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Military 1 (normass/dcepe)

Saigon, May 12--Some of the bitterest bureaucratic in-fighting America has seen in the history of any of its war has been ~~hampered~~ reduced here when General William C. Westmoreland ~~was~~ was named yesterday to assume responsibility from U. S. ~~civilians~~ civilians on the crucial Vietnamese government pacification program.

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Informed sources ^{report} ~~show~~ the decision to streamline the American advisory effort by shifting responsibility from civilian to military hands is the delayed reaction to a heated confrontation here last fall between Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and former Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge.

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During his last visit to Vietnam in October, McNamara argued for and insisted upon a more efficient, unified unified chain of command with the American military rather than civilians ~~and~~ calling the shots. He also argued for the concept of a greater offensive role for American combat units to ~~be~~ be deployed against the Communist main force units.

Lodge, however, argued as intensely for an integrated, coordinated approach in which ~~military-civilian military~~ American civilians were ~~coo~~ co-equals with the American field commanders. He also wanted to shift the military concept whereby ~~American~~ a maximum--but not all-- of the American combat units would be securing the populated Vietnamese villages, rather than conducting large-scale offensive operations in the jungles. Lodge then wanted a concentration of American-Vi~~etnam~~ Vietnamese civilians to ~~and~~ rebuild quickly the wartorn Vietnamese villages and restore them to political normalcy.

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Reliable sources report that the discussions between Lodge and McNamara ~~became~~ became heated. At one time, according to these ~~sources~~ sources, Lodge refused to answer three telephone calls from McNamara. McNamara left Saigon earlier than scheduled, cancelled an airport news conference and "in general he left in a huff." ~~McNamara~~
~~McNamara~~

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At least on the American management of the war, the McNamara viewpoint prevailed over the Lodge, who subsequently resigned his post as Ambassador.

~~In general terms,~~
On the surface, the new Westmoreland responsibility is regarded here as ~~as~~ the ~~most~~ militarization of the American side of the war. ~~But~~ reliable sources regard this as ~~simply a first-glance~~ superficial appraisal. Westmoreland's deputy for pacification is dynamic, ~~cocky~~ cocky Robert Komer, special assistant to President Lyndon Johnson who has worked on the pacification program at the Washington level for months. ~~He~~ While looked upon with ill-regard by the military establishment, he appears to bring to the program the new sense of urgency and direction that has been needed at the Saigon level by both American civilians and military—and an urgency long ~~advocated~~ advocated by Americans in the provinces. At the ~~policy~~ policy level between the American military ~~and~~ command and ~~the~~ the new Komer team, the in-fighting on the American side may only be entering a new round rather than abating.

However, ~~in~~ ^{new} administrative terms, the Westmoreland responsibility ~~streamlines~~ streamlines the American chain of command and bureaucracy, a move towards greater efficiency and unity which the American military command has long advocated—in fact, advocated as early as the spring of 1964.

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The American military leaders have long regarded the American civilian establishment here as operating without discipline, urgency and systematic ~~org~~ organization, which would presumably be corrected by the military take-over.

However, the civilian leaders, while conceding the short-run tactical advantages of the military take-over, have long and loudly pointed out the long-term, higher-level disadvantages, which ~~have~~ they ~~maximized~~ must now be accepted. ^{LIVED W. P.} ^{2d. ADVANTAGE} The first ~~arg~~ argument was that the American military take-over would be especially embarrassing at this time, when official American policy is to encourage the formation of a constitutional--possibly civilian--government on the Vietnamese government side. ^{DISADVANTAGE} The second ~~argument~~ was that the purpose of the Johnson Administration ~~was~~ since the Honolulu Conference ~~in~~ February, 1966, was to publicize the non-military "other war," and the civilian effort. ~~that~~

~~Indisputable fact that the military take-over would be a disaster for the South Vietnamese people.~~

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disadvantage ARGUED

The third and loudest ~~argument~~ ^{could} advanced by them, however, was that at some point there would be negotiations with the Communists, a ceasefire and at least a phased American military withdrawal. But, an American presence in South Vietnam ~~could~~ ^{could} be maintained by the civilian sector. Hence, they consistently argued that the ~~A~~ Vietnamese civilian side, ~~must~~ be braced up even though the nation was at war. For example, instead of concentrating solely on training and advising a Vietnamese army, ~~additional~~ resources--especially ~~of~~ ^{of} Vietnamese manpower--should still be delegated to the Vietnamese police, ~~who~~ ^{which} would be responsible for Security ^{PEACE TIME} ~~governing~~ during a ~~ceasefire~~.

One Western diplomat, ~~is~~ watching the frenzied shake-up on the American side, commented: "This militarization will go over like a lead balloon internationally, especially when President Johnson is trying to convince others he's genuinely serious about negotiations."

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