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28 December 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ACTING DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Report on Pacification Measurement Project in Vietnam

1. I departed Washington on 15 November enroute to Saigon, in accordance with State message 83100. This message, sent on behalf of the White House, Department of State, Department of Defense, AID and CIA, advised the U. S. Mission in Saigon of the grid concept developed in Washington for measuring where we stand in Revolutionary Development (RD) and pacification, and designated me as an inter-departmental representative charged with briefing the Mission in Saigon on the details of this concept and assisting the Mission in refining and testing the concept with a view to implementing such a system in Vietnam by January 1967.

2. Briefings were presented at CINCPAC during a stopover in Honolulu on 16 and 17 November, enroute to Saigon, Admiral Sharp was briefed personally and was very receptive to the evaluation concept, recognizing its value as a management tool. Other elements of the CINCPAC staff were also generally receptive. I was joined in Honolulu by Colonel Carter W. Clarke, Jr., from the staff of DCSOPS, Department of the Army, who was designated as JCS/DOD representative to accompany me on my mission.

3. On our arrival in Saigon on 19 November, we met with representatives of the component agencies of the U. S. Mission, briefed them on the evaluation concept, distributed copies of the proposed checklist, and arranged for a meeting the following week to receive their comments and reactions. Ambassador Porter, whom we briefed the following day, reacted very favorably to the concept. He advised us not to be overly flexible in making adjustments to it; expressing his desire that the system ultimately adopted retain the best features of our initial concept.

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4. Colonel Clarke and I retained responsibility for the project from the outset, with assistance from Ambassador Porter's staff which provided us with office space. We fully recognized that some modifications and refinements of the concept would be necessary in order to adjust it to actual conditions and to capitalize on the rather extensive work already done on this area by some Mission components, particularly by MACV's Revolutionary Development Support Directorate, which was engaged in a long-term research project aimed at developing a similar evaluation system.

5. With Ambassador Porter's approval, we embarked on a series of field tests to determine the feasibility of the concept and the validity of the indicators selected in Washington. These tests, including some conducted by three sub-sector advisors, disclosed that our original checklist was somewhat unwieldy and that it contained a number of ambiguities and inconsistencies. (A list of sub-sectors in which tests were conducted is contained in Enclosure 1.) These faults were eliminated through a major overhaul of the checklist and a switch to a multiple-choice format (a revision also suggested by MACV). The refined checklist, which was tested by seven sub-sector advisors, retained the basic features of the original concept but proved to be much less cumbersome.

6. While the testing was in progress, we engaged in a number of meetings and discussions with various elements of the Mission in Saigon and in the field, incorporating suggestions where feasible. By 11 December we had secured full agreement at the working level on the final checklist and on the procedures for implementing the system. Colonel Clarke and I also drafted detailed guidelines for the use of the sub-sector advisors. The need for such guidelines became apparent when the advisors taking part in the early tests expressed a lack of familiarity with certain major aspects of the RD and pacification effort. This was particularly true with regard to the organization and functions of the VC village guerrilla structure and the VC political infrastructure, and to some extent also with the specific developmental goals of the RD program. Accordingly, in our guidelines we defined the scope of the six basic factors, outlined the RD goals with respect to those factors, provided a detailed description of each of the 18 indicators (i. e., VC village guerrilla organization, VC political infrastructure at hamlet and village levels, etc.), and set forth a detailed description of conditions related to each indicator at each of the five grade levels. The guidelines concluded with a listing of sources of information available to the advisor on each factor. Those advisors who were provided with copies

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of the guidelines for use in the final tests welcomed them as a valuable educational tool. The guidelines will be made available in handbook form to all U.S. personnel involved in the evaluation system.

7. We briefed the Mission Council on the project on 13 December, describing the results of our coordination and testing activities and the procedures developed for implementing the evaluation system beginning in January. The Mission Council approved the project, and directed its implementation as recommended.

8. The approved system retains the basic features of the concept developed in Washington, with improvements in format and procedures worked out in coordination with components of the Mission. The hamlet will be the basic administrative/political unit evaluated. The approved system retains the grid of six basic factors and five grade levels. The number of indicators on the hamlet checklist was reduced to three for each factor from the original four to seven, and the number of choices required by the evaluator was reduced to 90 from 191 (Enclosure 2). The final checklist will be reduced photographically to a letter-size page. The switch to a multiple-choice format simplified the processing of the data by the ADPS equipment as well as making it less cumbersome for the evaluator. The sub-sector advisor will be provided each month with a hamlet evaluation summary form printed out by the MACV ADPS equipment (Enclosure 3). This form will list all hamlets in the sub-sector, the village to which they belong, the grid coordinates, hamlet population, and hamlet code number. It will also indicate the hamlet's status under the former classification system (secure, undergoing securing, undergoing clearing, uncontested, or VC-controlled), and its classification under the 1967 GVN 11-point, 6-point and 2-point criteria. It will provide spaces in which the advisor will indicate the grade for each of the 18 indicators. It also has spaces for the answers to some 14 "problem area" questions. These questions, which will not affect the hamlet grade, were developed to meet the needs expressed by various agencies in Saigon for subjective data on attitudes of the populace and problems with respect to performance of GVN officials, pay of officials, etc. (Enclosure 4). Responses to these questions will be compiled in the data bank and can be read out to meet the needs of interested agencies.

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9. The advisor will enter on the hamlet evaluation summary form the grade compiled from the hamlet worksheets prepared for each individual hamlet to which he has access. The completed data sheet will be forwarded to province level where it will be reviewed by the U.S. province team, including the sector advisor, and the USAID, JUSPAO and CAS province representatives and/or the senior civilian representative. Any differences will be resolved in consultation with the sub-sector advisor submitting the report. The hamlet summary report forms will then be forwarded to Saigon as enclosures to the province team's monthly Special Joint Report, where they will be processed by MACV's ADPS equipment, which will produce a consolidated print-out. Copies of this print-out will be forwarded to Ambassador Porter's staff, and distributed back down through Corps/Region, Division, Province/Sector and Sub-Sector. The ADPS equipment will compute an average grade for each hamlet. Ambassador Porter's Evaluation and Reports Division will compile a summary of these grades in a format similar to that in Enclosure 5, which will be integrated into the Mission's monthly report on RD which is forwarded to Washington. The initial evaluations for the month of January will be contained in the Mission Report for that month which should be available in Washington in late February. No weighting will be applied to the initial grades; some weighting may be injected later if the need arises. Since the basic data will be transmitted by data-link from Saigon to CINCPAC and DOD, it will be possible to ascertain at all levels which areas may be progressing and which may be lagging.

10. The system will provide an essentially American evaluation. However, it must be borne in mind that very few U.S. officials are capable of completing such an evaluation without consulting at some stage with Vietnamese officials, whether they be at the hamlet level or above. In our guidance, we stressed the need for the U.S. advisor to make an actual visit to the hamlet to observe conditions for himself. Recognizing that he must seek information from others, however, we emphasized that he use his own judgment in assessing the reliability of responses to his questions. There was general recognition also of the need to avoid giving the impression of a unilateral U.S. inspection of what is essentially a GVN program. Accordingly, General Thang was advised in a letter from Ambassador Porter that an evaluation system was being developed and experimented with. Ambassador Porter planned to brief General Thang after 22 December on the system, and to offer his Ministry the opportunity to share in the data and even to adopt the same system if it desired.

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11. It was also recognized that a shakedown period of several months will be required to eliminate any remaining bugs and to insure consistent application of the criteria throughout the country. This may necessitate some subsequent adjustments in the initial returns as refinements are worked out. Allowance must be made for the fact that, while the processing of the data will be accomplished by machines, the input will reflect the necessarily fallible and inconsistent human judgment of over 200 separate sub-sector advisory teams. The evaluation system will thus have to be carefully monitored to minimize the potential for imbalanced interpretations of criteria by the large number of humans involved.

12. In conclusion, the constructive and cooperative spirit of all elements of the U. S. Mission in Saigon must be acknowledged. Without that spirit, our task would have been very difficult. The valuable assistance rendered by Colonel Clarke is also worthy of note. His enthusiastic, imaginative and hard-working approach to the project assured its success, and his tact and recognized professional standing contributed to the cooperation we received from his military colleagues in Saigon. With his help, we were able to accomplish our task and develop what appears to be a workable system for evaluating progress in RD and pacification.

13. In response to the request contained in State message 102066 (14 December) Colonel Clarke and I visited Bangkok on 15 and 16 December, where we briefed the U. S. Mission on the evaluation system developed for Vietnam. The Mission is studying the materials we provided them and will forward its comments at a later date. Enroute back to Washington, we briefed the CINCPAC staff in Honolulu on 20 December on the results of our work in Saigon.


GEORGE W. ALLEN
Vietnamese Affairs Staff

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