

Komer Report to Johnson After February Trip to Vietnam

Excerpts from memorandum to President Johnson from Robert W. Komer his special assistant, Feb. 28, 1967, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study. Paragraphs in italics are the study's paraphrase or explanation.

After almost a year full-time in Vietnam, and six trips there, I felt able to learn a good deal more from my 11 days in-country, 13-23 February. I return more optimistic than ever before. The cumulative change since my first visit last April is dramatic, if not yet visibly demonstrable in all respects. Indeed, I'll reaffirm even more vigorously my prognosis of last November which would be achieved in 1967 on almost every front in Vietnam.

He firmly believed that in time we would just overwhelm the VC in SVN: Wastefully, expensively, but nonetheless indisputably, we are winning the

war in the South. Few of our programs — civil or military — are very efficient, but we are grinding the enemy down by sheer weight and mass. And the cumulative impact of all we have set in motion is beginning to tell. Pacification still lags the most, yet even it is moving forward.

Finally, and contrary to all military reports, he saw some let-up in the pressures for additional resources:

Indeed my broad feeling, with due allowance for over-simplification, is that our side now has in presently programmed levels all the men, money and other resources needed to achieve success. . . .