MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Accelerated Expansion of RVNAF (U)

1. (U) Reference is made to the memorandum by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, dated 4 April 1968, subject: "Increase in the FY 68 RVNAF Force Level (U)."

2. ☐ The President has expressed intense interest in and has placed great emphasis on the expansion of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) to attain a posture of self-sufficiency in the near term.

3. ☐ COMUSMACV has estimated that SVN can reach and maintain an RVNAF force level of approximately 801,215 by end FY 1970. As a result of the current momentum being imparted to the mobilization of SVN manpower by President Thieu, it is possible that this force level may be reached earlier. Proposed force levels are contained in Appendices A and B hereto. In view of the possibility of negotiations with Hanoi, there may be a freeze applied to RVNAF force levels and armaments. Anticipating this situation, we should strive to bring the RVNAF to a self-sufficient posture prior to any freeze, and thus create the largest sustainable RVNAF in-being prior to a negotiated settlement.

4. ☐ The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider the further RVNAF increase of 115,475 spaces, which includes 31,475 FY 1969 pipeline spaces previously approved, is required to improve the capability of the GVN forces. This action should enable the RVNAF to become self-sufficient against a residual internal insurgency threat.

5. ☐ While the equipment requirements and dollar costs cannot be totaled precisely until final details are submitted by COMUSMACV, raw estimates of costs for the total increases are $530 million and for full modernization of RVNAF approach an additional $590 million.
6. Since equipment may not be available to keep pace with this expansion, it is planned temporarily to place personnel authorized for armor, artillery, transport, construction, engineer, and other special units into infantry-type units of the existing force structure. Basic infantry equipment can be provided from existing stocks, particularly the M2 carbine until the M16 rifle becomes available. This action has an advantage of providing unit fillers and overstrength with minimum impact on requirements for leaders and long lead-time training. As necessary leaders and the specialized equipment become available, personnel can be reassigned to newly activated units to round out the RVNAF force structure.

7. (U) The reference requested that when the proposals of the Joint Chiefs of Staff regarding FY 1969 RVNAF force levels were submitted, certain additional information concerning RVNAF force structure, combat effectiveness, equipment shortages, and studies which support the RVNAF force requirements were desired. Due to the urgency of the proposed expansion of RVNAF, this memorandum is submitted without the information you requested. This information will be developed, however, and submitted to you separately.

8. (U) The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that:

   a. Approval be provided for the expansion of RVNAF to a total force level of 801,215, to be reached as soon as possible.

   b. Approval be provided for funds necessary to support the recommended expansion, subject to final determination of the force structure, associated equipment requirements, and detailed costs.

   c. Approval be provided to furnish the M2 carbine as an interim weapon pending availability of M16 rifles.

   d. Approval be provided to furnish RVNAF (including RF/PF) M16 rifles.

   For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

   HAROLD K. JOHNSON
   Acting Chairman
   Joint Chiefs of Staff

   Attachments
### APPENDIX A

**RECAPITULATION OF CURRENT AND PROPOSED FORCE LEVELS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>See Def Approved FY 68 RVNAF Force Levels 1/</th>
<th>Proposed FY 69 Increases 2/</th>
<th>Subtotal</th>
<th>Proposed FY 69 Add-on 3/</th>
<th>FY 69 Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See Def Approved FY 68 RVNAF Force Levels 1/</td>
<td>Proposed FY 69 Increases 2/</td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>Proposed FY 69 Add-on 3/</td>
<td>FY 69 Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Regular Forces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army (ARVN)</td>
<td>303,356</td>
<td>20,813</td>
<td>17,700</td>
<td>38,513</td>
<td>13,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy (VNN)</td>
<td>16,003</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>1,175</td>
<td>1,740</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Corps (VNMC)</td>
<td>7,321</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>1,579</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force (VNAF)</td>
<td>16,448</td>
<td>2,897</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>3,247</td>
<td>1,877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Regular</td>
<td>343,128</td>
<td>24,504</td>
<td>20,575</td>
<td>45,079</td>
<td>15,306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2. Paramilitary Forces       |                                             |                             |          |                          |             |
| Regional Force (RF)          | 182,971                                     | 26,061                      | 2,900    | 28,961                   | 6,755       | 218,687     |
| Popular Force (PF)           | 159,640                                     | 11,375                      | 8,000    | 19,375                   | 0           | 179,015     |
| Total Paramilitary           | 342,611                                     | 37,436                      | 10,900   | 48,336                   | 6,755       | 397,702     |
| Grand Total                  | 685,739                                     | 61,940                      | 31,475   | 93,415                   | 22,061      | 801,215     |

1/ COMUSMACV was authorized to adjust spaces among forces within the level of 685,739.

2/ Approved by Mission Council and CINCPAC

3/ Concurred by Mission Council and CINCPAC. This FY 69 add-on incorporates the previous FY 70 proposed increase.

APPENDIX B

RECAPITULATION OF COMUSMACV-PROPOSED INCREASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Regular Forces</th>
<th>Current Strength</th>
<th>FY 69 Basic Increase</th>
<th>FY 69 Add-on 1/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese Army (ARVN)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry/Artillery Units</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53d Regt Hq</td>
<td>221</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d Bn/53d Regt</td>
<td>639</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d Bn/53d Regt</td>
<td>639</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Bn/53d Regt</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>662</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Bn/15th Regt</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>639</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bn Hq &amp; Hq Svc Co 4/43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th Div</td>
<td>168</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bn Hq &amp; Hq Svc Co 2/52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th Div</td>
<td>168</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regt Recon Co</td>
<td>(1) 1,012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arty Bn (105mm How)</td>
<td>(5) 2,375</td>
<td>(8) 3,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arty Bn (155mm How)</td>
<td>(5) 2,160</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arty Hq, Inf Divs*</td>
<td>(11) 230</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7,612</td>
<td>9,101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Airborne Units |                  |                      |                |
| Div Recon Co (Abn) |                  |                      |                |
| Engr Co (Abn)* |                  | 170                  |                |
| Med Bn (Abn)* |                  | 45                   |                |
| MP Det (Abn)* |                  | 309                  |                |
| Spt Co (Abn)* |                  | 20                   |                |
| Hq, Hq Svc Btry, Div |            | 50                   |                |
| Arty (Abn) |                  | 200                  |                |
| Arty Bn Hq (Abn)* |              | 47                   |                |
| Arty Bn (Abn)(105mm How) | (1) 475 | (1) 475 |                |
|                   | 922             | 1,269                |                |

| Logistic Units |                  |                      |                |
| ASP Det |                  | 90                   |                |
| ORD DS Co |              | 192                  |                |
| ORD Ammo Depot* |              | 132                  | 25             |
| Office Chief Ord* |              |                      | 24             |
| CM Base Depots* |              | 41                   | 171            |
| Med Boat Co |              | (2) 362              | (2) 362        |
| Heavy Boat Co |              | (1) 143              |                |
| Lt Trk Co |              | (4) 608              | (3) 456        |
| Tml Svc Bn Hq |              | (4) 156              |                |
| Tml Svc Co |              | 175                  |                |
| Tml Svc Co* |              | 300                  | 239            |
| Floating Craft Repair Tm |      | (1) 8                |                |
| Hwy Regulating Tm |              | (10) 80              |                |
| Zone Trans Office* |            |                      | 50             |
| Med Units* |              | 1,016                | 327            |
| Med Depots* |              | 220                  | 50             |
| Field Hosp Type A |          | 200                  |                |
|                   | 3,492           | 1,935                |                |

*Space Increase
1/ This FY 69 add-on incorporates the previous FY 70 proposed increase.
2/ Figures in parentheses indicate numbers of units.
### Log Units (Cont'd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Description</th>
<th>Current Strength</th>
<th>FY 69 Basic Increase</th>
<th>FY 69 Add-on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hq, Hq &amp; Svc Co DS En</td>
<td>(5) 750</td>
<td>(5) 750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOD Tms</td>
<td>(5) 40</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Chief QM*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QM Gps</td>
<td>(5) 175</td>
<td>40*</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med Trk Co</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch Trans Off</td>
<td>(3) 36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engr Br (Const)</td>
<td>(2) 1,214</td>
<td>(2) 1,214</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dredge Co</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(1) 120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Drilling Tm</td>
<td>(4) 28</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALC*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissary/FX*</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Mgt Scol*</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40th Engr Spt Basc</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighting Det*</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engr Op Hq</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engr Dump Trk Co</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,049</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other ARVN Units**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Description</th>
<th>FY 69 Basic Increase</th>
<th>FY 69 Add-on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armd Cav Sqdn</td>
<td>(2) 1,356</td>
<td>(2) 1,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spec Forces &quot;A&quot; Det</td>
<td>(9) 126</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP Bn</td>
<td>(2) 812</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP POW Camp Co</td>
<td>(4) 640</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>924th Intel Gp*</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spec Forces*</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Tech Directorate*</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinary Camps</td>
<td>(1) 123</td>
<td>(2) 246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signal*</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreters*</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG Office*</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mil Courts*</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAFC Tng Ctr*</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal Units*</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radar Units*</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mil Prisons</td>
<td>(3) 135</td>
<td>(1) 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scout Dog Plts</td>
<td>(2) 50</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records Ctr</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy for Opns JGS</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-3/JGS*</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL War Dept*</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ARVN</strong></td>
<td>6,138</td>
<td>2,447</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TOTAL ARVN Pipeline

17,700

### TOTAL ARVN

38,513

### TOTAL ARVN FY 69

51,779

---

**Appendix B**
### Vietnamese Navy (VNN)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Current Strength</th>
<th>FY 69</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Groups (decrease)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrol Craft, Escort (PCE)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrol Craft, Fast (PCF)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrol Craft, Gun/Missile (PGM)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landing Craft, Med (LCMM)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landing Ship, Tank (LST)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Assault Gun Boat Replacements</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNN Element, S.T.D.*</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence LNO*</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Riverine Area Staff Support*</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Light Const Tm*</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saigon Base Maintenance/Port Control*</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply Depots*</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleet Cnd, Admin Support*</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvage Capability</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naval Tng Center</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNN Basic Increase</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNN Pipeline Increase</td>
<td>1,757</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL VNN Increase</td>
<td>2,312</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL VNN Increase FY69</td>
<td>1,903</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>FY 69</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reorganize Div &amp; Regt Hq*</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arty Bn Roundout (+1 -105 How Btry)</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNMC Basic Increase</td>
<td>629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNMC Pipeine Increase</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL VNMC Increase</td>
<td>1,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL VNMC Increase FY69</td>
<td>1,579</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Current Strength</th>
<th>FY 69</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helicopter Sqdns (inc Maint)</td>
<td>(4) 928 (4) 928</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TACC/DASC*</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM/Elect*</td>
<td>110 (125)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC&amp;W Sqdns*</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maint*</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNAP Basic Increase</td>
<td>2,497</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNAP Pipeline Increase</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL VNAP Increase</td>
<td>3,247</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL VNAP Increase FY69</td>
<td>5,124</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Irregular Forces

#### Regional Force (RF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>FY 69</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RF Co's</td>
<td>17,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDG Conversions (16/PY68)</td>
<td>(30) 3,690 (28) 3,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD Territorial Security</td>
<td>(96) 11,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railroad Security</td>
<td>(13) 1,599 (10) 1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF Bn</td>
<td>(1) 560 (1) 560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Patrol Co's (6/PY68)</td>
<td>(6) 414 (4) 276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsector Med Disps</td>
<td>(66) 990 (83) 1,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOE Implt* (Sect/Subsec RF/PP Gp Hq AIDSG)</td>
<td>5,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command-Control* (Due inc RF/PP)</td>
<td>1,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF Basic Increase</td>
<td>26,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL RF Increase</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL RF Increase FY69</td>
<td>28,061</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Popular Forces (PP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>FY 69</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PP Plts</td>
<td>(325)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP Basic Increase</td>
<td>11,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP Pipeline Increase</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PP Increase</td>
<td>19,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PP Increase FY69</td>
<td>19,375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B