

# and the William Galley Holding Company

"Sheeple  
leads"  
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The way the Post Office delivers mail, it's hard to imagine the organization as a model for much, but don't be too sure. The Department of Defense seems to be following along the same bureaucratic path. In 1968, the Post Office was retired as a government agency and resurrected as a corporation in the name of "efficiency." The word is still big at the Post Office and seems to be the factor attracting the Department of Defense to the Post Office's technique. Whatever the reason, there's no doubt that Defense is moving in that direction. In the last month, two Department arrangements came to light that show the military getting a little private enterprise into the works. The first signs of the trend appeared on February 9 when Defense released news that the Vinnell Corporation of Alhambra, California, had been contracted to "furnish services and material outside of the U.S."

The phrasing didn't sound like much, but when the press secretary's language was peeled back, the deal behind the announcement was a little more complex and a lot more original than "furnishing services and material" made it seem. For \$77-million, Vinnell had hired on with King Faisal of Saudi

Arabia. The American corporation's task was to recruit 1,000 American veterans into a force that would train four mechanized units of the Saudi Arabian national guard. The contract between Vinnell and Faisal was arranged through the good offices of the Department of Defense.

The Vinnell contract marked the first time that Defense has permitted civilians to train the ground troops of any foreign power. No one knows if Defense drew a broker's percentage, but if they did, it was undoubtedly healthy. Faisal pays well. Vinnell's salary scale begins at a bottom line of \$1,400 a month for men with Special Forces experience. The company's office on Westminister Avenue is still swamped with applications.

A business called Bird Air surfaced in Vinnell's footsteps. They had been working for ten years when word of their operation got out. Bird Air, it seems, is under contract to the United States Air Force to fly the Air Force's own C-130 transports to Cambodia and back, hauling ammunition and military freight. "We just furnish the bodies," company president Arthur De Ronde admitted. "They (the Air Force) tell Bird Air when and where to go."

Most of the crewmen hired are names picked from the USAF retired list. An experienced pilot draws \$2,225 a month, and occasional bursts of anti-aircraft fire on the glide paths approaching Phnom Penh's airport. Bird's latest recruiting drive began when the Khmer

around the Congressional ban on U.S. military involvement" in Southeast Asia. As such, Bird and Vinnell's brand of capitalism is expanding the Department of Defense's efficiency beyond Robert McNamara's wildest schemes. By making war a corporate maneuver, they have

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Rouge rebels cut off barge traffic on the Mekong River and the Pentagon upped its order to 20 flights a day.

The efficiency of these operations may not be readily apparent, but Bird Air's owner, William H. Bird, offered a hint. The purpose of the contract, Bird told reporters, was "to get

move by hiring Bell Helicopter's team of 1,500 Vietnam chopper pilots to sharpen the skills of his helicopter fleet.

If the present contracts work out and the example of the Post Office becomes the ethic of the Seventies, Defense may be just the stimulus Wall Street has been looking for. The defense industry is tomorrow's answer to WPA, foreign policy, and the withering of General Motors. For the men who trudged with the First Marines in Con Thien and flew into the Vietnamese Highlands, Defense's drift may be the light at the end of the tunnel. The American investment in Vietnam is finally bearing fruit as a burgeoning industry in the recycling and export of veterans. The grunt is on his way to becoming the latest national resource, available in massive deposits around unemployment offices from Orlando, Florida to Oleana, California.

A smart long-range investor should jump on the Defense wagon before new markets open in Rhodesia, South Africa, Thailand, Ethiopia, Argentina, and Peru, driving stock prices up. Napalm Incorporated; Search and Destroy Unlimited; and the William Galley Holding Company all look like big earners in our future.