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ON PACIFICATION: COMMENTS BY THAI AND ELLSBERG

Working Notes on Vietnam No. 6

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PREFACE

In the past two years I have spent many hours discussing Vietnam with Vu Van Thai. There is no one whom I have found more stimulating, and only a handful of individuals, mostly Vietnamese, whom I have found at all comparably experienced, perceptive and persuasive.

Going over my notepads of the last two years, I found that I had taken extensive notes on our many conversations, some at the time and others immediately afterward, mostly in outline form but generally preserving Thai's own wording and formulation. Each conversation touched on many subjects, and none, of course, was as structured as an interview; they were, indeed, dialogues, of which only one half has been transcribed. I have now sorted out and collected my notes on these conversations by general subject and sub-heading, fleshed them out slightly where I am confident of my memory, and indicated, in brackets, the question to which Thai's comments were addressed. (In many cases, he was actually responding to a comment by me, not transcribed, rather than to a direct question). I have also included, in brackets, a few comments by me, some of them from our conversation and others added when I wrote the notes. For the benefit particularly of those at RAND working on "Lessons of Vietnam" and related subjects, I am issuing these notes now in three documents:

D-19127-ARPA/AGILE - "Vu Van Thai On U.S. Aims and Intervention in Vietnam"

D-19128-ARPA/AGILE - "U.S. Support of Diem: Comments by Vu Van Thai"

D-19136-ARPA/AGILE - "Vu Van Thai On Pacification"

Readers who find these relevant to their work should also be interested in similar D's based on conversations with Hoang Van Chi (D-19134-ARPA/AGILE, "Communists and Vietnamese" and D-19135-ARPA/AGILE, "Confucians and Communists"), and in other D's by me that reflect, in particular, my talks with Thai and Chi (e.g., D-19863-ARPA/AGILE, "U.S. Aims and Leverage in Vietnam, 1950-65" and D-19129-ARPA/AGILE, "U.S. Policy and the Politics of Others." They should also see Thai's RM-5997-ARPA,

"Fighting and Negotiating in Vietnam: A Strategy."

It is my hope that Thai himself, when he returns to this country from economic consultation work in Africa for the UN, will be moved by my Boswellian labor to use these notes as starting points for more elaborated pieces of his own on these subjects. (Until he has a chance to see them, they should not be shown outside RAND.)

For those readers unfamiliar with Thai's background: from 1950-54, Thai was a non-communist member of the Central Committee of France of the Lien Viet (earlier, and still more commonly known as the Viet Minh). After the Geneva negotiations of 1954 (which he attended), he joined the Diem government in Saigon and became Director of Budget and Foreign Aid until he submitted his resignation in October 1960 (not accepted till late in 1961, when he joined the United Nations). He has been a part-time consultant to the RAND Corporation since 1967, and is principally occupied at present as consultant to the Administrator of the UN Development Program.

ON PACIFICATION: COMMENTS BY THAI AND ELLSBERG

THE BASES OF COMMITMENT

Peasants in South Vietnam cannot be regarded as "politically un-awakened," given long indoctrination by both sides. Political energy blew up in the cities, rather than the countryside, in 1963, '64 and '66, not because of a peasant-city difference but because of the greater density of population in cities: thus, there was an ability to arrive quickly and spontaneously at sufficient numbers to confront GVN force. [One might say: the rural masses do not easily form a "critical mass," but the urban dwellers, under pressure, do.]

If people in "relatively secure" areas were really committed against the communists, they would act like Catholics and Hoa Hao (or like communists) against the GVN: though we prefer to attribute communist success to coercion). [I.e., they would inform their local leaders of any intrusion, give organized resistance to unwarranted demands, and fight to protect their homes and their leaders.] We have never achieved that. As in the strategic hamlets: when troops leave, cooperation stops.

The essence of achieving the desired cooperation is to give -- by ideology, religion, organization, respected leadership -- a sense of dignity, of being one in a community, part of an extended family, not an isolated atom. Nhu missed the point of developing the strategic hamlet as a community, providing channels for people freely to get together, to achieve their own aspirations.

You don't have to "pacify" better than the Hoa Hao or Catholics. But you must aim to do about that well; if you don't have that, you are not going to beat a strong communist challenge. The behavior of Hoa Hao and Catholics in response to their local leadership has never been very sensitive to the "long-run prospects of winning -- "bandwagon" considerations -- or even to local security (as provided by others)!

About twenty-five percent of the total population in South Vietnam accept communist appeals, without coercion:

1. Human dignity (antagonized by GVN/U.S.);

2. Revolt for social justice;
3. Efficiency;
4. Nationalism: pride in self-reliance; shaping own society;
5. Local reasons: relations, tradition....

The Viet Minh had a broader appeal; even the attentistes had a mild sympathy. This 25% forms a relatively "hard-core" of Viet Cong support, including mild or inactive sympathizers, all those who "feel an appeal," on balance, though their behavior in support of the Viet Cong may also reflect calculation and VC coercion.

[What has held the number of communist sympathizers down? What is their potential, in open competition?] "The effectiveness of the communists is bought at the price of harsh drive, ruthlessness, disrespect for tradition and religion, damage to Vietnamese values in human relationships. Moreover, privileges go to cadre, based on Party loyalty. The population's allergy to communism has some resemblance to their allergy to the GVN. The communist approach is effective with some who don't resent it; but has a limited appeal to those who do resent it."

The GVN could aim to match or surpass the above appeals "on all grounds but efficiency." But in fact the GVN has a corresponding "hard-core anti-communism" sympathetic support from only about 20% of the population (corresponding to the VC's 25%). Most of these 20% feel the GVN is distinctly the lesser of the two evils, and they feel a strong motivation to be against the communists. ("If they were positively pro-GVN, that would be progress.") They have something to lose under the communists; or religious reasons; or resentment against communists for wrongs to their family.

The remaining "55%" feel more negatively than positively toward both sides. All these are, of course, rough estimates; e.g., the GVN proportion could be larger than the Viet Cong. "But one feels strongly that the third part -- those who regard the two sides as equal evils, or one as being slightly less bad than the other -- outnumbers both the "pro-communist" and "anti-communist" together; it probably at least

comes close to doing so."

Simple "inertia" of peasants can't be disproven: it remains a hypothesis, corresponding to the hypothesis that the greatest desire of the mass of peasants is "to be left alone." "But it is not by pacification that you 'leave them alone'; you are replacing local organizations with ARVN. The GVN should strive to reestablish community, where necessary. But actually 'winning hearts' contradicts 'leaving them alone.' The communists do not leave the villagers alone. But communist methods are doomed to be used badly by a non-communist GVN." [This seems a major weakness in the pacification approaches of ex-Viet Minh officers like Chau or Be.]

The cliché, "The peasant just wants to be left alone" is fundamentally misleading. The peasants see need for a social structure; they are not anarchistic. The Confucian approach emphasizes "harmony" of government and people, not "minimum" government. More than "freedom," the peasants want dignity. They want non-interference in the realm of their dignity, self-respect.

Their "desire to be left alone" -- by communists, or Diem, or GVN's after Diem -- is a rejection of the current alternatives, not of all social orderings. Thai supposes that many -- a growing number -- could be aroused to a considerable fanaticism and participation by a government opposing both communists and those associated with past anti-communist regimes.

Meanwhile, what appears as passivity is a symptom of an aversion to both contending factions. It reflects personal rules: Protect oneself, minimize one's personal risks; don't look on either faction as a consistent source of positive benefits; minimize contact with either side; help both sides when necessary (to hold personal risks down); perhaps even, "help successively each to destroy the other." Another difference of the "double allergy" from indifference or passivity: it can blow up (as in the Buddhist crises), either against one side primarily or the other, or against both. As a mood, it is less stable than "indifference" [though at the same time, behaviorally, it is less prone to give rise to the "bandwagon"].

The communists, in competition with the Hoa Hao, etc., for cadres, got those who were looking for a political philosophy. With a different philosophy, the GVN could have got many of those -- and of those to whom unions, Buddhists, as well as the sects, appealed -- thus limiting the communist cadres to those who specifically believed in communism. This probably would have meant arriving (like Sukarno) at a philosophy of "Strength through Diversity."

The communists have a faith. "If the country were wholly a Catholic country... or a whole Hoa Hao country... that would be an effective counter to communism. But, if your society has both Catholic and Hoa Hao, and others, then you must find a substitute for a single mystical faith as a basis for commitment, which does require a kind of faith and dedication."

[Governments in LDC's can get "commitment," i.e., high-risk taking support: see North Vietnam, or communist areas in South Vietnam (or Hoa Hao, Catholic areas). Contrary to Wolf-Leites, this is not an unattainable goal for an Asian regime: at least, for a communist one! And without at least moderate popular support, and some willing commitment, the price of achieving "control" is high in face of even a small risk. It can be made too high for the Government or its external support to sustain.

[The Wolf belief that growth in "control" -- including some risk-taking -- can be built adequately without "loyalty" reflects in part his belief that the GVN had this in 1963 -- or could have had it, or had much more control, with appropriate methods -- despite the unpopularity of Diem Government. Thus, this experience is seen as a "proof" that an Authority doesn't need to be popular; just as Viet Cong growth in 1960 and 1964-68 proves that a Regal doesn't need to be popular.

[However, the Wolf view that Diem could have prevailed after 1963 if not overthrown is, in Thai's opinion, just wrong. A political approach is not needed everywhere, against any Rebellion: but against the Viet Cong in South Vietnam, yes. (And even optimal political policy could not have totally suppressed Viet Cong after 1959.)]

In Thai's view, popular commitment is necessary and is attainable: but not by a mechanical sequence of activities, or by most of the programs usually associated with "pacification," whether providing pigpens or even (by itself) "providing security."

"The U.S. has an axiom: Every man is born an anti-communist: just reduce the risks for him, and he will actively oppose communism."

[In other words, we too, like the Viet Cong, have faith in peasant drives toward a "general uprising:" to be released if only we reduce the presence of our adversary.

[Indeed, our past RD/Pacification schemes would suddenly make sense -- in terms both of concept and of actual implementation -- if the population were wholly Catholic or Hoa Hao. Then, the local defenders would just need reinforcement with Government reserves and firepower, and some aid, to tie them to the GVN. Given some military help, there would be no need for them to "accommodate" unwillingly to the Viet Cong, as some Hoa Hao or even some isolated Catholic villages may now sometimes have to do; i.e., the whole population would then be strongly anti-communist and would act like it unless under immediate threat by the communists.

But lacking this prior, initial condition, our programs have generally been fatuously inadequate or inappropriate to achieve their aim, which might usefully have been described: to get peasants who are not Hoa Hao or Catholic to act (toward the VC) as if they were.]

Various Americans see the peasant as (a) inert, apathetic, neutral; yet (b) as rallying quickly and firmly to a "probable winner," i.e., volatile, sensitive to this expectation. Or else (c) as basically anti-communist or (d) (U.S. doves) as pro-communist; or (e) (AID) as "easily bought" -- by welfare, "self-help" -- to the GVN side.

Yet, contrary to (b) and at times to (c,d,e) they did not commit themselves to the GVN in 1962 (when the tide ran against the communists) or to the Viet Cong in late 1964, or to GVN in 1966, or to the Viet Cong after Tet: while (contrary to (a)) Viet Cong hamlets, and Hoa Hao and Catholic hamlets were committed throughout.

In Thai's view, all the above views are misleading. It is true that the majority is allergic to the communists, unsympathetic, "doesn't want communist rule," dislikes them... But this does not equate to "anti-communism" in any committed, active, risk-taking sense, except for a minority: Catholic, Hoa Hao, some RVNAF, etc.

Moreover, the majority dislikes the GVN as much as the Viet Cong (even the latter anti-communist minority simply dislike the Viet Cong more). Yet for most, neither of these feelings is very strong; thus, even if the GVN came to seem "good," the Viet Cong would not look very "evil" by contrast (and vice-versa).

These attitudes do differ from passive neutrality, in a way as unfavorable to the communists as to the GVN. They mean that peasants do not flock to commitment to the Viet Cong even when the Viet Cong are on an upswing, "probable winners". Nor is this because peasants simply avoid commitment under all circumstances: note the commitment of the Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, FULRO, Catholics, Viet Cong -- and urban Buddhists, in their Struggle Movements -- as counterexamples. Also, see popular behavior in Kien Hoa under Colonel Thao and Colonel Chau; or in Binh Dinh, under Major Be.

Rather, the effect of a "double allergy" to both the VC and the GVN is to lessen the chance of a "conversion" to commitment to either of these two parties as they appear now but leave open the possibility of commitment to a third party [thus, the urban militant Buddhist movement from 1963 on] or to one of these parties if it should appear transformed in the future. And it might even lead to some "anti-bandwagon effects": an inclination to defend the underdog when its disliked opponent appears ready to gain total power (something like this, Thai speculates, may have favored the VC in 1959, and the GVN in Tet, 1968).

"The problem of South Vietnam has been that of a people squeezed between two competing authoritarian regimes: not a two-sided civil war."

SOME GENERAL COMMENTS ON MOTIVATION

In general terms, Wolf and Leites, in their emphasis on coercion and calculation of self-interest, do not take into account the relation of positive and negative motivations. The intensity of motivation is greater if both negative and positive motives are present than if only one or the other.

"Love" of Rebellion is likely to be strong only when it grows out of hate for the other side, or fear of its victory. Protest against the established order is the strongest, general motive.

Patriotism burns hot only when the country is threatened or invaded. [One can conjecture: "High risk-taking requires that a threat be 'salient,' immediate, preoccupying."]

And further: "It is hard to induce many people to take a significant risk of death by purely self-interested incentives (giving information, for example, may involve "not a small risk"). Thai's guess is that it requires some negative motivation as well: resentment, hatred, fear of opponent's victory.

If a Rebellion is progressing, positive sympathy for the Authority is not enough to induce people to take risks; resentment against the Rebellion is needed. An important factor is: Is the Authority or the Rebellion, progressing? How are things moving? How fast? How big are the sides? Even if the Authority is winning, and has reduced the Rebellion to its hard core: still, to have a cumulative process to wipe out the Rebellion, you need a positive attitude to Authority, because Rebellion is now an underdog, which reduces negative feelings towards it. (Perhaps this was one factor operating in Algeria in 1961. And see Vann memo of April, 1969 on the Delta.) In Malaya and the Philippines positive factors for the Authority increased over time; in South Vietnam, 1955-61, the contrary. Though Viet Cong attractions were also "reduced" there was not enough positive feeling for the Authority.

As Rebellion expands, it loses in ease of positive motivation; it becomes symmetric to the Authority. It relies more and more on negative feelings to the Authority, to make its own coercion acceptable. So the

Authority must concentrate on avoiding these negative feelings; [i.e., the Authority must avoid falling victim to "judo."]

On either side, the more intense motivation arises from humiliation or resentment: fanaticism is bred more by resentment than by a positive mystique; (e.g., right now [late 1968] the communists might be creating some intense anti-communists by their new tactics after Tet, 1968).

The main motivation to cooperate with Viet Cong is not based on direct appeal of communists but (communist exploitation of) GVN reaction to Viet Cong provocation or potential threat: e.g., to the mere existence of communist membership. [What I have called "revolutionary judo"; see discussion in a forthcoming D.]

People revolt against an existing situation. Even against the French, the original impetus came from resentment against discrimination, unjust treatment. (But one must have a positive mystique as well, to exploit resentment: the VNQDD failed here).

The true issue is: Can a regime improve itself under conditions of insurgency? [As in the Philippines.] If not, time favors a communist insurgency.

We should try to use judo on communists, as they do on us, i.e., force them to sharpen their contradictions" [i.e., stimulate internal conflict that will lead to a desirable result for us: not from affecting "premises" in the calculated decision of a given decision-maker, but by affecting a conflict process, rather than a "decision process".] One way to do this is by increasing rural productivity in ways that tie town to country: forcing the communists to alienate peasants by attempting to interfere with profitable links.

ADMINISTRATION AND ITS POLITICAL CONTEXT

To say "good administration is enough" [as British critics, like Thompson and Duncanson, and also Wolf-Leites, tend to do] is about right, at least for an early stage of an insurgency. But to get good administration, you must change the process of the emergence of leadership, and of restraints upon, and motivation of, administrators. Communists have

their own methods -- non-democratic, in a Western sense, but effective -- of achieving these ends. Nhu tried to imitate communists mechanically, but either: (a) could not; or (b) missed the essence (i.e., the features shared by the communists with the Hoa Hao, Catholics). "You can't fight communists with a bad copy of communism." A better alternative is a process of political crystallization.

Wolf-Leites prescribe an administrative performance by A (the Authority) that in turn supposes a political context. For example, Wolf-Leites assume that decisions made by A on combatting rebellion are not distorted by other considerations and interests: their approach rests on "impartiality" of the decision process. Such impartiality, or its absence, affects such programs as:

- (a) agrarian reform;
- (b) promotion in the Army, and in administration;
- (c) administrative reform, competence.

Since professionals are in short supply, solidarity of the intellectual class with Government is an important issue. Does the administrator find that he is, and is regarded as, alien, to the popular mass? [See the problem of policemen, or welfare officials, in U.S. ghettos.] This affects his "style" and effectiveness.

This is not, as people think, merely a problem of "professionalism". What are the political preconditions for professionalism? In a LDC, there will always be better opportunities outside the government (less true for a colonial regime: French, Dutch, Belgian); thus you need motivation to get good professionals into administration. One goes into administration in Vietnam either for patriotic reasons, or for corruption, security or prestige (which encourages a mandarin, arrogant attitude).

To determine the demands to be made on administration in an insurgency, one must ask:

- (1) What amount of control is needed, by R and A?
- (2) What rate of growth in control is needed (for a bandwagon movement)?

- (3) What are the requirements for:
- (a) willing popular support, sympathy;
 - (b) coercion;
 - (c) bribes, promises;

in getting the required control, and growth?

- (4) In particular, how many people do you have to "control" initially, in order to be able to coerce others? (If you have control of 30% of a target population with which to coerce others, you don't need much "sympathy." If only 5% are controlled already, coercion alone will not reach very far))

Some coercion may be an essential ingredient: but that doesn't mean all people take all acts of support out of fear, or hope of benefit, or among ad hoc calculation. Note the role of discipline in an army, and in general, the role of "authority/legitimacy" and its relation to coercion.

(October, 1967) "All pacification schemes will be mechanical, only buying compliance with benefits and coercion, so long as the GVN lacks any credibility or respectability: which are unattainable for those mercenaries who, for money or career benefits, sold themselves at the start to the French and have never, since, taken any opportunity to sacrifice, to suffer, to pass up personal advantage, or risk their lives, for their country." Thus, specifically, recent leadership, in contrast to some others who fought with the French, such as Minh, Thi (or more junior officers who had spent years in the jungle, like Chau, Be). A respectable government is needed to release energies, generate loyalty, dedication, honesty, attract talent and respected local leadership.

Moreover, there is need for a platform (and a program) with consistency, coherence: on which patriots can form and agree. The greatest failure of the 1967 election was that it produced no platform (except that of Dr. Dan).

At present, "The only thing that makes the GVN acceptable is its inefficiency; if, with its motives, it was as efficient as the communists, it would be hell." Some reasons for failure of the pacification concept:

- Too mechanical.
- A "control" concept: not leading to self-sustaining effort, self-defense, or meeting requirements for true "commitment" (even moderate commitment).
- Too fast; wrong time frame of planning (1-3 years). "One should plan for twenty years, in expectation of Viet Cong breakdown or concessions long before that, if the plan proceeds successfully."
- (Some) good U.S. and British analyses of the problem, but all underestimated the complexity and difficulty of solution, and particularly its political aspects (they lacked insights from Vietnamese).
- The pre-Tet GVN pacification strategy had accomplished nothing, since by changing strategy to the Tet pattern, the VC could negate all past "achievements". Simply by pulling ARVN back to cities, "pacification" crumbles, because RF/PF cadres are inadequate and vulnerable without ARVN, in the absence of popular cooperation; [i.e., the VC didn't rise markedly in strength; they may not be strong enough to challenge RF/PF if the latter had popular support. Yet by diverting ARVN, they could have taken the countryside (even if they failed in their goal of a city uprising, and hence, also failed in the goal of destroying ARVN.)]

[These Thai comments were made in the spring of 1968; at which time both of us expected the VC to gain and consolidate much wider control in the countryside. Their apparent failure to have done so, as of Spring 1969, raises questions: see comments below.]

On Implications of the Tet Offensive, 1968 [as of fall, 1968; see comments below written in March, '69.]

1. Viet Cong overestimate of general uprising (to be followed by ARVN defection -- which required a city uprising) shows VC dogmatism and wishfulness, with respect to the cities, like ours with respect to the rural areas.
2. The Tet offensive exposed GVN vulnerabilities, hollowness: e.g., the people's failure to inform on VC in cities, or on the route of withdrawal from cities; VC ability, by a change in strategy, to uncover the countryside from GVN "protection"; lack of self-defense by villages; ARVN withdrawal from countryside compelling RF/PF cadre withdrawal. Tet offensive didn't show new strength in Viet Cong, but exposed vulnerabilities in GVN side. The GVN had little credibility to lose in the countryside -- so there was not so much impact in the countryside because our prior impact (and control) had not been significant. The ease with which Viet Cong moved through hamlets without a shot being fired shows thinness of our "control"; we had little to lose.
3. A major lesson of Tet offensive: the refusal of the population to cooperate with either side. This cannot be explained as mere passivity by nature; in the November '60 coup, the '63 coup, '64 demonstrations, '66 struggle, the urban public took to the street despite dangers, and showed clearly that it sided against the regime. [These were not only "blue" areas, but cities. A failure in the cities -- where security is most reliable -- to side with the Government energetically vs. the VC cannot be interpreted in the same way as the "neutrality" of peasants.]

This behavior in Tet was active: the rejection of both sides. It confirmed Thai's rough guess, that about 20% of the population are active supporters of Viet Cong, about 20% active (less dedicated, competent, or organized) supporters of GVN (including the anti-communists: the only basis of

strong loyalty to GVN). The rest are increasingly resentful of both "gangs."

"This means: no hope for the country in either side; it may mean stalemate; the destruction of the country."

4. The U.S. exhibition, post-Tet, of stubbornness, of refusal to draw lessons, to be honest, reappraise: these are the major bases of pessimism [whether or not the Tet offensive was as bad for us as Thai thought in the spring of 1968. However, the change from Westmoreland to Abrams may have brought a form of "learning" with it.]

5. There is a possibility of a "colonels' coup" (as in Egypt), if battalions should have to fight for survival in cities. This would probably lead to a military dictatorship, though one still susceptible to U.S. influence.

6. We should now press for a military-civilian alliance. Tri Quang is the only Vietnamese with organization, potential for mass following (unless the unions). (Our bargaining position with Tri Quang has improved.) We must confront communists, in negotiations, with strong, organized non-communist elements.

7. If we enter negotiations without a plan to use the period of negotiations (including pressures raised by the negotiators themselves) to strengthen the GVN, then negotiations can only be about U.S. withdrawal, communist victory. We must be ready to react appropriately to Vietnamese developments, including turbulence caused by the negotiations.

8. Communist successes, and U.S. destructiveness, in Tet/May did not increase communist adherents in the cities (despite resentment vs. U.S. firepower, ARVN).

9. Thai draws from the Tet and May, 1968 events that lower-level anti-communists would fight rather than see a total communist victory come "peacefully." "Hence, U.S. quick unilateral withdrawal now would be the end of U.S. as a moral

power; for it would lead to liquidation of one million Vietnamese: although as Hoang Van Chi says, North Vietnam would be inclined to restraint. Some Cao Dai, some Catholics, some refugees, some ARVN officers, some Hoa Hao would go on fighting, and under such circumstances, force North Vietnam to exterminate them.

Reconsidering the attack in March, 1969, we noted that a year earlier Thai (and I):

1. Did not believe Viet Cong losses were so large as they were (or, as they were claimed to be by MACV).
2. Expected the communists to consolidate in the countryside. [Instead, they staked all on general uprising? Or on subsequent attack? Or on taking countryside later? Or (Thai) were peasants simply too resistant to VC appeals: the "double allergy"? Or (Vann) were their guerrillas and local forces too weakened by losses?]
3. Didn't expect the May offensive to fail so badly: poorly executed, big losses.
4. Expected greater demoralization and resentment at U.S. destruction of cities. Thai says: "It's a mystery to me -- one of the hardest things for me to explain -- why there is so little anti-Americanism in Vietnam" after this destruction in the cities.
5. Felt it confirmed what we already strongly suspected: the strength of a double allergy among population to the two sides.
6. Thai: Didn't see at first the significance of "collapsing the time dimension": the pressure for results through negotiations, if not from general uprising and ARVN collapse, the communists incurred by calling for a "general uprising."

[Nevertheless, it probably remains true that a pacification strategy based almost entirely on military/police measures "providing security" is very fragile. It is unstable with respect to a shift in VC strategy causing GVN forces to leave for a few days or more, especially

if VC move in to exploit this (which they didn't do, on large scale, after Tet.) It doesn't induce self-defense, or help, to GVN except when the risks are very low, i.e., given the immediate presence of ARVN and absence of many Viet Cong. If risks rise a little, population cooperation ceases. Contrast the Viet Cong pacification strategy, which cannot promise security; yet which induces high participation and risk-taking as provided by Catholics, Hoa Hao, even in situations of moderate-to-high risk.]