ANNEX K

to

APPENDIX B

COMMENTS BY THESE INTERVIEWEES

ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

(In Chronological Order)

Name	Association with MACSOG	Tab
Col William R. Becker, USAF	Chief, MACSOG Air Operations Jan 1964 - Dec 1964	A
LTC David H. Arno, USAF	Staff Officer, Air Operations, MACSOG Jan 1964 to Mar 1964 (assigned to Hq PACAF and TDY with MACSOG)	B
Col Edward A. Partain, USA	Chief, MACSOG Air Operations Section Jul 1964 - Jun 1965	C
Col John J. Windsor, Jr., USMC	Chief, MACSOG Operations Jun 1965 - Jun 1966	D
Col Donald D. Blackburn, USA	Chief, MACSOG June 1965 - May 1966	E
Col John T. Moore, Jr., USAF	Deputy Chief, Operations Branch, MACSOG Jun 1965 - Jun 1966 Chief, Special Plans Office Directorate of Plans, Headquarters, USAF Jun 1966 - to date: Jul 1969	F
LTC Vincent W. Lang, USA	Chief, Plans and Senior Advisor, Long Thanh Dec 1965 - Nov 1966	G
Colonel John K. Singlaub, USA	Chief, MACSOG May 1966 - Aug 1968	H
Capt Bruce B. Dunning, USN	Special Operations Division, OSACSA, Staff Officer & Division Chief Aug 1966 - Nov 1969	I
Col Benton M. Austin, USA	Chief, Operations-35 (SHINING BRASS) Chief, MACSOG Operations Sep 1966 - Sep 1967	J

Name	Association with MACSOG	Tab
Col Robert C. Kendrick, USA	Chief, Special Operations Branch, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations (J-3) Headquarters PACOM Dec 1966 - to date: Jul 1969	K
Col Eugene A. Wahl, USAF	Chief, MACSOG Air Operations Section Dec 1966 - May 1967 Deputy Operations Officer Jun 1967 - Dec 1967	L
Col George A. Maloney, USA	Chief, Operations Branch Special Operations Division, OSACSA Jun 1967 - Apr 1969	M
Col Harold K. Aaron, USA	Commander, 1st SFG Jun 1967 - May 1968 Commander, 5th SFG Jun 1968 - May 1969	N
Col Robert L. Gleason, USAF	Deputy Chief, MACSOG March 1968 - March 1969	O
Col Herbert O. Graeser, USA	Staff Officer Special Operations Branch, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations (J-3), Headquarters PACOM (Jan 1969 - to date: Jul 1969)	P
LTC James R. McCarthy, USAF	Commander, 1st Flight Detachment - under MACSOG operational control (May 1968 - May 1969)	Q
Col Stephen E. Cavanaugh,	Chief, MACSOG (Aug 1968 - to date: Jul 1969)	R

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL WILLIAM R. BECKER, USAF

. . . I think it is a simple matter acknowledging that you do wish to conduct covert operations. Having once acknowledged that you want to conduct them and so to commit part of your national resources for this purpose, and that the military should have such a capability, I think it is then necessary simply to follow through on what the acknowledgment implies. Obviously we need experienced people and equipment designed specifically to carry out the mission, . . . and an organization to conduct these covert operations. . . . We have organized to carry out other missions in the past and the conduct of covert operations need not be any more difficult than some of our other missions.*

. . . The SOG organization started out rather loosely and grew rapidly in a lot of different directions, none of which had been originally predicted, I believe, when the SOG operation initially started. It did go into many directions that the original organization was not particularly adapted to and it had to be constantly changed, added to and amended. This sounds as if the whole thing was rather disorganized from the standpoint of having an existing organization to start out with. I would suggest that it was rather the contrary and let me contrast this now with the organization the last time I saw a proposal for the JUWTF. The JUWTF at that time was proposed to be an organization with a set JTD that

* (TS) Interview of Colonel William R. Becker, P. 21

would come into existence whenever a SOG-type operation was needed in a particular area or theater. It consisted of a set JTD of so many people from the Air Force, the Army, and the Navy. It included operations sections, divided up into what was visualized to plan and conduct air, naval and land-type operations. . . . Any . . . future SOG operation is going to have to be tailored exclusively to the theater and the operating conditions under which it comes into being. I just cannot visualize any two SOG operations ever being the same. I could not at the time I was there or subsequent to that see that SOG was the same in concept or organization even within any one three or four-month period. The emphasis on types of missions and operations was subject to being shifted.

The organization itself has simply to be flexible and adaptable to the changing situations. It has to be adaptable to the point where people with a background and experience in the general area can put together enough of an organization to get the operations started. Then it must be responsive to the overall needs of the theater and of the political situation at the time. These needs include taking on new missions and operating under new concepts, entirely different than those of the previous six months. . . . What I am suggesting is most of the things that the SOG engaged in are common military skills with the exception of the clandestine cover that is pulled over the top of SOG. If you take away that cover, for example, most of the skills . . . and . . . knowledge . . . required to conduct an operation are, generally speaking, common military skills: the air dropping of troops, resupply, small air raids, small boat operations -- all these things are common military skills so that the SOG operation then

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needs to be able to put together common military skills and pull them under the [redacted DATA] [redacted DATA]

The organization then that is basically needed to start out with is one that can successfully organize [redacted DATA] [redacted DATA] to call upon various and sundry existing military skills compatible with the mission and concept of operation and to be responsive to the changing needs of the theater. The idea of starting out with a set organization and then saying that this is the way SOGs will be operated in the future is ignoring the fact that no two SOGs will ever be the same and any one SOG that is in existence is probably never the same thing that it was six months ago.**

* Ibid., pp. 22-23.
** Ibid., p. 23.

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COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

LT. COLONEL DAVID H. ARNO, USAF

. . . it had been CINCPACAF's recommendation, beginning with the first review group of the 34A plan and continuing formally a number of times in the next two years, that, in lieu of the type of organization that SOG had, a JUWTF be established with appropriate representation from the various interested components.*

. . . . . .

Prior to conducting covert operations there should be a clear understanding at the national level as to what the operations are to accomplish so that the individual operations themselves can be tailored to this end and the necessary authority and resources given to the operating agency. I feel that a covert operation should be conducted by a clearly defined joint task force or command. It is only in this way that the Services can provide the necessary personnel and resources to the operation . . . .**

. . . . . .

. . . Although the JUWTF has not, to my knowledge, been tried in large-scale operations as yet, from the theoretical point of view I think this would be the desirable method of organizing for unconventional warfare both in Southeast Asia and in Europe. It is only by forming such an organization that you can obtain readily the necessary support from the various Services that is required. The SOG would certainly

*(TS) Interview of Lt Colonel David H. Arno, USAF, p.1.
** Ibid., pp. 7-8

[redacted]

[redacted]

have operated more efficiently had it been so organized. The clearly designated components of a JUWTF and their channels back to the Services are the only way that maximum support can be [redacted] MT DATA [redacted] Although a truly for a uniformed Service to do, it can be done provided there is clear understanding of the mission, what its covert operations necessitate, and the special funding arrangements, and personnel arrangements that have to be made if the operation is to be covert. . . .*

* Ibid., p. 9.

[redacted]

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL EDWARD A. PARTAIN, USA

. . . I arrived in SOG in July 1964 and it had been in operation some six-seven months. There was definitely then the effect of still growing, still organizing and on the basis of what I was told by people who had been involved at the outset, there was a great . . . pressure to become operational like yesterday. Accordingly, people, uniformed types, were pulled out of various MACV agencies, and I know at least in one case, directly from the field, and were thrown together, some of them without any significant experience in the entire subject area, and told to get to work. . . whether or not the armed forces should be involved in such operations . . . I do not know. But if we are directed to, then definitely there should be an organization approved and personnel designated who would set up and complete their plans before attempting to start operating. One example that comes to mind, of course, is the JUSTF.

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* (IS) Interview by Colonel Edward A. Partain, USA., p. 1.

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL JOHN J. WINDSOR, USMC

. . . . . .

I recommend that an organization like SOG be task organized exactly as it was. This task organization has the capability to operate in areas other than Vietnam. In other words, have task elements that can be added like building blocks to your task force in order to suit the needs of the types of operations which you are going to conduct. Of course, in order to operate this building block principle, the Services must maintain a training base and trained personnel within each of the areas which could be called upon to build the joint task force in a manner which might be needed in any particular theater of war. If the Services give more attention to training, when the need arises, the personnel can be mustered in a task force form to accomplish the mission.*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel John J. Windsor, p. 13.

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COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL DONALD D. BLACKBURN

. . . . . .

. . . organization and operations in accord with the JUWTF concept were not accepted at the various higher echelons. I had to use the basic organization as it existed although I felt that the appreciation of a true JUWTF operational concept would have enabled us to produce better results, particularly, if an effort had been made to select better qualified officers for the staff.

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* (TS) Interview of Colonel Donald D. Blackburn, USA, p. 3.

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COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL JOHN T. MOORE, USAF

. . . . . .

The JUWTF organization, as presently constituted, recognizes just what I have been talking about, I think, and that is direct access to the top decision maker. The way we are constituted now, as in the case of SOTFE in Europe, for example, the JUWTF comes directly under the theater commander. I think this is appropriate. We are faced with a problem in the JUWTF organization, however, in that during peacetime the force is not organized as such and, therefore, we have difficulty operating on a day-to-day basis. This is one of the problems facing MACSOG, which has never been designated as a JUWTF. There was opposition to this, apparently both in MACV and CINCPAC, perhaps even in the Joint Staff. Exactly what the opposition is or the reason for it, I have never been able to determine. I have always felt that MACSOG should have been organized and operated as a JUWTF even if it was called by some other name. This has been a particular sore point with the Air Force insofar as the way the air forces have been utilized. What I mean is that the MACSOG Staff is fine, i.e., the headquarters; whether it is called SOG or whether it is called a JUWTF is immaterial to me. What I am talking about are the forces that are assigned to MACSOG for MACSOG to operate with. There never has been a clear-cut organization of these forces and the relationship between the Services and those forces. It has been kind of a patch-up job the way they were organized.*

* (TS) Interview by Colonel John T. Moore, USAF, pp. 20-21.

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I think that the organization, as it stands right now, is poor. The lines of support are not clearly defined between the Services and the forces supporting MACSOG. However, in a JUWTF, you have your component forces and your component commanders of those forces who are responsive directly to the JUWTF commander as any joint task force is. The way MACSOG is set up there are no real forces, there are no components. It is just not set up as a JUWTF. I think that it should be. On the air side, there should be a unit, it could be a composite squadron because of the small numbers of aircraft involved, or it could be two or three squadrons organized under a group. That group should be commanded by an Air Force commander and he should have aircraft and crews assigned to him. These should be assigned from the theater forces and committed to the JUWTF commander in much the same way as in our contingency plans in which we organize a JUWTF for theater operations. If this were so, we wouldn't have the problem, that we had for a long period of time, of MACSOG directly fragging the air assets. The way we have it right now, these assets are not completely dedicated to MACSOG because they are flying other missions. For example, the Air Force helicopters are not completely dedicated to MACSOG.

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If this were done properly, we would have had those assets set aside and assigned to the JUWTF and they would be utilized solely for that purpose.*

At such time as the requirements change, then the sizes of the forces should be changed. The way it is now, MACSOG

* Ibid., pp. 20-21.

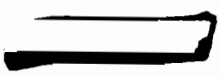
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is directly fragging, as I understand it, the air assets to facilitate the operation with an information copy to 7th Air Force. In effect, 7th Air Force is exercising veto power -- silence means assent and if they object to the operations they, of course, say so. We have a similar arrangement in Europe but different in that to task the special operations squadron providing the air assets for the JUWTF, the theater commander frags the Air Force involved (in this case, 17th Air Force) and the Air Force Headquarters is given an information copy of the order and the understanding is that the 17th Air Force goes ahead and executes the order without question unless the Air Force Headquarters intervenes. This is a cumbersome arrangement, in my opinion. I don't know why we can't go ahead and set up a task force and allocate to it from the theater assets those forces that are required to conduct the operation and let the JUWTF commander run it.*

With respect to the qualifications of the personnel to be assigned to the JUWTF and even to the forces supporting the unconventional warfare operations, I think that these people have to be specially trained. I think it is practically a career field of its own. The types of operations encompassed within the term unconventional warfare are of such a specialized nature that you just don't automatically acquire the right people from your conventional forces. I know this is true in the Air Force and I strongly suspect it is true in the Army and Navy as well. All the Services have recognized this and have taken steps to organize and train people especially for this type of operation. Whether you call them special forces or special operations personnel, etc., they are still people specially trained for this type of an operation. I think we need this. These are the sort of people that should be allocated to and assigned to the forces conducting unconventional warfare.**

* Ibid., pp. 21-22.
** Ibid., p. 22.



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COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

LT. COLONEL VINCENT W. LANG, USA

. . . . . .

Shortly after we started work on the SEAsia plans, General Blackburn directed that I and my staff come up with the organization of a JUWTF for Southeast Asia. The principal staff officer working for me on this was a LCdr Case. He completed the entire staff study. We staffed it through MACSOG and got all of our approvals on it and the same day that Colonel Blackburn left Saigon at the end of his tour, he signed off on it. It was then processed through all of the J staff with everyone concurring with the exception of J-1 who had some questions concerning some of the specific enlisted MOSs listed in the JUWTF organization. There were no major problems. We concurred with J-1's recommendations, modified the staff paper and I gave it back to Colonel Singlaub who at that time decided that the time was not right to staff a JUWTF through MACV and it was filed and, as far as I know, forgotten.*

. . . . The JUWTF, as we had recommended, had a top rank of a one star general, so that in itself would have given us far more power in competition with the other J Staff members in MACV. A JUWTF organization provides for your multi-Service participation. You would have an ARCOM commander, a NAVCOM, and AIR; you'd get better participation and support I'm sure from your various Services. It provides a command

* (TS) Interview of Lt. Colonel Vincent W. Lang, USA, p. 4.

[redacted]

Tab C to
Annex K to
Appendix B

[redacted] far more suited for control and supervision of the various Services and also the control of operations which SOG was tasked with. I can't really think of any disadvantages. I think one of the major advantages would be that if you had an approved JUWTF with everyone chopping on it, it would require the proper horsepower in all slots,

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* Ibid., p. 5.

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COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL JOHN K. SINGLAUB, USA

. . . . . .

. . . I am not completely sold that the JUWTF organization, as taught in our Service schools, is the most efficient way of performing the missions of UW. The part that I object to is the effort to retain Service components within the JUWTF concept. It is my feeling that unconventional warfare should be conducted as a national effort and should lose the identities of the Services doing it. I believe that all US operations are, by their nature, joint and I recognize that this joint organization requires people with particular skills that could only be produced as a result of duty in one of the Service components. However, I see no real advantage to retaining component identity and organization within the JUWTF concept. It is my view that this should be a task force that is tailored in each case for the particular area of operations. It should include those Services needed to provide the skills to be used but it should not have a Service component which is supported by one of the military departments and represents the concepts and doctrines of a particular Service.*

. . . . A joint task force is really what we have in the present SOG. It is a task force that is commanded by an officer and has members of the military departments, plus DATA USIA. This, from my point of view, makes it a joint

* (TS) Interview of Colonel John K. Singlaub, USA, p. 45.

task force. Parenthetically, I might add that General Johnson, the former Chief of Staff of the Army, made that quite clear in his initial briefing to me for my assumption of command in SOG. In this connection, when one talks to a JUWTF in SEAsia, the useful implication is that a joint task force would take over the running of all of the UW operations in SEAsia, i.e., those now being conducted in and from SVN and Laos, and those being conducted from Thailand. I believe that the whole war in SEAsia could be conducted more efficiently from a military standpoint if there were a theater commander

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I fully recognize that there are political considerations which militate against this.

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If a theater of operations were to be established in which a single commander exercised the total control over all of the Service forces participating in the war against the enemy, then I think it would be appropriate to try out the JUWTF. If I were given that mission I would like to make modifications in the organization but I feel that the establishment of a JUWTF of the type listed in our manuals and in some of the war plans should be tied to the establishment of a theater of operations rather than trying to do it under the present unusual command relations existing in Vietnam operations.** 29

* Ibid., pp. 45-46.
** Ibid., p. 46.

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

CAPTAIN BRUCE B. DUNNING, USN

. . . . . .

. . . I am opposed to the JUWTF organization insofar as it is applied to a program like FOOTBOY, which developed into essentially an integrated subversion program employing a good many UW techniques. The reason for my opposition is that I see it as an extension of the conventional military organizational concepts and of Service parochialism. These extend down to the lowest operating level by the inclusion of component commanders. It is the inclusion of component commanders which makes the JUWTF concept so understandable to most military people and so desirable from the individual Service standpoints. They want to have their man in the headquarters and to have their direct channel into the UW headquarters. Where you are working or trying to achieve a fully integrated program, you should be organized functionally. Your resources should be assigned to fulfill the required functions regardless of the Service. The organization must be completely integrated or, if it is compartmented, it should be compartmented along functional lines and not Service lines. It just seems to me that, in carrying out the JUWTF concept, you are going to have the Navy people in there saying, "well, we run maritime operations and we are the maritime experts and this is the way we are going to do it." You have your ground people saying, "we're the ground people and this is where we're going and this is the way we're going to do it" You tend to set a Service-oriented fragmentation of your operations unless you have a particularly strong and sharp commander who can whack these people over the heads and pull them together.*

* (TS) Interview of Captain Bruce B. Dunning, USN, pp. 34-35.

This feeling is reinforced in my mind when I look particularly at some of the unconventional warfare annexes in a number of the contingency plans that are in existence now. These plans in many cases are, in my mind, very shallow and almost completely sterile. What you have in so many of these plans is either a JUWTF or a JSTF to be established when the contingency starts. The Navy is tasked to provide naval UW assets, the Air Force is tasked to provide air UW assets, and the Army is tasked to provide ground UW assets.

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If you put together this type of an organization on a contingency basis, when the gun goes off, and you suddenly ship all of these units to a forward base, with each component having its links direct to its parent Service, it is going to take, in my mind, one hell of a long time before you get your planning and concepts integrated to the point where you are really conducting mutually supporting operations. I'm afraid that you are going to have each component going off and again conducting the type of direct action, physical harassment missions, which are peculiar to the Service element but which really don't contribute too much to the overall objectives. This ties right back again to planning. I think the other facet to this problem is that to do it right, we have to do a lot more substantive planning in advance and this has to be done in great detail jointly by the military and the DAA You must know what you are going to do, where you are going, what your objectives are, who the personalities of your units are going to be, your national organizations, etc., before the contingency ever starts and before you get on the

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scene. This is going to be hard to do where you are establishing a JUWTF or JSTF after the goo goes off.*

I think the JUWTF concept does have advantages, particularly in the more conventional unconventional operations. If you are using either US forces primarily or purely direct action-type forces (for instance, commando types) on raids, military reconnaissance, or more conventional UW operations, the JUWTF may offer advantages simply because it is an understandable organizational concept. It keeps the Services happy. It does offer some advantages insofar as logistic support involving conventional items is concerned. As you move across an unconventional warfare spectrum from this relatively conventional type of UW toward the sexier, more sophisticated types of UW [redacted] DATA [redacted] I simply don't think that the JUWTF concept is appropriate. I think you have to go to a fully integrated, functionally organized unit. I think it could be done a lot more smoothly and effectively than SOG but I think SOG sets the prototype.**

* Idid., p. 35.
** Idid., p. 36.

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COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL BENTON M. AUSTIN, USA

. . . . . .

. . . Knowing how the SOG organization got started, although that was over two years before I arrived in-country, I am sure that there are better ways to organize this effort than what was done. I'm not saying this in any intentionally critical or, at least, adversely critical way. I know that the organization was formed under the pressure of a war and, therefore, was based on expediency.

I feel that perhaps the distribution of Service representation within the organization was not balanced as well as it should be. I believe, too, that if some sort of an operational base were established so they could support all of the effort, they might have operated more efficiently within the existing resources. However, I don't think that we suffered from any lack of support. I think that the budget and logistical support was very generous.

Specifically, regarding the assignment of personnel to SHINING BRASS,* the intention of General Westmoreland had been to have one group of Special Forces personnel conducting the out-of-country and, therefore, more sensitive operations directly under his control through the Chief, SOG, and the remainder of the Special Forces operations in-country conducted by the field force or corps commanders through the 5th Special Forces Group. All Special Forces personnel assigned to the

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Benton M. Austin, USA, pp. 8-9.

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C&C Detachment, however, which was the organization that conducted the SHINING BRASS operation, were assigned to the 5th Special Forces Group. When the pace of operations stepped up, when political restraints began to be relaxed, additional personnel were not made available to SOG to C&C Detachment at the same rate and so we had personnel problems. In addition, the personnel assigned to C&C Detachments took a higher percentage of casualties than did the personnel assigned to the 5th Special Forces Group. As a result of this, a message was sent to Washington requesting people to be assigned to 5th Special Forces Group, but coded in such a way as to indicate that they were specifically for the C&C Detachments for operations controlled by MACSOG. These personnel arrived in-country but were diverted by the commander of the 5th Special Forces Group to his own detachment based on the argument that the same percentage of manning should exist throughout all of the 5th Group. Chief, SOG, took exception to this stating that his operations needed to be manned at 100 percent because it was a small organization in which a percentage loss was bigger bite than it would be out of the 5th Special Forces Group. What I'm saying is, this was a problem that would never have come up had we had an organization tailored to do the job to begin with.*

I think the JUWTF organization with its own Special Forces operational base and equivalent air and naval units assigned to this same operational base would have given us a chance to use personnel with common military occupation specialties or AFSCs or the similar term in the Navy. We could have used people from various Services as long as they had the requisite skills throughout across-the-board in SOG. . . .**

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* Ibid., p. 9.
** Ibid., p. 10.

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COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL ROBERT C. KENDRICK, USA

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On the organization of SOG, I saw nothing wrong with our current staff setup. I think that it would be simpler for Colonel Cavanaugh if he had assigned to him the people who conduct his programs. However, that might cause more administrative headaches. I have often wondered why MACSOG and the 5th Special Forces Group were not put under one central headquarters or one control agency. It would certainly give both of them one central chain of command or one boss. Now, the people who support MACSOG or run MACSOG's programs out in the field actually belong to the 5th Special Forces Group (SFG) whose boss is US Army, Vietnam, while SOG works directly for COMUSMACV. If you have two bosses -- Chief, MACSOG and the Commander, 5th SFG -- who don't get along together, the coordination is tedious and less than desirable. It just seems to me that it would simplify the operations and the support and coordination of both organizations if they were under one central head. I also think that had both SOG and the 5th SFG been under one central command and worked for the same boss that it could have saved people and streamlined and cut out similar logistical systems.*

SOG is organized in such a manner than it can accomplish its mission. . . . One thing about the current organization, Colonel Isler, who now commands the ground operations group

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Robert C. Kendrick, USA, p. 12.

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which runs the SALEM HOUSE and PRAIRIE FIRE Programs, should move out of Saigon and establish his headquarters closer to his operations, probably at Kontum (that is the central base). This would facilitate coordination among his three launch sites and his Command and Control Detachments (North, South and Central). It would save time on coordination and give better eyeball-to-eyeball contact with his subordinates. . . .* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

* Ibid.

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL EUGENE A. WAHL, USAF

. . . . . .

I definitely feel that there is a place in this overall military establishment for an organization such as SOG. It is my personal opinion that regardless of the world situation (whether we are in a situation in Korea or Vietnam) we should have this organization operating. When we stopped bombing up north, we should have operated stronger up north if we were, in fact, a true covert type of organization. This is when we should have really started pouring it on. . . . The need for intelligence is such that we know where we need this type of an organization and it should be expanded to actually perform the mission that was originally designed for it . . . .*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Eugene A. Wahl, USAF, pp. 7-8.

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL GEORGE A. MALONEY, USA

. . . . . .

. . . . Cross-border operations require a large, highly-trained, and very responsive organization to succeed. They require the dedicated use of a lot of assets and it does tend to wind up as a top-heavy organization. That is to say the cutting edges are not as they are with conventional forces. Your cutting edge on a cross-border operation is your two US and four indigenous small reconnaissance team and, in the case of PRAIRIE FIRE, your platoon-size reaction forces. This appears to be a very small DATA DATA that is necessary to make this thing DATA

It has been our experience that you should not try to maximize the efficiency of the equipment, such as helicopters, by having them perform dual roles of supporting simultaneously special operations and conventional operations. You tend to lose the classified nature of the mission. Your operation soon becomes well-known and is being bantered around in the papers. This defeats the whole purpose of a covert program -- it should be plausibly deniable by the United States. Further, your extraction helicopters must be immediately available.**

* (TS) Interview of Colonel George A. Maloney, USA, pp. 4-5.
** Ibid., p. 5.

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL HAROLD K. AARON, USA

. . . . . .

. . . I was made aware of the proposal by General Palmer to create two Special Forces groups: one for operations in-country, and another group for operations out-of-country in the cross-border operations. These two groups would be responsible largely for tactical organizations and advice, and they would be controlled by a brigadier general who would have a staff and would be responsible for budgetary, fiscal, and logistical support, and the overall guidance and direction of the two groups. As I look back on it now, I think that this organization had tremendous possibilities and I do not know exactly why it was discarded or rejected. If I were to set up this organization tomorrow, I would tend more towards the Palmer approach to the organization than what we have now. I do feel that Chief, SOG had so many operations of such varied scope that his span of control far exceeded his capabilities. I felt that had he confined himself to the operations in North Vietnam and the maritime operations, this would have been more than sufficient for the staff he had and for his capabilities.*

Some people have also proposed the establishment of a JUWTF. I think that this has also a tremendous potential in which one individual heads the JUWTF. You would have the subordinate Navy element, for example, which would be responsible for the maritime operations, and you could possibly have one SF

* (TS) Interview by Colonel Harold K. Aaron, USA, pp. 7-8.

group which would be responsible for the UW operations in North Vietnam, another group for the cross-border operations, and another for the CIDG program. I think this would have been handled by the JUWTF Staff and perhaps to a certain extent by the staffs of the groups. We have played with this JUWTF concept off and on. We have got hot and cold about it. However, we have very little doctrine that has been formally prepared in the Services on it. I do feel that the JUWTF is a good concept. I have seen it work in exercises and it has worked quite well. It certainly does bear some consideration.*

* Ibid., p. 8.

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL ROBERT L. GLEASON, USAF

. . . . In October 1968, Col Cavanaugh, the new chief who replaced Col Singlaub, reviewed the organization. He believed there were certain changes that would improve the effectiveness and the operation of MACSOG. His basic thoughts were to establish or continue the trend toward operational groups, backed up by equivalent staff sections in MACSOG Headquarters. The major change evolved around OP-35, the cross-border operations group. Previously, OP-35 had acted as both a staff agency and a command agency under Chief, SOG. They not only ran the command and control detachments in the field but they were also the only agency that did staff work in cross-border operations for Headquarters, MACSOG. The main operations were PRAIRIE FIRE and DANIEL BOONE. Under the new organization we established a Ground Studies Group (Ground Operations Group). This continued to serve the same operational function as the old OP-35 shop, running all the operations for Chief, SOG, through CCN, CCS and later CCC (Command and Control Central). However, the OP-30 agency which had always existed but had never addressed itself to the staff supervision of cross-border operations, was reorganized into the Operations and Training Studies Section (still OP-30) and expanded its activities to include this staff function. Now we had a clear delineation of responsibility. The Operations and Training Studies shop did the staff work for cross-border operations and the Ground Studies Group actually carried out and executed the missions through their command and Control detachments.*

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Robert L. Gleason, USAF, p. 1.

[redacted]

Another significant change was the elevation of the Comptroller Division to a major staff section. This was done to provide much tighter financial administration than previously. Much of the financial management had a direct impact in the logistics area. Therefore, leaving the Comptroller under the logistical officer would compromise his position in trying to tighten up that aspect of financial management. The Recovery Studies Group (the old JPRC) stayed as the major staff section. [redacted] DATA here but not in mission or organization. The reason the name was changed was to establish a direct link between the JPRC and MACSOG. To do otherwise would imply that MACSOG was an operational agency. This would attach a secret classification to any document so reflecting this relationship. Additionally, we took the JPRC off our non-classified organizational chart. We divorced it from MACSOG in phone directories and merely called it the MACV JPRC.*

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[redacted]

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Established separately as a Radio Studies Group was the DATA organization. This agency received its policy guidance from USIA and JUSPAO [redacted].**

* Ibid., pp. 1-2.
** Ibid., p. 2.

[redacted]

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Under the new concept, the training group would do all the training for the command, both for the cross-border people as well as the field type training for agent type training. A key training program recently established in the training group is the team leaders course for newly assigned US team leaders. Finally, there was established what we referred to as a Status and Analysis Section. This was placed under the Operations and Training Directorate staff agency. This is no more than an abbreviated version of a command post containing all the status boards which showed the status of boats, aircraft, teams, etc. This section also did analyses of sorts for special projects as designated by Chief, SOG, also, most significantly, the weekly SOG briefing given to COMUSMACV.*

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I think SOG could operate as a JUWTF. I also think it's effectively operated the way it is now. Right now we get some of our air support, helicopters primarily, through MACV tasking of the field forces. I presume under JUWTF they would somehow be brought together and assigned to SOG on a more steady basis. They can vary quite a bit now depending on what operation the field forces have going versus what SOG needs, etc. I would certainly not recommend a radical change at this stage of the game. I think we've gone through the

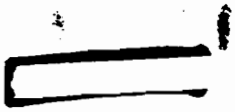
* Told.

war this way. It's certainly not the most understandable organization but neither is it the most understandable mission. There are some other differences between the SOG operations and what one might expect under JUWTF, e.g., our relationship with the Vietnamese. In all the programs, with the exception of the cross-border operations, we are basically the advisor. The Vietnamese run the programs or presumably so. I think to a great extent they do contribute significantly. OP-35 is still a US led, US commanded operation. So you have this dichotomy of funtion of SOG: advisory on one hand, operational on the other; quasi operational in the case of the AirOps Group; completely operational in the case of OP-35; advisor and support in the MARCPS program, i.e., we advise them on the operational tactics and maintain and support boats for them. So you have several distinct differences between what SOG is doing and what one would normally expect a JUWTF to do. In my opinion, good men could reorganize themselves 15 ways to get the job done; I think SOG could too. Had it been set up initially as a JUWTF, there may have been some advantages to it; also there may have been some problems we did not envision.*

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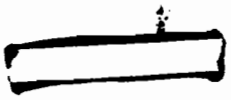
. . . I think it is vital that in an operation like MACSOG, we should have our own helicopter resources. These can be either dedicated as the 20th Helicopter Squadron (USAF) and the 219th VNAF Squadron are today or actually assigned to SOG as are the C-123 aircraft and crews. The problem we ran into was that the vast majority of helicopter support given SOG came from the US Army or USMC. This was assigned on a random basis and not only detracted from the security of the operation by exposing an unnecessary number of aircrews

* Ibid., pp. 5-6.



to our operations but also complicated the tactical harmony between the aircrews and the flight crews. During a helicopter seminar held by SOG in January 1969, and attended by helicopter pilots from all Services, this was a unanimous recommendation.*

* Ibid., p. 13.



COMMENTS ON MACSOG & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL HERBERT O. GRAESER, USA

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With regard to the structure of this type of organization, as far as I was able to determine, it sort of grew in the area like topsy. Perhaps there was no way of foreseeing what type of organization was eventually going to come of this. However, to have a staff element of MACV controlling an operation with US personnel furnished by the Services to the staff element's operational control appears to me to be a less than perfect way of doing this.

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The net result is a bastardized JUWTF set-up with the commander operating directly for COMUSMACV, but without any component commanders under JUWTF control. Theoretically, of course, this is possible and has been done in the past and is being done right now. Almost anything can be made to work. However, there are built-in problems that have caused some friction in these programs. When a unit such as the 5th SFG, which has a separate mission of its own, is directed to furnish personnel on a permanent basis to an element of MACV which does not control the 5th SPF (which is under USARV), the question of the caliber of the individual who is furnished, the question of timely replacement, and the question of augmentation on a short notice of additional personnel have caused some problems. Not that this cannot be worked out by two rational individuals. Of course, it can and has been, but it does not appear necessary to build

in this kind of a problem if the control of the resources and the operation can be placed under a single decision point rather than under a multiple one that now exists.*

The arrangement as it now exists between SOG MACV and the 5th AFG also raises some problems on the reverse side of this question: Chief, SOG, as an operator, could very easily (and has in some cases) considered himself a commander working directly for COMUSMACV and, as such, is somewhat of a privileged character. This is not helped, of course, by the fact that the personnel that do most of the running of this operation are Special Forces or unconventional warfare qualified which, in their minds, puts them automatically in a special category. This type of arrangement sometimes leads MACSOG to ignore the normal coordinations which should occur with field forces or other elements in the dissemination of their intelligence. . . .**

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Herbert O. Graeser, USA, pp. 5-6.
** Ibid., p. 6.

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

LT. COLONEL JAMES R. McCARTHY, USAF

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. . . . One of the problems we found in Vietnam was that the lessons we should have learned from Korea, we had to learn all over again. What we need to do is form an outfit, maybe a JCMTF, and each Service provide a package as required, then go operate. Organize then operate instead of vice versa.*

* (TS) Interview of Lt. Colonel James R. McCarthy, USAF, p. 7.

COMMENTS ON MACSOG'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL STEPHEN E. CAVANAUGH, USA

The organization of MACSOG, both in staff and command elements, was the first area that I felt needed some modification. I found that the organization was designed to insure maximum security and to guarantee that personnel in one operation area were not cognizant of and aware of operations in another area. This is both geographically speaking and functionally speaking. While this provided for good security, it had been applied to such an extent that there was no overall staff that functioned for Chief, SOG with cognizance over all operations. I found, therefore, that if I was interested in OP-35 and the cross-border operations into Laos and Cambodia that I did not have a J-3 or an operations type on the staff that was fully cognizant with all of the cross-border type operations which OP-35 was running. OP-35 (Ground Studies) had its own operational type staff or G-3 that ran his operations and OP-35 reported directly to Chief, SOG. This became a problem since there were cross-border agent operations being run by OP-34 (previously Airborne Studies), maritime operations, certain air operations, etc., and none of them falling under the overall responsibility of one operations-type section, such as J-3. OP-30, as it existed at that time, was both a staff and an operations unit and was focused into maritime, agent and air operations but did not have the total broad responsibility for all operations and training. Similarly, the Intelligence Division was simply a channel through which intelligence from the field was passed to MACV J-2. It did not have an overall staff responsibility for evaluating and analyzing intelligence from the various operational units in

the field, whether it be maritime or cross-border operations. As a result, there was no cohesive intelligence analysis being accomplished to provide MACV J-2 with any sort of comprehensive picture of what was occurring in any of the areas in which SOG operations were being conducted. Personnel and administration was handled similarly in that the personnel people were interested purely in the personnel assigned to MACV SOG by the JTD and they felt no real obligation towards monitoring the personnel situation that existed in the field in the operational units. OP-35, which was the PRAIRIE FIRE/SALEM HOUSE operation, used personnel in the field from 5th Group and the MACV SOG personnel officer had little concern about the status of these personnel. They remained focused upon the JTD personnel only. OP-35, operating semi-independently, dealt with the 5th Group for filling the various positions within the command and control detachments in the field. The result was that the command and control detachments drew only on personnel coming in from USARV assigned to 5th Group and SOG seldom used the MACV personnel pipeline to select people for key field assignments; this remained a 5th Group responsibility. The only staff section which functioned across the board was the Logistics Division.*

The subsequent reorganization which took place in December 1968 was designed to provide a complete joint and special staff and reorganized the various staff and operating elements such as OP-35 and 34, 31, and 32 into actual field commands. Prior to December, these were independent staff agencies under Chief, SOG who translated Chief, SOG's directives into action documents which were then transmitted to the operational units in the field which were directly under Chief, SOG. For example, each command and control

* (TS) Interview of Colonel Stephen E. Cavanaugh, USA, pp. 1-2.

[redacted]

detachment was considered to be a command reporting to Chief, SOG. He rated the commanders of the command and control detachments, for example, and OP-35 functioned as a staff section for Chief, SOG for cross-border operations, but did not function as a command element. In December, when a SOG staff was organized, the operational staffs which existed in MACSOG such as OP-35, PSYOPS, etc., were changed into headquarters for subordinate commands and their heads became operational commanders. There were some exceptions; OP-31 which was the staff element of MACSOG that dealt with the maritime operation located at Danang became a staff element of the new Operations and Training Division (J-3) and the maritime command in the field, the Naval Advisory Detachment, became the direct command under Chief, SOG. This similar reorganization resulted in seven field commands, a number of which were located in Saigon and the creation of a complete staff section with the Operations and Training staff section of MACSOG absorbing some of the operational sections that had previously functioned independently of one another. The compartmentization that existed previously provided a greater degree of security but I felt lacked responsiveness and could have led to a lack of coordination. Above all, it did not produce for COMUSMACV the type of coordinated intelligence effort which I felt was essential. When dealing with a large number of varied and complex operations, and with a budget as large as it is, I think it is essential to have some type of central staff organization capable of overseeing and supervising the total effort.*

* Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Concerning the subject of broad organization in South Vietnam for conduct of cross-border covert and clandestine type operations, my personal view is that an organization such as SOG is essential, the organization must be joint in that there are Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine type functions which must be pulled together. The consideration that the mission be assigned to the 5th Group, I think would be erroneous in that 5th Group under the current term of reference has an exceptionally broad responsibility for an in-country counterinsurgency type of effort, that this effort is a major one, exceptionally important, and it would be difficult to add on to the current 5th Group mission the broad responsibilities currently assigned to SOG for running covert and clandestine operations. I think, in reality, that the 5th Group should be divorced completely from SOG and that SOG should have been provided some years ago with its own organic reconnaissance capability. The current troops used by MACSOG, the indigenous type, are not CIDG; they are employed and recruited by SOG, not 5th Group; they are under a different pay scale and different employment scheme and do not relate to the CIDG soldier. Therefore, the reason for using 5th Group personnel is DATA, in that by using 5th Group personnel and calling the current indigenous soldier DATA DATA for the activity. Yet, on the other hand, the problem areas previously discussed, administrative control, etc., occur and it appears to me that an organic special forces unit should have been organized and assigned to SOG under Chief, SOG's complete command and control.*

* Ibid., p. 3.

[redacted]

Tab R to
Annex K to
Appendix B

[redacted]

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. . . I personally feel the 5th Group did an outstanding job in providing support; I do feel, however, that a basic error was made in establishing MACSOG without its own organic reconnaissance-type unit to perform this operation. My personal views are that there should have been a Special Forces unit organized and provided to MACSOG for this type of operation not only from a security point of view but for control and administration. The problem that Chief, SOG faced was that he was dependent upon another command, that had a big job to do also, to get qualified people to run the SOG operation. When these people were assigned, he had operational control of them but did not maintain their records, SOG was not the final approving authority for decorations, and was not in a position to administer to the individual personally insofar as his finances and personal requirements were concerned, and this to a large extent denied the Chief, SOG one of the principal tools of command.*

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. . . in an operation such as the type MACSOG is currently involved in, it is essential that helicopter assets, both troop carrier and gun ships, be organically assigned and dedicated to the mission. Seventy percent of the assets currently used by SOG are fragged by MACV from helicopter units of the general support type or are organic to US divisions. These aircraft and their crews are generally rotated by their parent units into the SOG mission approximately every two or three weeks. Therefore, the Command and Control

* Ibid., pp. 6-7.

Detachment personnel in the field are habitually training new pilots and their crews in the techniques, DATA DATA ment which apply in the various operational areas. The lack of dedicated aircraft has resulted in numerous aircraft accidents and losses of team members and has, on one occasion, precipitated an incident which reached international proportions due to the lack of familiarity with the operational area and lack of training of the crews.*

Of equal importance is the fact that the security of the cross-border program is being constantly and consistently endangered by having a large number of personnel involved in the operation on an ever-changing basis, which is a further reason that an organization of this type should have dedicated assets both in aircraft and personnel or else have these assets organically a part of the organization. DATA DATA DATA Both have done an outstanding job in operations but the total aircraft available has been far below that needed to support the entire SOG program.**

. . . . . .

During my tenure as Chief, SOG I found that the working relationships with the 5th Group were close and effective, and I do not believe that I could have had any better support from any other unit except one that was directly assigned to SOG for complete control, administration, etc. Our relationship with MACV was good; the greatest difficulty I faced was that for cover purposes, SOG was a Studies and Observations Group which was a part of the MACV Staff. Even though the majority of the

* Ibid., p. 13.
** Ibid., p. 14.

key MACV staff recognized that SOG was an operational unit, the tendency was to regard MACV as a staff agency and very often the problems inherent to command were overlooked. I found that much effort was being devoted to staff-type work in compliance with staff requirements and that operational supervision and control were sometimes hindered. This was resolved generally by a personal contact with the MACV personnel involved. I found that when this dual relationship of being a staff agency and a true command was explained that there was a ready understanding and willingness to assist in overcoming any difficulties, but with the large personnel turnover that occurred in MACV, this type of explanation was one which was required continually. I hasten again to add, however, that the difficulties were overcome once the explanation had been given. This type of problem is probably inherent to an organization of this kind, attempting to establish itself with a cover in a large staff organization such as MACV.*

* Ibid., p. 7.