

DEBRIEF OF A #12

PROVINCIAL REFUGEE ADVISOR

BINH DINH, VIETNAM

1067 - 1969

No. 26695

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Refugee Division. People in Refugee Division/Saigon seemed unenthusiastic and disinterested in their work. He was sent to II Corps where he picked Binh Dinh province to work in.

He was the first advisor in Binh Dinh to concentrate solely on the refugee problem. He set up his office in the Vietnamese refugee office and soon learned that no one really knew what the refugee situation was. He found that the situation was not as bad as it appeared, that the refugees had enough food but were inadequately housed. Many found employment working for the U.S. military and other allied units. The unstable military situation made it impossible to do any long-range planning. His time was taken up by a myriad of insignificant details.

Adjustment to Living Conditions. 5

Even though he had lived abroad before, he experienced a certain amount of cultural adjustment in Vietnam. Coming back to the U.S. poses perhaps greater problems of adjustment. Married men in Vietnam have the greatest adjustment problems. They find it hard to do their jobs because of the frequent visits to their families. They should be allowed to have families in Vietnam.-

Prescription for Adjustment. 6

One must have a good sense of humor and be able to work with people. Learning the language and mixing with Vietnamese is essential if one is to be effective. Knowing the details of current programs and past failures is also necessary.

AID as an Employer. 7

For the most part AID is a rather poor employer. He thinks salaries should be higher, although he doesn't believe professionals should be paid overtime. The temporary promotion policy in Vietnam is ludicrous; it's one of the reasons he might not stay with AID. Those working in the field find it difficult to advance quickly. No one

likes the proficiency reports they have to fill out. The personnel services were terrible; he never had any use for them. After many futile inquiries about bachelor travel policy he did what he wanted to do and no one bothered him.

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Institutional Development. 8

AID is subverting institution building by utilizing the imprest fund. It is a mistake to be doing things that the GVN can't do just because it doesn't have the funds. Instead of using imprest money to pay for something it is better to see that the funds get programmed from Saigon and down through the system to the local level. Generally the problem is not getting money, but getting people to sign for it and do something with it. Why is that so? This is the question we must answer and find a solution for.

In institution building we should take advantage of organizations that already exist. Before an institution can be developed there first has to be a recognized need for it. To create this awareness you need competent leadership. But how do you find it? That is the problem we don't have the answer to yet. It would help if many of the competent people in the military returned to private life. Participant training in the U.S. should be de-emphasized except in special cases; most training can be done in-country. More emphasis should be placed on teacher training. Quality, not quantity, needs to be stressed now.

On the whole we are not doing very well in Vietnam, no better now than when he went there. He felt he was very effective with the Vietnamese but only reasonably effective with the Americans. With the Vietnamese it was a matter of getting them to use their own systems and to realize what potential they have. With the Americans it was a question of calming them down.

Above all, institutions must be developed at the level that the peasant population recognizes, i.e., the village or district level. It is a matter of building instruments that

are sensitive to the problems of those at the lowest level of society.

Post-War Development 12

Now that modern technology and methods have been introduced into Vietnam we need Vietnamese to administrate over them. Too many units are operating independently. Many are doing long-range planning but do not seem to be in touch with each other.

The American contractors are the biggest thieves in Vietnam. Their work is lacking in quality, they are not very concerned about society, and they are worse personal representatives of the U.S. than the military.

The Vietnamese are not completely ready to take over themselves. They are over reliant on the U.S. and it is the U.S. that is guilty of establishing this. Yet we can reduce our effort gradually and the Vietnamese will be able to handle it. Meanwhile more stress should be put on community development. This doesn't mean building schools and roads, but rather developing institutions within the country that can do these things.

Politically, the most relevant thing for the future would be allowing the NLF to participate in the government. This is a realistic assessment.

Prescription for AID 14

He would stress working at the lowest level possible for AID. He would reduce the food import program and concentrate more on developing local food production. The district or province rep concept might be useful in other countries.

The American Image. 14

Americans get away with too much in Vietnam. The Vietnamese permit it but are resentful inside. They like the French more than the Americans because with the French they always knew their place and how to act with them. But they simply

can't figure the American out. He has a pretty good idea how government officials and students feel about Americans, but he doesn't know what the peasant thinks.

Host Country Bureaucratic Relationships 15

Although he worked with some poor administrators who were graduates of the National Institute of Administration, he thought the training the school offers is effective overall.

Host Country National and U.S. Interpersonal Relationships. . . 16

The age of the American advisor is not as important as his ability to get along with his counterpart. Some Vietnamese like to work with younger advisors.

U.S. Bureaucratic Relationships 16

CORDS 16

The conversion from USAID and MACV to CORDS was smooth in his province. The Americans had a civilian senior advisor and a military deputy senior advisor, and there was no friction between them. There were some administrative problems at the district level, mainly over the amount of power the advisor should have.

Administrative Reporting 17

Many of the questions asked in the reports were a waste of time. Some of them expected accurate statistics that were impossible to get. The number of reports per month varied; some months he complained bitterly that there were too many.

Senior Assignments 17

The policy of appointing senior administrators in Vietnam is bad. The promotion policy is not flexible enough to let a guy start as a district rep and work his way to region. Many very, very competent young men have already left Vietnam because of this problem.

Use and Misuse of Resources 18

Corruption in Vietnam is not an evil word, it is a way of life. Corruption is significant only if it convinces the population that the GVN is interested in controlling it and can control it. The GVN has not done this. But he thinks the U.S. presence (individuals and actual units) is just as corrupt as the Vietnamese.

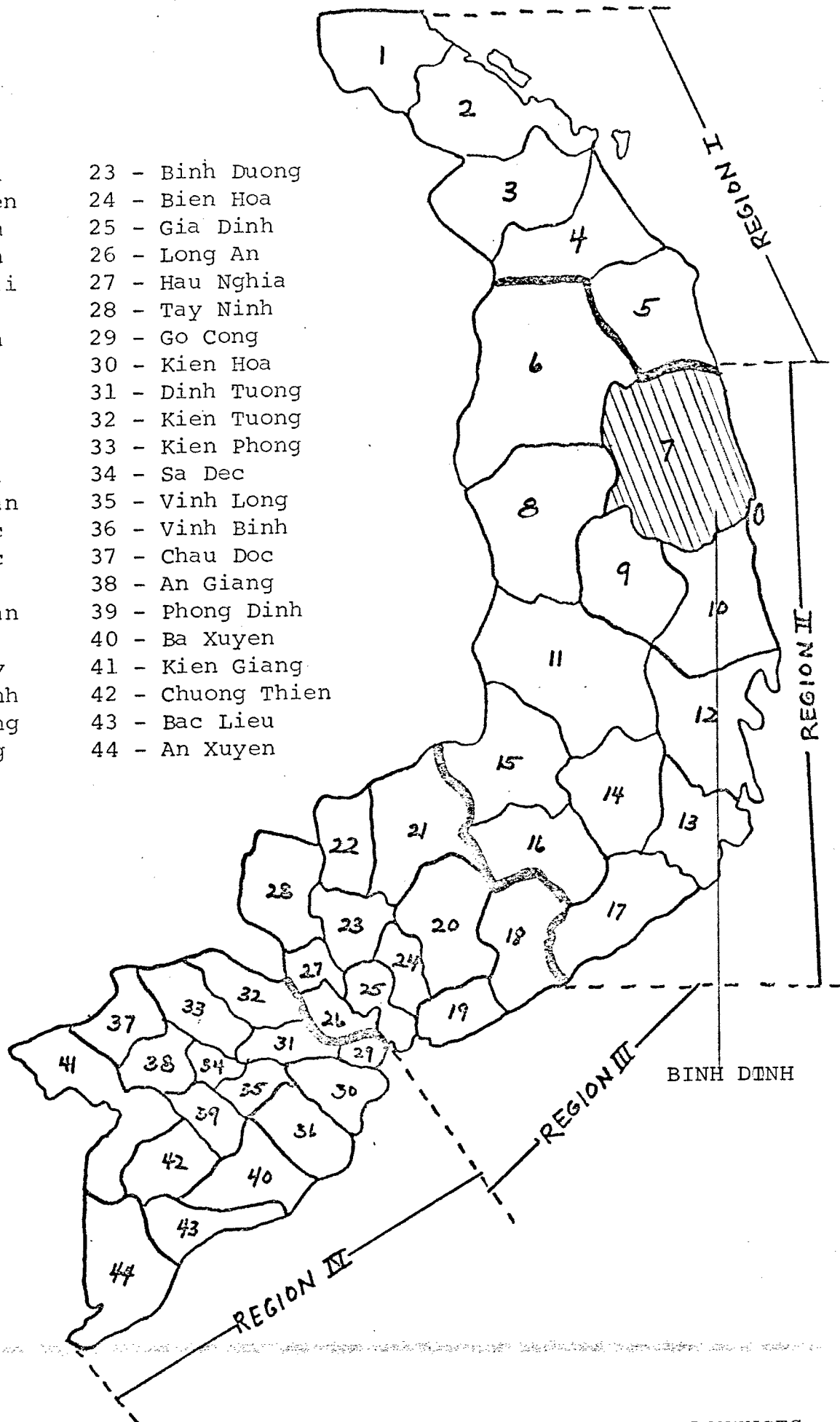
The Binh Dinh province chief was appointed to clean up corruption in the province. He did get rid of many people but the problem was that many of them were the most effective ones in the province.

Program Evaluation. 19

The majority of refugees in Binh Dinh were not living as badly as people in Saigon thought. Most of them were able to find some kind of employment and a reasonably decent place to live. The success of their adjustment was due to indigenous organization, not the activity of the refugee cadres who had been trained by the government. The U.S. was very interested in developing programs like the refugee program but never planned for the administrative tools that are necessary to keep such programs in operation.

Sometimes the welfare of individuals has to be sacrificed for the sake of institutional development. He himself refused to assist refugees if it was possible for GVN to do the job. The best counterpart he had was one who had been with the Viet Minh for many years. This was the best possible training to make him sensitive to the people's needs and wants.

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|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 - Quang Tri | 23 - Binh Duong |
| 2 - Thua Thien | 24 - Bien Hoa |
| 3 - Quang Nam | 25 - Gia Dinh |
| 4 - Quang Tin | 26 - Long An |
| 5 - Quang Ngai | 27 - Hau Nghia |
| 6 - Kontum | 28 - Tay Ninh |
| 7 - Binh Dinh | 29 - Go Cong |
| 8 - Pleiku | 30 - Kien Hoa |
| 9 - Phu Bon | 31 - Dinh Tuong |
| 10 - Phu Yen | 32 - Kien Tuong |
| 11 - Darlac | 33 - Kien Phong |
| 12 - Khanh Hoa | 34 - Sa Dec |
| 13 - Ninh Thuan | 35 - Vinh Long |
| 14 - Tuyen Duc | 36 - Vinh Binh |
| 15 - Quang Duc | 37 - Chau Doc |
| 16 - Lam Dong | 38 - An Giang |
| 17 - Binh Thuan | 39 - Phong Dinh |
| 18 - Binh Tuy | 40 - Ba Xuyen |
| 19 - Phuoc Tuy | 41 - Kien Giang |
| 20 - Long Khanh | 42 - Chuong Thien |
| 21 - Phouc Long | 43 - Bac Lieu |
| 22 - Binh Long | 44 - An Xuyen |



REGIONS AND PROVINCES
OF
SOUTH VIETNAM

DEBRIEF OF A PROVINCIAL REFUGEE ADVISOR

Binh Dinh, Vietnam

1967 - 1969

Preparation for Assignment

Personal Background

I was working for the Peace Corps and I was anxious to go overseas again in AID. I went over to the AID office in Washington, filled out the application and was accepted for the program; but for Vietnam. I said no but eventually I decided to go overseas with AID. Also a large factor was that if I hadn't gone to Vietnam with AID, I probably would have gone with the U.S. Army. I was interviewed by two people; nothing really very significant; nothing really stands out from that. It was sort of, "This guy is interested, who is going to interview him?" This seemed to be a process that they were forced into; it was just a procedure that they had to go through. I do not think that they were selective in any way. I don't think it meant very much one way or another.

I went to Washington for two or three weeks of orientation and then to Hawaii. In Washington, I received a general orientation into AID and to Washington (AID), some films and a little Vietnamese language, passports, visas; this type of stuff. It was not worthwhile because I got the same thing at the ATC.

I wasn't sure what the program was going to be at the ATC. The only similar thing that I had gone through was Peace Corps training, so I was forced to compare this with Peace Corps training. In many respects it was very similar to the Peace Corps program, but I don't really think the training on the whole was very good. I think the language part was very weak which is the most important part of it. I think the cross cultural aspect wasn't really very good. The language should have been intensified; it was too easy. We were given too much free time with language; we weren't pushed enough. At the time, the people who were working in, and in charge of the language program really weren't very good. They have since left. As far as the other stuff, I don't think it is of any value to study AID or to study CORDS in a training situation, and this is the bulk of the stuff that

we did; we studied CORDS public administration program, the CORDS agricultural program, the CORDS nursing program, etc., etc., etc. This is the kind of stuff that you will pick up pretty quickly once you are in the country, but the kind of stuff that you won't pick up are the more academic things. I think much more time should have been spent on the history of Vietnam, the economy, politics, socio-anthropological phenomena etc., etc., of Asia. I think this would have been much more relevant together with the whole question of operating in a different environment, a different culture. I am not quite sure how you train a person for this. I think they attempted to here at ATC and I think that was good. We had this rural counter-insurgency phase where we went out for two weeks to subvert the island of Hawaii. This was good; this was a beginning. I think the thinking was in the right direction. I don't know quite whether they achieved their purpose.

Ideal Training Program

Of all the training received, language was the most valuable. I think we could have done reasonably well without a lot of the stuff that was included. We needed to know the history of Vietnam; we didn't need to know the history of Vietnam in two brief lectures. I think that was a waste of time. If I were to devise an ideal training program, the bulk of it would be language; then area studies, but on the more academic level; a much more heavily academic approach. I would have more professors from the university.

As for identifying ideal representatives, the surprising thing is that many average people or average Americans do very well overseas. It is probably easier to point out within a group those people who probably wouldn't do very well. If you gave me a group, I think I could probably pick out those people who wouldn't do well overseas. I think within the group that we came with, everybody knew after the second week those people who would do well in Vietnam, and those people who wouldn't do well in Vietnam. The people who we suspected at the time didn't do well or left before the end of their tour. A lot depends on what position you put the person in if you are asking for certain identifiable personality characteristics which would be effective overseas. I don't think you can really get any kind of answer to this. There are probably certain identifiable abnormal characteristics which would probably eliminate a person, but I don't think you can identify those which would increase a person's ability to operate effectively overseas. Those people who can be identified in a training course, should be eliminated from service during this

training period. Maybe I am cold blooded, but I think that is too bad. I think when you come to the training program you ought to be aware, like in the Peace Corps, of the fact that you might not make it.

Personal Adjustment to Job and Living Conditions

Adjustment to Job

I was very anxious to work within the labor section in Vietnam. I felt that as a result of my experiences here, the problem in Vietnam is still going to face us. There is a lack of strong groups within Vietnam that would be capable of assuming a leadership role after the war, and one of the groups that could possibly do this would be the labor unions, so I was interested in getting involved with the labor unions. I wrote to a number of people and I don't think I ever got an answer. When I went there, I spoke to them and they said, "Well, the only people we hire in Vietnam to work in the labor section are those who have had 10 years of experience with labor unions and knew George Meany, or got a letter of recommendation from George Meanie." I could probably get the letter of recommendation from George Meany, but I couldn't get the 10 years experience. When I first went to the office at CORDS or AID, I was told I was to work with refugees, which I wasn't very happy about at the time, so I did everything I could to get into the labor section. They wouldn't take me, so I wound up working with refugees. I spent about 10 days to two weeks in Saigon in the refugee section doing absolutely nothing. The most exciting thing in the refugee division was the arrival of Time and Newsweek magazine downstairs, and everybody sort of looked forward to this day. They didn't do any kind of briefing or introduction; they didn't really seem to care if you were there or not. So, we went up to Nha Trang which is the regional headquarters, and all the people in Nha Trang were new people and they didn't have any idea of what was going on in the field. These people had been there two weeks, and I had been there a week, but good people were running the refugee division within CORDS, in II Corps, and they decided the best way for us to find out what was happening in the refugee program was to send us newcomers out into a province to gather information for the regional office. In this way we would become familiar with the refugee situation and the people in region would be able to find out what was happening. We went to a number of provinces spending two, three, four, five days going around looking at refugee

We had 237,000 refugees; all kinds, all types, rich, poor, skilled and unskilled. The history of the refugee situation was that the former chief was in jail, the former province chief was in jail, the former police chief was in jail; everybody was in jail. It was a new administration within the province for the most part. No one really knew very much about refugees, so I think the first priority was finding out really what the refugee situation was. In Saigon, in Nha Trang, and in II Corps, the people were panicking because they saw these huge numbers and they thought there was a major refugee problem; there really wasn't. A large percent of the refugees had moved into

There had never really been a refugee man in Binh Dinh before, and it was really a question of trial and error, finding out what the refugee situation was and establishing certain priorities. When I came in, there weren't any offices available to work in at CORDS, so I moved into the Vietnamese office; I was on my own. They had asked if it would be possible if the advisor had his office in the Vietnamese office. I thought it was a great idea, so we moved in. I spent 90% of the working time in the Vietnamese office with Vietnamese with no other Americans around. It was a question of learning from them what the priorities were, and then going from there and assisting them in solving the various problems associated with the priorities.

camps, speaking to Vietnamese and speaking to Americans. This lasted about three weeks, and then they asked you where did you want to go; in which province? I decided I wanted to go to Cam Ranh for some strange reason which I don't even remember, but the last report that I had to do was in Binh Dinh province, and when I got to Binh Dinh, I decided that's where I wanted to stay, for a number of reasons. Binh Dinh is the largest province in Vietnam, and the population probably has the highest priority of any province in the country; militarily and politically as far as AID is concerned. Other than Saigon, or the Saigon area, Binh Dinh is probably more important than any other place. They had more refugees than any other province--more refugees now than any other province in the country. I decided that this is where the action is so this is where I wanted to work. Because Binh Dinh is the most important province in II Corps, the regional people thought that they wanted to send their oldest and most mature guy up there. I was the youngest, and probably the least experienced, but I met the province senior advisor and I told him that I would like to come up there and work in the refugee program. He said, "Okay, fine, come up." Well, the regional people couldn't do anything about it; they sort of had their hands tied so they said, "Okay, go up." So I went up.

cities like Qui Nhon, and established themselves working for the U.S. military and various allied units. So the numbers tended to inflate the problem. It was a question of assisting those refugees who needed assistance, and there really weren't very many of those. There were refugees living in very poor housing conditions. They were fed enough food, but I think it was a question of building better houses; providing what they should have gotten two years ago. This was something that only began six or seven months before I left, because the refugee office never functioned the year and a half before I arrived.

My work was a day to day thing unfortunately, however, this was the case. Again it was such a large province that there was always a crisis happening; there was a military action in another part of the province, so you had to go and take care of refugees there. It was from day to day. There would be this chap visiting or that chap visiting and I had to chauffeur them around. Unfortunately there is just very, very little time for long range planning. There is very, very little time to sit and make out a schedule of what you are going to do during the day or during the week. Most of the time this is the way things went. I spent an awful lot of time doing trivial things; running after pads, pencils, and paper and things like that, or being a mechanic and fixing my vehicle. I don't really think that I should have been spending my time doing things like this. I don't really care, but it seems like an awful waste for the U.S. government. This could have been avoided if they had supplied enough of those things that you need. In Nha Trang and Saigon, they have plenty of pads, pencils and automobiles, but when you get to the provinces they don't have plenty of pads, pencils and automobiles. Chances were within the GVN that by the time things started from the top and filtered their way down to the bottom rung, they had very little left. The same applies with the U.S. government in Vietnam. You start in Saigon with beautiful plush offices, and by the time you get down to the provinces you are lucky to get a desk. But you know, this is not all that significant. As far as program support, you have no problems. I think that this is much more significant. I think that you always get someone to listen to you and if it is a good idea and you push hard enough you can get it carried through.

Adjustment to Living Conditions

Having already worked in a different country and then going to Vietnam, I still feel that even though an individual has experienced a strange and different culture, there still exists a certain amount of cultural adjustment, or we might say cultural shock. I won't say it is old

The best advice I could give to you if you were going to Vietnam is to have a good sense of humor. If you were my replacement I would probably tell you about different people and how they would react in certain situations, and how far you can push and what you can get away with and what you can't get away with. I don't really think that I could convince you that institution building was more important than feeding refugees. I would mention it I guess, but I would sort of sound you out and see what your feelings were; if your view was the opposite of mine, I wouldn't really try to convince you. I think that I would try to convince you to learn Vietnamese. I think that I would try to convince you to spend as much time as possible with the Vietnamese. You have just got to know the details and people and the various programs that we tried and weren't successful or couldn't be successful. For example, I can't lay great faith in those refugee cadre workers. It took a while to realize that they weren't really very effective. This type of thing. You should know things like the vocational schools that weren't really that good; a number of smaller things like this or even individuals who work in

Prescription for Adjustment

Regarding the adjustment of married men, I think that married men should have their wives in Vietnam; they are starting to have that now. Having the wives in foreign bases is absolutely ridiculous. How can a guy do his job? How do they expect him to; he spends half his time in Bangkok and half his time in Vietnam. It seems utterly ridiculous. A man with a family has got a problem. I still think that he can bring them to Vietnam. This isn't always a problem; there are enough facilities. There is an air force base there; hot and cold running water, everything is air conditioned, beautiful plenty of land; they can put all of the families there although the military could be a problem.

had a date in two years. awkward for the first time. What do people do on dates? I haven't a long time, that I think if I went on a date, it would be somewhat on the rocks, or bourbon and water. I haven't been on a date in such order bourbon, ice and water, but we here in the States order bourbon to do; just small things. For example, when I order a drink, I right word is in certain situations or quite what you are supposed are certain situations where I feel awkward and do not know what the find it awkward coming back here; coming back to the States. There after a while, you sort of get to know what to expect. But I still hat, but I have gone through it with the Peace Corps and Vietnam and

the province; some are very good and some are not very good. Be wary of them or work closely with them.

AID as an Employer

AID as an employer is rather poor for the most part. I think that we should be getting more money. The thing that bugs me for the most part is that they have this temporary promotion bit in Vietnam, and then upon coming back you get less money. That seems absolutely ludicrous, and that's one of the reasons that I might not stay with AID. It is not a question of money for money's sake; it is a question of money for recognition of a person's responsibility and the job that he has done. I think that if a person is worth a certain amount of money, he should be paid a certain amount of money. I don't think that the salaries are that good for one thing. In Vietnam I found that if you work in the field, it is really difficult to advance quickly. That may be Vietnam in particular.

As far as proficiency reporting is concerned, they had two forms-- I don't know what the numbers are--but they had a special short form for Vietnam which was absolutely awful. I had to do one on two people, and I didn't like doing it at all. No one likes it. The other form is all right--the longer form, where you get a chance to write without so many boxes to cross out. I have no objections to it. I am sure there could be better ways of evaluating someone if the organization wasn't so large. In a place like Vietnam, it is difficult to do I think. I don't know what other method you could use.

The personnel services were terrible. I never saw the whole time I was there, what the bachelor travel policy was. I never saw it. I asked for it a number of times, but no one ever had it. The training officer in Vietnam was a jerk of the first order. I didn't think that the whole thing was very much. Then they have this language proficiency test where you have to go down to Saigon to take the test. I don't think that's very fair. I never bothered to take it, but I really couldn't care less; it really didn't bother me. I enjoyed the work that I was doing and I was satisfied with the work that I was doing. If I wanted to take a vacation, I took a vacation. I didn't know what the policy was. If they objected to what I was doing, I probably would have gone anyway. I went back to the States and I don't even know if I was allowed to go back to the States when I took leave, once. I really have very few gripes. I'd be perfectly satisfied if they just paid you a certain salary and said you were off on your own and you can do what you like, but you are supposed to work

I don't think anybody in Vietnam has heard about Title IX. I have never heard anybody mention it. I think this is significant. I think it is all very nice, well and good, but how do you implement it; I don't know. What I do know is that we are subverting institution building by utilizing the imprest fund. Everybody finagles the books with it, and you can do just about whatever you want with it. I think it is a bad thing because what happens is that you subvert the GVN. Because I have the money, I can be doing the things that the GVN should be doing and if the GVN didn't have the funds for it, then there is a mistake in the system. So, let's change the system rather than subvert the system by using the imprest fund. I think the most important thing is developing institutions within the society. We are talking about large amounts of money with the imprest fund. You know--spending 100,000 dollars at one crack which is a large amount of money. Let me give an example of this. Let's say

Institutional Development

U.S. Goals and Goal Seeking

But getting back to AID personnel services, such things as travel arrangements are the things that I think are the least important. I guess to some people with families, they could be important, but I really couldn't care less. They can do without all that micky mouse stuff for all I care. The travel section they can do without; there are more than enough airline offices in Saigon to handle it I think. I don't think that they need that kind of stuff.

I don't think that they should pay people overtime. I don't think that a professional should be paid overtime. If they are going to pay him I am going to put in for it. I don't think that a professional should be paid overtime.

so many days a year and after that you can take so many days vacation if you want to. I don't really need AID services; they don't have to supply housing, or air conditioners or come and change my light bulbs. I can take care of those things myself. I think they offered services that you do not need. I think that AID officials live a very push life. I would be perfectly willing to take care of all these things myself. Just give you your money and you rent a place and take this out of your salary. If you want furniture, you can go buy furniture and this type of thing. The problem is that it would interfere with the economy.

that you decide that you want something printed, and you are to use your imprest money for it. Well, why shouldn't the GVN have money to print something up? This may be a poor example, but it is worth the effort, it would seem to me to go back and change it and see that money is programmed from Saigon through the system all the way down to the district or province level. It may take a lot longer, but after it is done once, in the long run, I think the benefits will pay off. The same thing with trucks, with transportation again; at some point we'll give the help.

When money is moving within the GVN structure, although there is all this talk about corruption etc., the thing is that a man does not sign for money unless he is very, very careful about it. Here again, we wind up at the same point again. If you get an official who isn't willing to accept money, why isn't he willing to accept money? I think this is the important question. This is the problem you have got to solve rather than getting the money there. There is a reason for it; what's the reason for it? Is he incompetent, is there something wrong with the way that the money is coming through, doesn't he need the money or doesn't he know how to spend the money? I think these are much more significant questions.

Building institutions in another culture is extremely difficult. Take labor unions for example. Everything is unionized, there are a hell of a lot of unions in Vietnam; you have the hair dressers union, the taxicab drivers union, they always unionize down to a very small level like the tenent farmer's union. But, whether these unions are more fraternal organizations than unions I am not sure; I think they are. But if they are, they are still organizations that exist and they would have developed indigenously for the most part without outside control. We ought to glom onto those vestiges of institutions that exist and build upon them or draw leadership from them and put them into government.

Before you can develop an institution, there has to be a need for the institution first. There has to be a recognition on the part of the society that the need exists. There has to be a recognition on the part of the society that this need not only exists, but that there are certain advantages to it. In any case, how do you form an organization out of this? Is it public or private? If it is public, I guess it would be reasonably easy using the governmental structure, to solve the problems. If it is private, again it may be easy, it may be difficult. I think the problem in developing countries, in Vietnam in particular, would be getting competent in-

In terms of assisting a developing country like Vietnam for example, or any developing country for that matter, I have run into two generally polarized groups of thinking; the hard and the soft. I would think which is best would depend on the country. I think in a country like India you probably have to be hard. I think in Vietnam, maybe in the short run you have to be hard, but in the long run you wind up being soft. I think the Vietnamese are pretty bright and intelligent and know where they are going, and if they want to get something done they will get it done. If they don't want to get some-

I think, but I am not convinced, that we may be putting too much emphasis on elementary education in Vietnam. I think we should start working on secondary and university education, within certain fields and certain areas. I don't believe in participant training where we are taking people out of their culture for education in the States or overseas, unless it is really an exception like you are training someone to be a nuclear physicist or to be a doctor. I don't think that is really useful. I haven't seen any real advantages to it. I think that they can probably do most of the stuff in Vietnam with the existing facilities. I think more emphasis should be put on teacher training for elementary and secondary schools. There is tremendous wastage within the educational system as a result of examinations and people going up. I would emphasize to some extent, quality rather than quantity in the elementary schools right now. It seems to be going the other way around; it is quantity rather than quality in the elementary schools. I would put more emphasis on secondary schools and on universities. I have mentioned two really basic things; education and the army.

dividuals to work within it. The need for competent individuals is an example of a requirement that apparently precedes organization. It is a fantastic problem and I don't have the solution for it; I don't know if anybody does. I think that there are a number of things that can be done to encourage development; better leadership that will encourage individuals. One of the fatal things is this whole military bit--just inCORDS we can probably get rid of at least half of the people, in the field and out of the field; it is way overstated. This would release an awful lot of competent interpreters and this kind of people. This really isn't a significant number of people, it's a small group. Even the armed forces is overstated; probably too many people in uniform running around. They probably ought to be more selective in their drafting, and they could probably release a hell of a lot of people into the civilian sector; competent people. I think you can draw from this, and then we get into the whole question of education.

thing done, they won't get it done. I think, let's say India, has many more problems economically than Vietnam, and politically in the long run also. I think you might have to take a very hard line.

On the whole, we are not doing very well in Vietnam. We are not doing any better now than when I went there. I was very effective with the Vietnamese, and I was reasonably effective with the Americans. With the Americans it was a question of calming them down; this great crisis doesn't exist. There isn't a major problem here, relax, take it easy. With the Vietnamese I think getting them to use their own systems has been the most significant contribution that I could have made anyway; getting them to realize what potential they have, what facilities they have. One of the problems of the Vietnamese is that they don't talk to one another, very often. Each office is an individual entity. When you get the various offices or units cooperating, I think you've done something, and I think we did this to some extent. They have a long way to go, but it is a beginning.

Throughout all of this, we must not forget the farmer because he represents the bulk of the population in Vietnam. Now since something like 80% of the population of Vietnam are farmers living at the village level with the district as possibly the highest level of government that they recognize, and the most intimate organization level that they are familiar with is the village, any effort that is made in the development of institutions, should be made at the levels where they recognize it. In other words, take what exists and build on that. It is just a question of building institutions that are sensitive to what the people want; that are sensitive to the problems in the society. These institutions are those that are at the lowest level filtering up towards the top, starting at the village level. I think that you can go from the lowest level up. This is the approach then that should be taken in developing organization for the purpose of doing whatever the people want to do. The process of growth as far as experience is concerned, involves positive or negative responses, if you want to call them that. A negative response is also involved in the process of growth, so within the society, you are talking about community development in a strict sense and how you develop a structure within the village. You want to develop within the village confidence that as a village it can achieve certain results, be it a school or be it a brothel. If it is a brothel and the people get together and build their brothel together and it can't be very far away, then when they are making money from the brothel they might say, "What else can we do, let's build a school." They start to do these things, and the next step is the realization on the part of

As a result of the war, there has been an introduction of pretty sophisticated military equipment; you have to have 1) Vietnamese who can handle the stuff and there are Vietnamese who can handle the stuff, and 2) you have to have the administration which can handle this and the Vietnamese. On the other hand, you do have the intellectual who is totally useless. Arguing with them is a hell of a lot of fun, but you never get anywhere. But when talking about some of the most sophisticated computer programming, the Vietnamese can handle it now.

One problem, however, is that too many units are acting independently. One of the problems that we face or I faced in Binh Dinh, was what happens to the city of Qui Nhon, which is probably the third largest city in Vietnam. There is one group doing long range economic planning and there is us sitting up there not knowing what the hell they are talking about, trying to figure what Qui Nhon can do after the war. There must be three other groups planning other things. Nobody knows what the other one is doing. We decided to figure out what was going to happen to Qui Nhon. I would think that the U.S. military is probably drawing up plans for what they are going to do with their facilities after the war, and I am sure there are other organizations that I know nothing about. In terms of training, it's pretty significant to find out what you are going to do with these things after the war so you can train people to fill the roles. One of the things that we were talking about doing was finding out what facilities there are in Qui Nhon, civilian facilities, so that we could develop a fishing industry by going to the U.S. army and saying we have these 50 guys who want to learn more about fishing. Because you have the Coast Guard unit here and because you have the facilities, can you train them in this? We actually got to the point where the U.S. army said that they would be willing to train them. We were willing to take two hours a day to train them in a field that would be of no benefit to the U.S. army, but in the long run would be to the advantage of the country.

When you consider the private sector, I would have to say that U.S. contractors are the biggest thieves in Vietnam. They are very ex-

Post-War Development

the unit that it has certain power which it can exert over the next highest level. I think once this concept is developed within the group, I think you have achieved a major step in the political development of the country.

pensive. The work that they are doing could probably be done cheaper by Asian contractors and be equal to if not better quality than the U.S. contractors. Yes, they are training people to do certain jobs, but so is everybody in Vietnam. I wasn't very impressed with them; they were not very anxious to do very much for the society. They are probably the least controlled group and the poorest representatives. I think they are even worse than the military in some cases; real animals. I think they should start phasing out the third country nationals. Again, they are not trained Vietnamese and trained Vietnamese could probably fill their roles given certain circumstances.

I do not want to leave the impression that the Vietnamese are completely ready to take over. I don't think that they know which way they want to go; I don't know if we know which way we want to go. I don't know of any society that knows which way they want to go or what they want. I think there is an over-reliance on the United States and I think that the United States is guilty of establishing this. I think that we can reduce our effort gradually in Vietnam and I think that the Vietnamese will be able to handle the situation and handle it very well. I think if we hadn't gotten involved in Vietnam to the extent that we have, the Vietnamese would be basically in the same position now. I think there are a number of large scale economic development projects like the Mekong delta thing in which the Vietnamese will probably have to depend on us to help them build the damn thing. I think that the U.S. should concentrate on community development in Vietnam. But, there are very few people to do it; I know of only two or three people who could actually do it or would be willing to do it at this level. But, if you are going to do community development in Vietnam, you have to get rid of all the other stuff. Community development taken in the simplest terms, means developing a community; it doesn't mean building schools, roads, highways; it means developing institutions within the community that can do these things.

Looking ahead politically I think the most relevant thing is allowing the NLF to participate in the government. I think this is more realistic in terms of what probably will come out. I think, although I am not sure, that the North Vietnamese will be willing to accept American aid at some point. I think that once they are willing to do this, the economic and political development of Vietnam will go ahead very quickly.

One of the things that I was shocked at and still continue to be shocked at, is the amount of freedom that the Americans have; at the amount of stuff that the Americans can get away with without having created much resentment among the Vietnamese. If this were in any other society, what we do in Vietnam wouldn't have existed very long. The Vietnamese are difficult people to read. They are described as people who are very hard on the outside and very soft on the inside. I think that the Vietnamese are very soft on the outside and very hard on the inside. He is very congenial and very easy to get along with initially. There is just a certain level that you can reach with the Vietnamese. It is very difficult to penetrate beyond that and to find out really what he is thinking. You know a Vietnamese is the type of person that while he is smiling, he can be stabbing you in the back at the same time. So, it is difficult

The American Image

I think that the development problems in Ethiopia and Vietnam are very much the same in many instances; poor top administration locally and nationally. Vietnam has a higher level of sophistication and intelligence than Ethiopia has. Neither country really has much of a population problem. Both countries have great possibilities in agriculture; Ethiopia probably more so than Vietnam just because of its location. Both of them have serious problems. I am not sure that I can make generalizations from my experiences in Vietnam in relation to other countries. I would think in other countries AID could use a district or province rep type individual. They may be useful; this type of experience.

If I were to give AID direction, I would start off by saying I would work with the lowest level of AID possible, although I have no idea of what AID's involvement is in the rest of the world. None at all. I would also probably reduce drastically the food program and I would put much more emphasis on agriculture and education. I would reduce the food program because from my experience in Vietnam, the stuff isn't used; it is wasted--thrown out. That is purely a stop-gap measure. I would concentrate more on developing local food production. I guess in a place like India you need food, but I haven't had any experience in India, so I don't really know. I don't even know if the food the U.S. gives to India is used.

Prescription for AID

to understand really what they think about Americans. A couple of times just for laughs I used to go around, I speak Vietnamese, and introduce myself as French hoping that the person didn't speak French. They just used to go wild; especially the older people. They thought that the French were just wonderful, just marvelous, much, much better than the Americans. Why were they better than the Americans? Well they were better than the Americans because we (Vietnamese) knew where our places were; we knew how to react to the French, we knew what to do, we knew we were under the French. With the Americans we can't figure them out. They are like little kids sometimes, and like dictators at other times. The Vietnamese are really not sure of their place within society, and in an oriental society, knowing ones place is very important.

The only thing is that you can't make generalizations because there are various groups that react to Americans in a different way; government officials are forced to go along with these U.S. military guys as a whole. Students have an ambiguous picture; some of them will tell you they hate Americans; some of the interpreters will tell you that the only reason that they are working for the Americans is to make the money, but otherwise they hate us. You know it varies. I have had people come to me who I am friends with and say that they have hated Americans, and now they realize that they don't hate all Americans. But what I am missing, is that I can't tell you what the farmer thinks, or what the peasant thinks, and I think that is important.

Host Country Bureaucratic Relationships

I would like to make a few remarks about the National School of Administration. The first chap that I worked with was from the National School of Administration. He was a young guy about my age; he was probably one of the most energetic guys I have ever met. He would do everything; he would try to do the paperwork, he would load the vehicles, he would fix the vehicles, but he was the worst administrator I have ever met in my life. He had no concept of delegating responsibility or authority to any of his staff and hence nothing was done; nothing was ever accomplished. We had another guy who was deputy province chief over whom there was a lot of question as to whether he was honest or dishonest. He was the typical cut of a man doing what you would expect him to be doing. He would find it impossible to go out and talk to the people; he was, you know, one step above. I wasn't really impressed with him. There was one civilian district chief in our area who graduated from this school

When I was there, things were pretty much set. I was in a province where we had a civilian province senior advisor/military deputy province senior advisor. The province senior advisor is a very strong guy; very high ranking. He ran the show. When the order came out that CORDS and MACV would be one, I think this was before I came; this was done very quickly and very effectively. It worked as effectively. It worked as the two top men there; as the deputy province senior advisor and the province senior advisor were. There was no friction between the military and the civilian; there was no overlapping of authority and responsibility between the civilians and the military. I think it was unique. I think our province senior advisor was considered one of the best. In no uncertain terms, the military and the civilians realized that they worked for one man,

CORDS

U.S. Bureaucratic Relationships

Some say that the Vietnamese and Orientals in general revere age; that it is best to send older men to deal with them because of the fact that they won't listen to younger men. The one thing that they are forgetting is the age of the Vietnamese officials you are dealing with. When I first arrived, my counterpart, the refugee chief, was about the same age I am. This worked out well, and when he was fired and another chap came in who was quite a bit older, he said to me--I don't know if he was trying to build me up or pat me on the back or make me feel good--he would rather work with a younger person. His reason was that he felt that a younger person was more flexible, quicker to learn and to understand the problems than someone who was older. It varies I think. I think it depends on the individual rather than on his age.

Host Country National and U.S. Interpersonal Relationships

who was very effective. Generally I think that the school is effective. I think it is a good idea. I think it should be encouraged. I think that the school is getting involved in continuing education. Just before I left we met some people at the airport who were going out to interview graduates from the school, finding out what types of problems they had and how the school can help them in their jobs. I think that this is very good. They were just talking about establishing a social welfare school along the same lines, and I think this is also important.

and as a result of this I think everybody was working on the same team. Everybody got along very well. There was no bickering that I ever heard of. Certainly there were animosities between one individual and another individual; one may have happened to have been military, and one may have happened to have been a civilian, but this is a broad overview now. The organization worked very effectively. It worked very effectively on a province level, at the district level, well, there were problems sometimes. Sometimes you would have a younger fellow, a civilian, who would have been in the district for three years, but he wouldn't have had the age or the rank to assume control. Although he probably ran the place, he couldn't assume control. On the district level, there was sometimes friction over the setup, but I don't see how you could do it any better, given the limitations of CORDS; given that this is the type of organization or the type of advisor that you want to send out.

Administrative Reporting

As far as reporting is considered, there was a form report and then a general report. I did not think much of the form report because it was asking for too much information. It would ask for things in the refugee situation; how many are employed, how many people are 50% employed, how many school age children are there? Well, in a developing country they do not have accurate statistics and we would be deluding ourselves in trying to get them. This type of stuff is just a waste of time.

The amount of reports would vary from month to month, I found. Sometimes there would be an awful lot of reports that had to be done, and then when they made a new report, it took an awful lot of time. Once you got into the swing of it, you could fill it out in less and less time. There were some months that I would complain bitterly that there were too many reports, and other months it wasn't so bad at all. The same thing is true of travelers and visitors. Some months it was unbelievable the amount of people who would come and want to be shown around, and other months very few.

Senior Assignments

The whole system in Vietnam of appointing senior administrators for programs is bad. It seems the quality of senior administrators varies from excellent to very, very poor. I don't think with the investment in Vietnam, we can justify very poor administrators in senior slots. There doesn't seem to be enough flexibility in the program, pushing

I am sure you know as well as I do that corruption in America is an evil word; in Vietnam it isn't an evil word, it is a way of life. Corruption is only significant if in fact it convinces the population that the GVN can and is interested in controlling it. I don't think the GVN has demonstrated that it is interested in or capable of controlling corruption or anything else. I don't think there is any more corruption among the GVN than there is among the U.S. in Vietnam. So, I never really got terribly excited about corruption as such. I think the U.S. presence, individuals and actual units, are just as corrupt as the Vietnamese.

The province chief in Binh Dinh was appointed by Ky to clean up the corruption in the province, and one of the big things in the province most of the time I was there, was getting rid of those people who supposedly were corrupt. The province chief was reasonably effective in doing this, and the question of whether the province chief was corrupt or not, I don't know the answer to that. He may have gotten rid of all the little people and taken everything himself. I don't know. There was another problem also; if you have a limited amount of trained man power and if you have a person who is very effective

Use and Misuse of Resources

people through; in other words starting a guy as a district rep and having him know the problems and then go on up to region as a top person. Once a person is in a district he is stuck there. There are really very few places he can go. What's happening is that you are getting very high ranking, foreign service officers in AID from other countries, who have been given the choice, either Vietnam or out. They have gone to Vietnam and filled many of the top posts. Well, the reason why they are giving them the choice between Vietnam or out, is because probably they were fairly incompetent where they were before, so they send them over to Vietnam. Well, what is it doing to young guys who are very competent? Unfortunately, AID is going to lose them, or Vietnam is going to lose them. I have seen a number of people who are really very, very good leave because of this. There is no place for them to go. If they wanted to, they could probably get a desk job in Saigon. You can go from the district to Saigon, but once you get to Saigon, you are stilled; there is nothing to do there. The action isn't in Saigon for the most part. There are only a few jobs in Saigon that are really significant; you can get a job in Saigon going over somebody's voucher. I don't think you would have much of an impact doing that.

at his job, but corrupt, what do you do? The province chief got rid of these people, so it made the organization a bit more ineffective.

Program Evaluation

U.S. military action created most of the refugees in my area. In the northern part of Vietnam, your refugees are supposedly starving, but this was never the case where I was. There was more land, I think, where we were and people were able to eke out an existence. The percent of the population who were refugees, I don't think would be as large as in other areas. Although we had the largest total number, the percent of the population was never that large. There was enough jobs available with the U.S. military; washing laundry for somebody who is washing laundry for somebody who is washing laundry; this type of thing. There was enough money floating around that the people were able to survive.

We had beautiful refugee camps. They could be a model for urban development in almost any developing society, and then you had places that were just horrible; tin shacks, not even tin shacks, orange crate shacks. They were just awful. In between that, there were a whole slew of camps; generally the Catholic camps were much better than the Buddhist camps; more tightly administered, able to get more money and took better care of their people. Basically it was a matter of indigenous organization. They had what they call, refugee cadre. These are people, a group of 10, who are trained in Saigon and supposedly sent out to do community organization within a refugee camp. Hence, you are talking about political development within a refugee camp; hence you could work with a cadre in developing political maturity within the camps, but generally the cadre weren't very effective. They weren't effective in doing community development. They were more effective in building things than developing institutions or political institutions within the camps. There weren't enough trained Vietnamese to handle the situation even as it was. Just to keep the system going, there weren't enough Vietnamese. I think another aspect of it and I think an error on the part of the U.S. was that we were very interested in developing programs, but we never really considered the tools necessary to keep the program in operation; administrative tools, not tractors or plows or all this other nonsense. These are very nice, they look very good, but if you have 237,000 refugees and you are interested in keeping track of them, you are going to need some pretty sophisticated office equipment. I think this would have been worthwhile; sophisticated office

I was lucky with the counterpart that I finally got who was appointed one of the refugee chiefs and had excellent experience. He was with the Viet Minh for many years and he was very sympathetic to the people's needs and wants. He had gone through the best possible training program to work for the GVN. I find this generally true. The older officials who have been with the Viet Minh were generally more effective, more sympathetic, and more responsive. When we talk about programs and about priorities, my counterpart put them in terms of what the Viet Minh would have done or the Viet Cong would have done and what the reactions to certain things would be and how he can be more effective using limited resources.

Let me add another thing. I think you have got to make a decision when you are in Vietnam, what you are there for in terms of are you there to help refugees or not? Is your job in fact assisting the government of Vietnam to develop? I think the latter is much more important. I think it is much more important that the GVN become aware of its responsibility, and then in fact devise methods to handle their responsibilities because you as an individual aren't going to achieve very much by giving out food, clothes, and shelter to refugees. It can only be done through the institutions which the GVN has set up. You get to be somewhat coldblooded about individual refugees or individual refugee camps; they are not that important. Now if a refugee is hungry or starving, yes, you will probably do something, and you probably will get your own resources and go around the GVN, but in most of the cases I was willing to sit on my arse and do absolutely nothing until the GVN decided it was important. For example, when is a logistics base for a fourth or third of the country for the U.S. military; hence there are a lot of trucks, and it is very easy to go over and borrow trucks and move refugee commodities. I would never do this. It may take two or three weeks longer to move commodities, but there is also a large ARVN logistics base, and if the GVN wanted to move commodities, I thought the ARVN should move them; not the U.S. government and not the U.S. military. By the time I had left, they had set up a reasonable system where they were getting ARVN trucks, but the people suffering through all of this unfortunately were the refugees. So, maybe I am a bastard.