construction of a multi-story building and the time to construct such a facility would be excessive.⁶⁸³ After further study by the staff during the summer, a new concept was developed in October. This was approved

THIS PAGE REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED 135 BY 482 Pages
Order Sec Army By-DAIM per

841534

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

by COMUSMACV and submitted to the JCS. The study recommended that the new headquarters be constructed at Camp Petrus Ky, an RVNAF compound, and that an immediate release of design and construction funds be made in order to assure occupancy as soon as possible.⁶⁸⁴ The JCS endorsed the project and CINCPAC authorized \$300,000 for design funds. By the end of the year a construction sum in the amount of 7.8 million had been approved, with the remainder to be included in the FY 66 supplemental budget. Site clearing operations began on 5 December. By the end of calendar 1966, it was planned that COMUSMACV would have available the physical plant necessary to meet his headquarters consolidation objective.^{685,686,687}

(S) During 1965 the most pressing major logistical problem was establishing a base from which sustained combat operations by the US and FVMAF could be conducted. Although the base was by no means complete by year's end, COMUSMACV had made significant progress and no combat operation had failed or been delayed because of lack of adequate logistical support. At the end of the year, COMUSMACV considered the port situation, to include the resultant supply backlog, to be his single most serious problem.⁶⁸⁸

THIS PAGE DEGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
Order 5400.7-1, July 1973

Page 136 of 482 Pages

S 4 15 3 4

~~SECRET~~