

# HISTORY OF MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY'S

## POLICE PROJECT IN VIET NAM

### CHAPTER I

#### A REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

In 1954, at the request of Ngo Dinh Diem, Prime Minister of Free Vietnam, Michigan State University, with the approval and financial support of the U.S. Foreign Operations Administration (later U.S. Overseas Mission (USOM), presently International Cooperation Administration (ICA)), sent a team of four specialists to Vietnam to survey the administration problems of the Vietnamese Government; to make recommendations as to actual needs; and to propose a comprehensive program which would solve some of the problems by means of U.S. technical assistance.

In October 1954, MSU's survey team, designated as the Special FOA Mission from Michigan State College (which became a university in 1955), arrived in Saigon, Vietnam. Composed of Dr. Edward W. Weidner, Chief of this Special FOA Mission and Head, Department of Political Science; Professor James H. Denison, Assistant to MSU's President Hannah; Dr. Charles C. Killingsworth, Head, Department of Economics; and Professor Arthur F. Brandstatter, Head, Department of Police Administration, these men, singly and jointly, discussed the problems of Vietnam with dozens of top level government people, both Vietnamese and American, including U.S. Ambassador Collins and Prime Minister Diem, in order to arrive at

their recommendations. The recommendations submitted to Prime Minister Diem and to FOA at Washington by this Special FOA Mission contained suggestions for technical assistance to be provided by the United States in the fields of public administration, governmental research, field administration, and police administration. The conclusions of the mission were as follows:

"1. An Institute of Public Service should be established by the Vietnamese Government at Saigon through which all American assistance in public administration and its closely related fields should be funnelled. The Dean of the Institute should be a Vietnamese; an American who would also serve as coordinator of American assistance in these areas should be designated to assist him. The National School of Administration at Dalat should be subsumed in the larger program of the Institute.

2. The immediate or emergency objective of the program is to make the Vietnam Government effective; the long-range objective is to make the Vietnamese Government and the Institute self-sufficient without assistance. Priority has therefore been given to that part of the program that will have an immediate impact on the effectiveness of the Vietnam Government. Nevertheless, provision has been made for a long-range program so that the Institute and the Government will have sufficient trained manpower and resources to carry on independently of American assistance after a few years.

3. Priorities in the field of general public administration reflect three urgent needs:

- (a) contributing to the stability of the government,
- (b) extending government authority and effectiveness to the rural areas, and
- (c) developing an elementary awareness of concepts of supervision and management.

Priority is therefore given to:

- (a) strengthening the Office of the President in all its aspects,

- (b) developing a viable system of local government, central field relations, and land registration, and
- (c) 'in-service' training for supervisors and secretaries.

All of these programs should be implemented by late fall or 1 January 1955.

4. Priorities in the area of public finance and economics are based on two major needs:

(a) to provide expert advice to the Vietnamese government in the day-to-day operation of technical economic services of the government, such as central banking;

(b) to develop both immediate and long-range policies which will strengthen the Vietnamese economy and improve the living standards of the people in general, thus creating a firm material basis for the fight against Communism.

Priority should be given to the following:

(1) Assignment of a corps of specialized consultants in such fields as banking and monetary policy, foreign exchange control, revenue reform, public housing, statistics and labor, whose function will be to offer operating advice to governmental officials;

(2) Assignment of a principal economic consultant to coordinate the activities of the specialized consultants and to advise the government on overall economic problems;

(3) Establishment of a research team whose primary function will be to develop a coordinated, long-range program for the economic development of Vietnam, and who will also be available to do needed research on immediate problems as requested by the operating consultants;

(4) A training program encompassing 'in-service' instruction in agricultural extension, statistics, secretarial techniques, and accounting, as well as enrichment of the public finance and economics content of the degree program in public administration;

(5) Of somewhat lower priority is an exchange of persons program, under which Vietnamese students and government officials would be sent abroad for varying periods for study and observation in public finance and other areas of economics.

5. Priorities in public information reflect the pressing necessity to enlist overwhelming popular support for democratic government by (1) greatly increasing the flow of information to the people concerning their government and its plans, programs and purposes, and (2) refuting Viet Minh propaganda. These priorities are:

(a) Establish a new medium of information and education--television--which is especially well adapted to the purpose. This should be accomplished not later than May 1, 1955.

(b) Improve the administration of information services, especially in the Office of the President and the Ministry of Information, through counseling and 'in-service' training, and

(c) Establish an efficient government agency for the production of films, booklets, posters, and the like.

6. Priorities in police administration have been assigned on the unquestioned premise that internal security and order are a first essential of good government. They are:

(a) Organization and unification of the police forces;

(b) Expansion of training facilities and the improvement of training programs;

(c) Establishment of a modern police communications system, and training of personnel in its efficient use;

(d) Introduction of present day methods of traffic enforcement and engineering; and

(e) Establishment of modern laboratory facilities and training of police specialists in their use.



Beginnings on these programs should be made by 1 January 1955.

7. Michigan State College stands ready to enter into contract negotiations with FOA and the Vietnam Government, under which contract it would accept responsibility for carrying out the program herein contained.

8. The recommendations in this report are necessarily tentative. As the program develops and needs change, modifications of the recommendations will need to be made. Provisions for such modifications must be included in any contract drawn up."

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Inasmuch as we are specifically interested in MSU's police program, the Mission's entire original study made on Vietnamese police and its recommendations in that field are reproduced.

"Law Enforcement Reorganization.

The organization of the civilian police forces should be developed separate from the military forces and directly under the Minister of Interior. Under existing conditions, the police forces should be centralized at the Ministry level, with the second echelon of command at the provincial level of government. Below this level, the police organization should be related directly to the subordinate units of government. The provinces that are very sparsely settled may be combined in administrative units. As much local autonomy should be allowed as existing conditions will permit.

Basically the organization should follow traditional patterns of organization that are common to law enforcement agencies. For example--the basic units of organization may be identified as the Uniform or Patrol Bureau, Criminal Investigation Bureau, Traffic Bureau, Personnel and Training Bureau, and Technical Services Bureau. In addition to these traditional functions, because of the dissident elements in the country, an additional Bureau should be added that would concern itself primarily with the identification of these elements and collecting information about their activities. This bureau, which may be identified as an intelligence function, should be responsible to the Minister of Interior directly.

This type of organization is applicable to every level of government. Special functions can be added or deleted as dictated by local conditions.

At the ministerial level a special section should be established that would maintain close liaison with the military forces. It is anticipated that military support will be necessary to assist the local police forces in maintaining order. The responsibilities of the liaison section would be to plan jointly with the military forces for such activity. Plans would be prepared in advance in an attempt to determine the type and degree of military support available and necessary to assist the local forces in discharging their responsibility.

Within the ministry the responsibility for administering the total police operation should be delegated to one person, who would appoint such deputies as he deemed necessary. Directly responsible to the head of the police force would be the heads of each major unit of operation. These units may be charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Uniform or Patrol Bureau
  - a. Patrol units in Province
    - Foot Patrol
    - Motor Patrol
    - Youth Section
    - Inspection
2. Criminal Investigation Bureau
  - a. Special Sections
    - Homicide
    - Robbery
    - Narcotics
    - Vice
    - Theft
    - Such others as necessary
  - b. Scientific Laboratory
3. Traffic Bureau
  - a. Traffic enforcement
  - b. Accident investigation
  - c. Parking control
  - d. Signal section
  - e. Traffic engineer

4. Personnel and Training Bureau
  - a. Recruitment
  - b. Promotions
  - c. Training
  - d. Personnel
  
5. Technical Services
  - a. Supply section
  - b. Radio Section
  - c. Property section
  - d. Custodial section
  - e. Communication section
  - f. Equipment section
  - g. Others as necessary
  
6. Intelligence
  - a. Investigation section
  - b. Record section
  - c. Evaluation section
  - d. Liaison or coordination with other intelligence units of government

This organization is sufficiently flexible to permit expansion or deletion of special functions as required. The intelligence unit at local levels for instance, could be absorbed by the Criminal Investigation Bureau, while the Traffic Bureau could be absorbed by the Uniform or Patrol Bureau in provinces or areas where traffic control or regulation is not a major problem.

Regarding the Saigon-Cholon metropolitan area, it may be desirable to give the police chief in this area authority and rank equal to and paralleling that of the bureau heads in the Office of the Minister of Interior. The police problems of this area are sufficiently complex to warrant this consideration but only after careful study.

#### Equipment and Communications.

The lack of time has not permitted an adequate examination of the communication needs. However, present means of police communication is primarily by telephone. A police radio installation for Vietnam is considered essential to supplement the telephone. The use of radio will permit a remarkable increase

in the promptness and effectiveness of police service especially when emergencies occur where time is of the greatest importance. Teletype service should also be installed from the M.I. to all provincial headquarters. According to information received teletype machines are available now in Saigon, but lack of money and maintenance have rendered them inoperable.

With the different religious groups functioning as police forces in Vietnam, there may be differences in the methods of maintaining and filing records. These should be studied, made uniform and integrated with the communications systems.

The biggest need in terms of operational equipment is mobile radio units. This is an urgent need as two-way radio supplies a nearly complete system of communications between headquarters and patrol cars. Radio transmission provides dependability, speed, and secrecy, all of which are essential elements for the police forces in Vietnam.

It is estimated that fifty mobile radio units are needed initially in the Saigon-Cholon area. Additional units are needed for the provinces, but the number needed cannot be estimated until detailed information is obtained regarding the population, size of police force, nature of police problems and territory to be policed.

Library facilities are inadequate and limited to French books only. The library facilities of the training school and major police headquarters should be expanded to include police literature from other countries."

A careful reading of the text on Law Enforcement Reorganization reveals problems that appear unusual from the western world concept of police. The following are some questions that can be raised:

Questions: Paragraph 4.

"Why is it necessary to '...maintain close liaison with the military forces?', and why is it anticipated that '... military support will be necessary to assist local police in maintaining order?'"

Under Equipment and Communications, paragraph 2, what is meant

by "with the different religious groups functioning as police forces in Vietnam...?"

It should also be noted that there was a recommended urgency in establishing a technical advisory staff in Vietnam as noted by the last sentences in subdivisions four and six of the conclusions, which state, in part, that beginnings in these programs should be made by 1 January 1955.

The answers to these questions reveal police problems seldom, if ever, encountered anywhere else in the world. Only after a close study of the geography and history of Vietnam up to and including 1954 can one obtain a clear picture of the political and police situations and the police needs as they existed at the time of the survey.



## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

(Geophysical, Political, Cultural and Religious Factors)

Vietnam, located in Southeast Asia, is slightly larger than the state of New Mexico and is endowed with a coastline of more than one thousand miles containing a number of excellent harbors. It is a long, narrow country, only 325 miles wide at its extreme width, and toward the center it frequently narrows to less than 100 miles.

On the north, Vietnam borders China; east and south is the South China Sea; to the west is the Gulf of Siam and Cambodia and Laos. For eighty-five years the three countries, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, comprised the States of French Indo-china. However, the term Indo-China was generally used for the Southeast Asian peninsula which also included Malaya, Burma and Thailand.

Enriched by the alluvial deposits of two great rivers, the population concentration is on the Red River delta in the north, along the coastal areas, and in the south on the Mekong River delta. Both deltas are crisscrossed by extensive networks of canals which not only carefully drain the areas, but are widely used as means of transportation of products and people. The delta areas being extremely fertile, rice, the staple food of Vietnam and Asia, is cultivated and grows profusely.

The delta areas are vast expanses of level ground broken up into plots of family land with occasional villages composed of a dozen or more thatched huts situated amidst groves of coconut palms. Areas not under cultivation soon revert to jungle growth. In the center, Vietnam is blessed with the Annam mountain chain and a plateau area which is very fertile. The plateau and mountain areas were sparsely settled and were inhabited, until several years ago, principally by various tribes of Montagnard (mountain) people.

The northern portion of Vietnam has sufficient rainfall during the year making it possible to cultivate and harvest two crops of rice annually. Even so, because of intense concentration of population on the Red River delta, in past years it was necessary for the north to import rice to avoid starvation. When one pictures seven million people crowded into 5,800 square miles, or 1,500 persons per square mile, one obtains a tragic picture of overcrowding, since these people do not live in multifloored apartment houses but in small villages on minute plots of land, each barely eking out a living.

In the south the picture is reversed. With a six month dry season, only one crop of rice can be harvested. True, the population is also concentrated on a delta area; however, the Mekong delta is much, much larger than the Red River delta, thus providing room for expansion. Various areas in the south, never before put to cultivation, are presently being opened to settlers.

The northern tip of Vietnam is approximately  $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  north of

the equator. The climate is subtropical with summer temperatures occasionally reaching  $110^{\circ}$  and is similar, in many respects, to the climate of Florida. Extending southward to approximately  $8\ 1/2^{\circ}$  of the equator, the climate is fully tropical with an average daylight temperature of  $90^{\circ}$ , which occasionally registers as high as  $100^{\circ}$ . These are shade temperatures. The sun is broiling hot from 10 AM to 3 PM, and to slightly change an oft repeated saying, "only mad dogs and crazy Americans go out in the sun during midday hours." The climate in this portion of the world is such that one feels enervated. The constant heat and humidity soon saps the energy. Statistically, this area is one of the unhealthiest places in the world. Fungus runs rampant; various types of dysentary including at least two types of amoebic dysentary are common, and hepatitis is prevalent. Dengue (breakbone) fever, malaria, and blackwater fever is prevalent throughout the country outside of Saigon.

The delta areas lend themselves well to the cultivation of rice, the staple food, and there are diversified crops grown such as maize, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, and tropical produce such as lemons, oranges, papayas, bananas, coconuts, and breadfruit, cotton and tobacco. On the plains of the south and in the rolling hills preceding the plateau area, rubber plantations abound. The plateau areas of Central Vietnam are fertile and are just beginning to be opened to Vietnamese settlers, mostly refugees from the north. On the plateau are tea, coffee and tobacco plantations, and cotton is grown on a limited scale. Fishing

is a major industry, done principally by small sampans within sight of land, and providing people with their basic diet of fish and rice.

With the coming of the French in 1863, the north was, to a certain extent, industrialized. Large deposits of anthracite coal and iron ore were mined and shipped for export. The north had the only major railroad locomotive repair shop in Vietnam.

Lumbering is rapidly becoming a major industry. The jungles of Vietnam are extensive and not only cover the plateaus and mountain areas, but also in many places extend into the delta areas, furnishing not only mahogany used profusely as building material, but exotic woods are being lumbered and used for furniture. The jungle varies from large areas of open tree-shaded glades to areas of pine forests in certain locations of Central Vietnam, to impenetrable bamboo forests. In the Far East, bamboo is a blessing since it can be used easily and quickly, not only as supports and framework for homes, but when cut lengthwise in strips it becomes the walls also. Coconut palm fronds are used for the thatch roofs of lower class houses.

#### Big Game.

The jungle areas of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia comprise what is probably the last virgin hunting area in the world. Big game, naturally not as plentiful as the plains and open country of Africa, remain practically undisturbed. Portions of Vietnam still remain unexplored. A news item appearing in the USOM of Saigon News Roundup under date of May 27, 1958 is interesting in this respect.

"New Mountainous Village Found in QuiNhon. QuiNhon: During their recent inspection tour in different western villages of Vinh Thanh, Vinh Binh Province, the Vinh Thanh Administrative Representation discovered accidentally in the heart of the forest, a new mountainous village of 113 inhabitants and called 'Gia May'.

It took the administrative teams two days traveling to arrive there. Thus far, the inhabitants in this village have not had any relations with the lowlanders and this is the first time that they had met the Vinh Thanh cadres. The Vinh Thanh cadres organized informational talks on the present situation of the country and the policy of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam as a means of bringing them up-to-date.

All the inhabitants of Gia May village were pleased with the meeting and hoped that permanent meetings with regional authorities will take place shortly."

Three species of tiger abound, with the most notable trophy being the Royal, or mountain tiger, inhabiting the plateau and mountain areas. All three species prey upon the domestic animals of the Vietnamese farmers and the Montagnard tribespeople when drought causes wild game to be scarce. Occasionally, because of circumstance, a tiger becomes a man-eater and makes life miserable for the defenseless natives armed only with the crowbow. Tiger of ten feet (nose to end of tail) have been shot in the past five years and guides state that one can still find a tiger of twelve feet in length, although this size is now rare.

The wild Asian elephant is plentiful and also makes himself a nuisance by destroying crops and, when angry, entire villages. While on a hunting trip several years ago we came to a Montagnard village that had been leveled to the ground by a herd of elephant just several hours before. Upon arrival of the herd the villagers had fled. Returning in the morning, they found all houses demolished. While smaller than



his African cousin, with smaller tusks, he is just as exciting and dangerous to hunt as the African pschyderm.

One of the most prized horned trophies is the gaur, or to give the Indian name, the sladang. This is the largest specie of bovine in the world, standing seven feet high at the shoulder, and weighing close to 3000 lbs at full maturity. Neither the Indian nor the Malayan specie approaches the size of the Indochina variety. Pure black at maturity, many professional hunters and guides claim the gaur as the most dangerous and difficult trophy to obtain. As wild and quick as deer, the gaur will always charge when wounded, not a blind charge with head lowered but a coolly calculated charge made with full intent to kill. Probably not more than 40 trophies of gaur grace the dens of American nimrods.

The bantang is a very large specie of wild cattle. Golden brown in color, a large male carries beautiful trophy horns and is considered a prize among hunters.

A number of species of deer are to be found. The cerf, quite similar to our elk, weighs 400 pounds, or more, at maturity. Other species run to smaller size including the mouse deer which is about the size of a healthy jackrabbitt.

Boar of tremendous size are plentiful and their shooting welcomed by the tribespeople because of their destructive nature. Four species of cobra are to be found including the "King Cobra". None of the cobra species, except the King, will attack man. Extremely poisonous, agile and quick, he has been known to attack elephants, who, within a short

time, die from the venom. A number of other species of poisonous reptiles are plentiful. The "krait" is small but deadly, and the "banana" snake takes his toll among the native population.

Perhaps the most unusual and repulsive creature to be found in the jungles of Vietnam is the monitor lizard. At times attaining the length of eight and nine feet, one is strongly reminded of prehistoric times when a glimpse of this giant lizard is caught.

The peacock is plentiful, wild chicken from which our domesticated varieties are derived abound, and wild duck wax fat in the marshes and waterways.

Except for tiger hunting which is done by setting out bait and awaiting the arrival of "His Majesty," while ensconced in a "mirador" or tree platform, or in a branch shelter on the ground, any other type of hunting is a "man's" work. The jungle is thick, the heat is terrific, and the terrain rugged.

Religion:

The predominant religion of Vietnam, as in all of Southeast Asia, is Buddhism. However, the Buddhism practiced in Vietnam, Free China and Japan (religion has been suppressed on the China mainland) is of the "greater vehicle" type and is less ostentatious than the "lesser vehicle" denomination practiced in Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Malaya. The principal difference between the two types is that a believer in the "greater vehicle" can, by devotion and piousness, save not only his soul but also the souls of his family, relatives and friends; whereas

the believers in the "lesser vehicle" can only save their own souls. The monks or "bonzes" of the "greater vehicle" wear brown robes while the bonzes of the "lesser vehicle" wear gold or saffron yellow robes.

Taoism and Confucianism has many followers, and with the advent of Portuguese and French missionaries in the early 18th century, Catholicism took root and now has more than 2 1/2 million converts. For many years French Catholic priests have set up schools and medical and first aid stations in the plateau and mountain areas, bringing some basic education and some relief from pain and suffering to the Montagnard tribespeople. Protestantism has a following, although small. Protestant missionaries are also working among the mountain people and have established clinics in these areas. Living wholly off the country, all of these people are to be commended for their fortitude.

The Cao Dai religion numbering about one million followers was started in the city of Tay Ninh, about 60 miles west of Saigon, in 1926. It is a mixture of Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism with its own Pope and Cardinals. Cao Dai has a literal meaning of the "Supreme Being" and the Caodaists worship as their saints such deceased world figures as Victor Hugo, Sun Yat Sen (founder of the Chinese Republic); Thomas Jefferson, Voltaire, Joan of Arc, and others. The Holy See and the residence of the Pope are located at Tay Ninh.

Another unusual religion centered in and around the city of Cantho to the south of Saigon, is the Hoa Hao sect, who are actually dissident Buddhists. A literal translation of the name would be

"Peaceful Unanimity". The sect, numbering more than fifty thousand, is a branch of Buddhism. In contradiction to their name, they were terrible fighters during Vietnam's ten year war for freedom. It is reported that soldiers of this sect ate the liver of enemy killed by them. This, supposedly, make them even more fierce. They were much feared as soldiers.

People of Vietnam:

The Vietnamese people are very similar in stature, coloring and facial characteristics as the Chinese people. Short and slim, the average height of a male is 5' 1/2", with weight about 120 pounds. The women are slim, walk alertly and erectly and are, as a general rule, lovely. Skin coloring varies from an almost white to a dark tan.

The people of the poorer classes work very hard. About 80% of the Vietnamese in Free Vietnam are farmers either growing rice, the staple food, or secondary crops such as lettuce and popular green vegetables. Women are frequently used as laborers doing the back-breaking work in construction of buildings such as mixing and carrying mortar, etc., working on highway repair and construction, or even in the fields.

In the south, the men normally wear western clothes, whereas the refugees from the north still wear the traditional styled Vietnamese clothes. The women and girls wear the "cai ao". There is probably no more beautiful sight than to see the slim, jet-black haired Vietnamese girls walking on the streets wearing the traditional

dress. This is a two piece costume; the "pants" are long and may be white, black or vari-colored. The "cai ao" is a full length, long-sleeved tunic, worn over the trousers. The tunic is split into two on the sides and has a high Chinese-type collar. Very, very beautiful.

There is little, if any, difference between the Vietnamese from the north, central or south. There is some regional difference in the language but not to such a degree that the people cannot understand one another. Strangly enough, even though the Vietnamese inhabiting the south (Cochin-China, now South Vietnam) originally came from the north in the 18th century, they do not fully trust the Vietnamese from the north. As members of the southern Vietnamese have said, the people from the north are more alert, smarter and, in business practice, sharper; therefore, there was and still is resentment among the southern Vietnamese over the influx of nearly one million northern refugees. There is no reason, however, why this feeling should not subside in time.

Chinese. In Free Vietnam, i.e., the Republic of Vietnam, there are a number of minority groups. In 1954 there were one million Chinese living here (south of the 17th parallel). A number of Chinese had been in Vietnam for many centuries. The great influx of Chinese into Vietnam, however, occurred during the French colonist regime, when a treaty with China permitted free ingress to Vietnam. The Chinese is principally a businessman and in Vietnam became the small



shopkeeper and the "middleman" in French and Vietnamese business transactions. In fact, the Chinese had more freedom, more rights in Vietnam, under the French than did the Vietnamese. For example, the Vietnamese were the rice-growers, but the Chinese were permitted by the French to become the rice traders, buying the rice from the farmer, storing it in vast warehouses awaiting a favorable market. The Vietnamese do not like the Chinese.

Khmer. Another minority group are the Cambodians. Originally all of the Mekong delta was Cambodian. By the 18th century the Vietnamese coming from the north had overrun this portion of the country. In the western provinces adjoining Cambodia there are approximately 300,000 Vietnamese of Cambodian or Khmer descent. Almost all speak Vietnamese language, mostly with an accent; however, in their village groups, etc., they still speak Cambodian. These Vietnamese of Cambodian descent have been, under Diem, assimilated into the Vietnamese structure and being principally rice farmers have participated in the land reform of the government and many now own their own land. They enjoy all the benefits and rights of Vietnamese citizens and are so considered and accepted. However, as is the case in other parts of the world, it is difficult to eradicate the individual incidents that occur between the Vietnamese and the Cambodian. Of much darker complexion than the Vietnamese, many of the rank and file of the present famed Vietnamese Air Force parachute brigade are of Khmer origin.

Cham. A third minority group are the Cham. Descendants of a once powerful and highly civilized nation called Champa, located along the coastal regions of Central Vietnam (formerly Annam), the Cham people, numbering about 50,000, are now living in mud huts and have become a poverty stricken ethnic group. Too small in population to carry much weight, they also have been declared Vietnamese citizens but little has been done as yet to alleviate their lot.

Mountain Tribespeople. The fourth minority group comprising almost one million Montagnard who live a semi-nomadic life principally in the mountains and plateaus of Central Vietnam, present to Diem one of his most difficult problems. Living in tribal groups very similar to the American Indian pattern, with a variety of languages and dialects, the Montagnard (the Vietnamese prefer to call them Moi meaning savage) are looked upon as uncivilized, uncouth, inferior and lazy by the Vietnamese. Resented, because of some good land upon which they grow rice, resentful because some tribes burn off jungle land in order to plant their crops, the Vietnamese have been giving the Montagnard a difficult time.

The Montagnard tribespeople, and there are many, many tribes such as the Rhade (numbering well over 50,000), Jarai, Bahnar, Sedang, M'Nong, Chema, Koho, Bik, Katu-Die, Ha-Long, Hodrong, Arap, Colar, Malong and many others, are widely scattered throughout the sparsely settled plateau and mountain areas, and may be classed as savages by civilized standards. Stories still come out of the mountain regions

of human sacrifice, but from personal experience, several of the tribes with which Americans lived for several weeks off the beaten track were kind, friendly, generous and curious. There is no evidence whatsoever of theft. This evidently comes out through association with civilized people.

Some of the tribes observe the matriarchal system in which the women are the property owners, the dominant factor in the home and leaders of the tribes. The tribespeople are animists, believing that everything, even inanimate objects, have a soul. They worship many spirits of the woods, mountains, rivers and streams.

Away from civilization (there are still unexplored areas in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia never visited by white man or national) the Montagnard live well. They grow either wet or dry rice, vegetables, tobacco, cotton and raise water buffalo, pigs, chickens, cows and dogs for food. Only when associated with civilization does one find these people hungry-looking and dressed in tattered, cast-off clothing.

Under the French many of the accessible tribesmen were lured to the plantations where <sup>nu</sup> abuse and malnutrition killed them off rapidly. Still being used as laborers on plantations (still owned by the French) their lot appears to be improved somewhat.

The Vietnamese have always preferred the lowlands for their habitat. The mountainous areas to them are unhealthy and fills them with a vague dread. From personal experience the Vietnamese are frightened of the Montagnard and scared of the jungle and of the wild animals inhabiting it. Yet, slowly but surely the Vietnamese are pressing back the Montagnard and seizing the tribal lands. This may

cause difficulty.

Indians. In 1954 there were about fifty thousand Indians living in Vietnam. Many, as French citizens, received preferential treatment and were in the police service, the judicial system as clerks and messengers, and the majority were tradespeople. During the past five years their number has declined considerably. The Indian-French citizen has left; the pressures placed on the tradespeople by the government in order to make room for Vietnamese have been such that a great many left Vietnam for their former homes in Bombay. Those remaining in Vietnam have become Vietnamese citizens.

History to 1900 A.D.

Vietnamese legend has it that Vietnamese dynasties were ruling as early as 2000 B.C. There is, however, no evidence whatsoever that such was the case. Earliest recorded history is not found in Vietnamese annals, but in Chinese records; in fact, it is not known whether the Vietnamese had a method of written expression before the advent of the Chinese.

Vietnamese factual history goes back 2000 years and reveals that at that time the Red River delta area was already thickly settled by a distinct ethnic group of people. What migration wave brought this group to this area and whence they came are questions impossible of answers. Modern historians agree that long before the Christian era, the delta was settled by tillers of the soil and fishermen whose language and customs differed from the Chinese bordering on the north.

Anthropologists generally agree that these people were a fusion of Mongoloid tribes from Tibet with Austro-Indonesian racial groups already occupying the Red River delta area. The Vietnamese language itself is a blend of Mongolian (variotonic) and Indonesian (monotonic) languages.

China, during the Han dynasty, eyed the rich alluvial delta area of the Red River, and in 111 B.C. overran the country. During the intervening 150 years of Chinese rule, the Vietnamese people acquired Chinese culture and civilization. New methods of agriculture were introduced, working animals used for ploughing and custom and learning spread to a large number of the elite. The Chinese system of writing with ideographic symbols was copied; however, instead of being absorbed by the Chinese, which had occurred and continued to occur with other ethnic groups through the centuries, the Vietnamese maintained their ethnic status and when Chinese rule became oppressive, they threw off the Chinese yoke.

Under the leadership of the Trung sisters, who lead a rebellion against the Chinese, they succeeded in driving the foreigners from their land. Within two short years, however, the Chinese, led by one of their ablest generals, quickly defeated the Vietnamese army and their rule this time lasted for five hundred years. Again thrown out by the Vietnamese, the Chinese returned in 603 and ruled for another 336 years, when in 1939 they were once again evicted from Vietnam. Thus ended more than 900 years of Chinese domination of the



Vietnamese people, and the year 939 marks what historians say was the beginning of the Vietnamese state. By this time the Vietnamese had absorbed the Chinese method of public administration (about one-third of the language revealed Chinese influence, especially those words pertaining to administration, religion, philosophy and the sciences); the idea of a centralized state with local and provincial administrators was placed into practice. Thus, Chinese influence was strongly felt and was accepted in matters of social, political and cultural matters.

During the 13th century the Vietnamese repelled three massive attacks of the Mongols led by Kublia Khan, one of the sons of Genghis Khan. This scourge of Asia, the Middle East and a portion of Europe, amassed an army of 500,000 warriors, but was repulsed by a defending army of 200,000 led by Tran Hung Dao. Dao is now one of the most venerated heroes of Vietnamese history. This new country was also under constant threat from her old enemy, China, and indeed, after repeated attempts in the 11th and 12th centuries, again succumbed to China in 1406, but China had to capitulate and leave the country by 1428 after a short but bitter rule by a member of the Ming dynasty. So oppressive was this rule that once again the Vietnamese peasantry arose and evicted the Chinese from within their borders. Nor was this the last attempt on the part of China to subjugate the Vietnamese, making another attempt to conquer the country in 1788.

That period of Vietnam's independence between 939 and 1407 was not a calm and peaceful one for its people. At the beginning,

Vietnam was racked by civil wars and chaotic conditions before order could be restored by the power of the state. Even then corrupt dynastic rulers exacted heavy tribute and taxes from the peasantry. Also, during this period Vietnam was threatened on numerous occasions by invasion from Champa and Cambodia, countries to the south. During the 15th century Vietnam began to expand south into Champa (or Cham) territory and eventually the Cham people were defeated in a number of bitterly fought battles. (The Cham had been a highly cultured people; their civilization resembling to some extent the Khmer civilization of Cambodia where the ruins of Angkor proclaim the former glory of Cambodia. Ruins of 10th century Cham watchtowers can still be seen in several places in the Central Lowlands.)

Victory over the Cham now permitted rapid expansion further to the south, toward the tremendously fertile Mekong River delta. Inhabited by the Khmer people, the Vietnamese slowly defeated the sporadic attempts at defense and by 1750 were in complete control of all of the present area of Vietnam. The newly conquered territory wrested from the Cham and Khmer people comprises all of the land presently lying within the boundaries of Vietnam south of the city of Hue. The conquest of this territory more than doubled the size of Vietnam.

All of this was not done without internal strife. As the Vietnamese hordes poured south, the lines of communication and authority were so lengthened that it was a simple matter for an astute

leader to set himself up as an emperor in the south. Thus, about 1532, Vietnam was a divided country. Only after repeated internecine warfare between the Trinh dynasty in the north and the Nguyen family of the south did Vietnam again become a united country, with the victory going to the Nguyen, who were able to defeat a numerically much superior force. With Vietnam, at last again united, the sole remaining member of the family, Nguyen Anh, in 1802 founded the last Vietnamese dynasty as Emperor Gia Long, which only expired with the mandate of the people in removing Bao Dai from his ancestral throne in October 1955.

Early in the 16th century, Portuguese merchants had established colonies in the Middle and Far East in their bid for colonial power. With the establishment of their colony on a small peninsula at Macao in 1557, the merchant fleets were soon attracted to the Vietnamese mainland where at the present site of Faifo in Central Vietnam they established a stronghold and were soon doing a brisk business in trade. With the advent of the trader into this area, the coming of the Catholic missionary was a foregone conclusion, and soon a number of missionaries had established a foothold in Vietnam and were to a small degree successful in making converts.

At a time when Spain, Holland, England and France were vieing for colonial empires, it was foredoomed that all of these nations would fight one another for the right to establish a foothold on the Asian continent. During a century of jockeying for power and time

and again each and every foothold wiped out or treaties ignored by the Vietnamese, there came to Vietnam a French Catholic priest named Alexander de Rhodes. A gifted man, he learned the Vietnamese language within six months and soon thereafter translated the first catechism into Vietnamese, using Latin letters phonetically which freed the Vietnamese from the ideographic symbol writing they had obtained from the Chinese. Upon being expelled from Hanoi three years later, he continued to work in the south and later, upon returning to France, he went to Rome where his efforts were rewarded by the issuance of an edict which placed all of the struggling Catholic missions, mainly Portuguese, under two French apostolic vicars. This was a blow to the Portuguese and marked the beginning of a waning of their foothold on trade in Vietnam.

The intervening years, between 1650 and 1780, the Vietnamese vacillated between permitting the missionaries full freedom to make converts and expulsion from their territory, both extremes being in vogue at one time or another. Violence occasionally broke out against them and a number lost their lives, were imprisoned, deported or mutilated.

During the civil war raging between the north and the south, both the Portuguese and the French supplied arms and ammunition to both sides. The war continued unabated for a number of years. In 1767 a young priest came to Vietnam where he headed a seminary at Hatien. A siamese invasion destroyed Hatien and the priest, Pigneau de Behaïre, had to flee. In 1775 Behaïre returned to Hatien upon the

lifting of a ban against Catholicism, and soon afterward assisted the 16 year old nephew of the Nguyen king to escape a royal massacre during the Tay Son revolution. Eventually Behaire became political advisor, strategist, military leader and friend to Nguyen Anh, who upon returning to Vietnam rallied an army and eventually defeated the Tay Son and became emperor of all Vietnam. Of all foreigners who have ever visited Vietnam, Behaire, who became the Bishop of Adran, made the greatest impression. The Bishop, who died during one of the final campaigns in North Vietnam, was officially praised and revered.

As always, a new broom sweeps clean. Emperor Gia Long was a capable administrator. Under his guidance and farsighted administration, Vietnam began to recover from the ravages of the lengthy civil war. New highways were built and old ones repaired. An efficient postal system was instituted. Granaries were established in the countryside so that a surplus of grain of one year would provide food for the lean years brought on by drought and insect damage. The monetary system was overhauled and he instituted a policy of agrarian reform. A new legal code was substituted for the archaic Le code and Vietnam prospered during his rule of 18 years. Upon Gia Long's death, his eldest son, Ming Mang, ascended to the throne and ruled Vietnam from 1820 to 1841. His successor was Thieu Tri, one of Ming Mang's forty-nine sons. Thieu Tri ruled for six years only, being succeeded by Tu Duc in 1847 and whose first year of rule also



heralded the first French attack at the harbor at Tourane (Danang).

From 1800 to 1847, French missionaries came to Vietnam and were frequently persecuted, some put to death, others deported and under the pretext of safeguarding the lives of these missionaries, the French sent armed forces to subdue the Vietnamese. This action, under the guise of providing protection for missionaries, was taken only after prolonged attempts at negotiations of treaties which would favor France in their bid for a market for their produce and a source for much needed raw materials so lacking at home. Several opportunities for signing favorable trade agreements with amenable Vietnamese emperors during the early part of the century had been lost because of vacillation on the part of the French government.

The first French attack took place at Tourane (Danang) on April 15, 1847 by two French warships. During the attack 800 shots were fired by the French and 10,000 people massacred by the cannonading in supposed reprisal for probably not more than 100 missionaries killed over a period of more than 100 years. Further, as historical accounts point out, missionaries came to Vietnam surreptitiously, often dressed as merchants and traders, with full knowledge that an emperor's edict was in force forbidding their presence in Vietnam and forbidding the practice of Catholicism. Certainly, if these men lost their lives, they were fully aware of the risks and dangers of such action.

By 1867 the entire southern portion of Vietnam was under French administration and was proclaimed a French colony. Emperor



Tu Duc attempted to save the remaining portions of his country, but by 1884 the Central and Northern portions of Vietnam were proclaimed French protectorates. Even then guerrilla warfare continued in North Vietnam and sporadically in the south, so that it was not until 1898 that a semblance of peace came to Vietnam.

The French conquest of Vietnam was accomplished with the greatest of cruelty. One of the Indochina governor generals, after his recall to France, J. L. de Lanessan, wrote in 1895:

"It seemed to me, that the burning of villages, the mass shootings, the bayonet slaughters, and the executions of notables should be replaced by other less violent procedures."

### CHAPTER III

#### THE WESTERN (FRENCH)ROLE IN VIETNAM - 1900-1954

The mandarin governmental system adopted by the Vietnamese from the Chinese centuries before was adapted to the social structure. The mandarinal system permitted a maximum of freedom in which was predominantly an agrarian society. It was free of the evils that go with class rule and caste rule. The mandarinal society was not a self-perpetuating class, nor were they selected from only one level of people. They were recruited from among all the people and, in order to attain the first or lowest level, the young Vietnamese was required to pass a number of prescribed, lengthy examinations. There was no other way to gain public office. The sons of the wealthy, of the nobility, of the poorest families, or a mandarin's own son, had to study long hours for many years and pass the examinations before acceptance into the mandarinal ranks. These tests were competitive and strictly impartial. Education was always free. A man could rise as high as his inclination. This was a democratic principle unheard of in the western world of that day. The country had its intellectual elite and this elite was used as an advisory council by the Emperor. The well-educated were held in great respect. Some men after receiving their education were content to return to their villages and teach. The teacher was venerated. After death the teacher was mourned for three years, the same length of time as for a parent.

The village was the basic unit of society and was self-contained. The village conducted its affairs under supervision of a council of notables recruited from the respected men of the village. The village was autonomous. The people had little contact with the central government since the village paid the taxes, provided the men required for military service and the labor for public works projects. This was virtually a self-contained society. The average peasant grew enough food for himself and family, and but little more. There were artisans about; some villages specializing in certain crafts such as weaving, carpentry, or charcoal and pottery manufacture. There was little extremes of poverty and riches. Ownership of land was widely dispersed. Each village maintained communal lands which were divided among the taxpayer and among the very poor and aged. A granary was maintained to provide rice during the lean years.

This was life in Vietnam.

Under French rule, Vietnam was divided into three states: Tonkin (or Tonking) in the north, Annam in the center, and Cochinchina (Cochin Chine) in the south. Saigon was the capital of Cochinchina, Hue of Annam, and Hanoi, formerly the capital of all Vietnam, was capital of Tonkin. Combined with the protectorates of Cambodia and Laos, the entire area was popularly known as French Indo-China.

The Vietnamese form of government, closely resembling the Chinese system, slowly disintegrated under the pressures exerted by

the French and French control was instituted at all levels in Cochinchina. A governor-general ruled Cochinchina and a resident-superior in each of the protectorates, Tonkin and Annam, guided the administrations of these states.

In Cochinchina at every level of governmental administration, French personnel took over. Vietnamese eventually, after some years, worked as clerks, typists, record clerks and errand boys, under close supervision. The French Napoleonic Code, the criminal code of France, was transplanted in toto, and justice administered by French judges from the highest to the lowest courts. Provincial administration was in the hands of French province chiefs and French personnel even reached to the district level.

Most intellectual Vietnamese withdrew from public life, thus indicating their resistance to foreign rule. Even those families who could afford to educate their children in schools--what good would this education do? The Vietnamese was a second class citizen in his own country. Even at the height of French power in Indo-China, less than two thousand Vietnamese students had the opportunity to attend our equivalent of high school. After graduation from high school, what was the future? Socially, he was looked down upon by the French. He was of an inferior race. If he was fortunate enough to find a clerk's job, his salary was less than half that of a Frenchman doing the same work. French people held jobs which white people in other colonies considered beneath them. A French official, Paul

Delamarre, in an article appearing in Le Monde Francais, March 1946, wrote of his visit to the Philippines in 1925. He was surprised at finding that the services a traveler comes in contact with, such as police, health service and customs officers, were all staffed by Filipinos. This was unheard of in Indo-China. This practice of filling subordinate positions with French personnel meant a tremendous tax burden on the Vietnamese people. Also, one can imagine the type of Frenchman one could recruit in France to come to Vietnam to fill the position of corporal in the police service. Keeping the Vietnamese out of positions they could have handled competently and easily, bred discontent.

The motto of the French government is "Liberté - Egalité - Fraternité". None of these was visible in Indo-China. Nationalist Vietnamese complained bitterly against arbitrary police methods, restrictions on travel, brutality and absence of personal liberties. They complained against the third degree methods used by police; against the judicial system which at all times favored the French. They complained of their inability to travel freely throughout their country (Cochin-China, Annam and Tonkin) unless armed with a police identity card almost impossible to obtain. Trade unions were unheard of, as were political parties, and there was little freedom of the press or of assembly.

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Annam and Tonkin remained, nominally, under control and authority



of the Emperor. Upon the death of Tu Duc, the French selected that member of the royal family they believed would be the most pliable to their suggestions, advice and demands, and forced his elevation to the throne. Surprisingly, over the years, the French made several errors of judgment in this selection. In the elevation of Emperors Thanh Thai and his son, Duy Tan, uprisings occurred and both had to be removed and replaced. Thanh Thai was declared insane by the French and exiled to Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean. His son, Duy Tan, elevated to the throne at the age of seven, was at eighteen exiled to the same island for being responsible for a revolt against the French.

Most of the anti-French movements had their beginnings in either Annam or Tonkin. Cochinchina was too firmly under the thumb of the colonial power.

The Emperor and his court ruled the people of Annam and Tonkin. However, slowly the French administration took away the royal prerogatives so that within a few years the throne was but an empty shell. For example, the plateau areas of Annam were inhabited only by the Montagnard tribespeople. The French soon learned that the climate in the plateau was ideal for the growing of rubber, tea, coffee, etc. It was not necessary for a Frenchman to buy the land from the Emperor of Vietnam--it was only necessary to make application to the resident superior, who then gave title to as many acres as desired. The Vietnamese had no voice whatsoever in the distribution

of this land and plantations grew in number and size, so that by 1940 much of the good fertile land was in the hands of the French.

Even under a protectorate, the resident superior appointed the French as mayors of the principal cities of Annam and Tonkin. As in Cochin-China, the police were French down to the sergeant level. Only in later years could a Vietnamese hope to rise to a sergeant level and then only if there was no question as to his loyalties. Province chiefs were Vietnamese in the protectorates, but were mere figureheads since the French assigned a counterpart who made all of the decisions.

Vietnam developed economically under the French. Capital for the exploitation of Vietnam came first from the French government. Later, after World War I, it came from French investors. France was successful in creating in Vietnam a closed investors corporation so that by 1938 more than 95% of the capital invested in business enterprises and all capital invested in government securities was French. The chief investors were large banks and immediate high returns for their investments was the goal.

Rubber trees were brought to the country early and the soil proved excellent for the expansion of the growth of rubber. Plantations containing millions of trees flourished throughout the colony. These plantations slowly expanded northward onto the plateaus of Annam. When rich deposits of anthracite coal were discovered in Tonkin, the French exploited these discoveries and exported this item by the thousands of tons.

No large industries were built in Vietnam. Apart from rice mills, sugar cane refineries, cement works, breweries, match factories, paper mills, and a few glass and textile factories employing less than 100,000 persons, nothing else was permitted to open. The basic reason for this was to keep the colony as a market for the overpriced products of French manufacture which were protected by tariff.

Rice production increased enormously under the French, but the lot of the peasant was not upgraded. Due in part to a rapid increase in population and to the tremendous rice export program, the peasant grew more rice but had less rice to eat. As Joseph Buttinger states<sup>1</sup> so succinctly, "While rice exports kept rising, many peasants could not satisfy their hunger all year round." The French did nothing to improve the lot of the peasant.

Frenchmen in Vietnam pointed with great pride to the public works projects completed, and commented that without French colonization Vietnam would have been a collection of grass shacks, with footpaths instead of roads and railroads. They cited the Saigon harbor facilities, the medical facilities available and the work of the Pasteur Institute, the electrical power and water supply in the large cities, the public buildings, etc. The cities of Saigon, Dalat and Nhatrang were the pride and joy of the colonists. The wide paved streets, the cleanliness, the tree-lined boulevards, all revealed careful planning.

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Buttinger: The Smaller Dragon. Frederick A. Praeger, New York; p.431

All of these things were true but, to take the other side of the picture, no one except the French, the very rich Chinese, and the Vietnamese collaborators, had the wealth to own cars in order to use the highways, or had the money to pay railroad fare for railway transportation. In fact, the Trans-Vietnam Railway, that portion between Saigon and Hanoi, was only completed in 1936 and could not compete economically with the cheaper, waterway transportation. The macadamized highways were built for the business and pleasure of the French alone. Saigon was a beautiful city, that is, the French section was beautiful; lovely cement homes and mansions look out onto the tree-lined streets. The business section has multi-storied office buildings; the banks are of tremendous size, but all of this was for the benefit of the French. The Vietnamese did not live in this area; this was reserved for colonists. The Vietnamese lived in crowded housing; the poorer people, and they were predominant, lived in grass shacks with grass-thatched roofs.

Relative to medical science and public health, anything in that field was done for the well-being of the French. They had access to medical facilities and to the serums necessary for the control of epidemics. They did not wish to die of cholera, small pox, bubonic plague, typhus, amoebic dysentary, hepatitis, etc., so they had medical attention and facilities. But how much of this medical service

and medicines was for the masses? Lauriston Sharp<sup>2</sup> in a study of colonial regimes states:

"All the justly famous work of the Pasteur Institute in Indo-China did not alter the fact that medical assistance remained poorly organized and insufficient, particularly in the countryside, where the mass of the people lived. In the Philippines there was one doctor for every 3,200 native inhabitants; in Indo-China there was only one for every 38,000."

Infant mortality among the Vietnamese was the highest in the world. Tuberculosis was rampant. Conditions of living among the laborers at the mines and plantations, both Vietnamese and Montagnard, were something out of the Dark Ages. Laborers were hired by "recruiting" agents traveling about from village to village. The laborer desirous of earning some money to help ease the aching poverty was signed up to a three year contract. Upon arriving at a mine or plantation he worked under an absolute peonage system. The supervisors of laborers were as cruel and inhuman as anything one would find in Uncle Tom's Cabin. Norman Lewis<sup>3</sup> relates his observations of this system:

"In the past they have employed labor recruiters, paying high premiums for each man who could be induced or tricked into signing on for three or five years--a period of indenture which the laborer rarely survived. Coolies were kept under armed guard and thrashings were liberally administered. Sometimes they were re-sold and transported to the Pacific Islands. Recent attempts to temper these conditions have met with the most resolute opposition, the planters asking, pertinently, as they believe, what after all is the purpose of a colony?"

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<sup>2</sup> Lauriston Sharp: Colonial Regimes in Southeast Asia. Far Eastern Survey, February 27, 1946; p.49

<sup>3</sup> Norman Lewis: A Dragon Apparent. Jonathan Cape, London, 1951, p.99-100



To sum up the civilizing influences of French colonialism in their programs of public works, these works erected for the benefit of the French were financed solely by Vietnamese taxes and built by Vietnamese labor--forced labor, in fact, from which thousands died from disease and malnutrition. The profits made by the French in their exportation of the produce of the country and the importation of goods from France did the country little good because this profit was not reinvested in Vietnam, but was sent to France.

The French colonial government had a state monopoly on salt, alcohol and opium. Traffic in opium was illegal in France but sale of opium in Vietnam was a great profit-making venture. The manufacture of salt, done previously by villages located near the sea, now became a closed monopoly of the French. Salt could be made only under close supervision of the French government and this was sold to the Vietnamese at exorbitant prices. Each village had a quota of alcohol which it was required to consume; whether the villagers drank the alcohol or poured it onto the ground, it had to be paid for at the price set by the government.

Is it any wonder that the French hated to relinquish their hold on Indo-China? Should it be a surprise to anyone that Vietnam wanted freedom from colonialism?

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With the advent of World War I, Vietnam supplied more than 100,000 soldiers and workers to France to assist in the war effort. As a reward for this war effort France promised reforms in Vietnam.

After the successful conclusion of the war, no reforms were forthcoming.

A number of uprisings against the French occurred during the 1920's and 1930's. The major effort occurring in 1930 when the Vietnam Nationalist Party, founded clandestinely several years before, started a general uprising in Annam and Tonkin. The French acted quickly and, taking severe measures, put the rebellion down. Later in the year the newly formed Communist party inspired strikes and demonstrations and these were ruthlessly suppressed. The French Foreign Legion was turned loose without restrictions and before the year was out, hundreds of villagers were killed by strafing planes and countless others were tortured by the French authorities. Official French figures list 699 executions without benefit of trial, 3000 arrests, 83 death sentences, and 546 sentences of life imprisonment. Due to these actions, both the Nationalist and the Communist movements ceased for the time being.

The Communist movement began about 1929 and was kept alive by the work of one Ho Chi Minh (presently President of the Communist People's Republic of Vietnam, north of the 17th parallel). Coming in contact with communism while working in Paris, he later studied in Moscow and was communist-trained and indoctrinated. In the early 1930's he carried on secret resistance movements in Indo-China. His unflagging will to oust the French from Vietnam, his bitterness toward the French, caused many people to flock to his standard despite his communist leanings.

Bao Dai, enthroned as Emperor over Annam and Tonkin at the age of 12 in 1925 while studying in France, remained there until 1932. He was a puppet in the hands of the French and even if he had had the inclination would not have been able to do anything to alleviate the sufferings of his people.

In 1933, in an effort to halt the rising tide of nationalism, the French promised social reforms in Annam and Tonkin. In May of that year a 33 year old province chief of Phan Thiet in Annam, Ngo Dinh Diem, was appointed Minister of Interior to the Imperial Court at Hue, and designated as secretary to the Commission of Reforms. Ngo Dinh Diem, from a mandarinal family, was known for his competence, intelligence and integrity. He resigned this post after five months when all his efforts toward changes and reasonable reforms were unsupported by the French.

With the advent of World War II, the pace quickened. With the fall of France in 1940, and a change to the Vichy government of Marshal Petain, the Indo-China administration followed suit. Shortly afterwards the Japanese in their "Asia for Asians" campaign clashed with the French forces on the Chinese border. There was feeling among the Vietnamese that the Japanese would assist them in ousting the French from Indo-China. Soon there were widespread uprisings, both in Tonkin and Cochin-China, but these were not supported by the Japanese who preferred to cooperate at the moment with the French authorities. The French once again ruthlessly put down the rebellions through mass

deportations. It has been told on good authority<sup>4</sup> that one French method of getting rid of undesirable (to them) elements was to cut a slit through the hand with a knife or bayonet and run a thick heavy chain through the slit. In this way several hundred persons could be successfully chained together and then forced to board a vessel, transported to sea and at bayonet point all forced overboard. Quite ingenious!

Under pressure from the Japanese military might and with weak leadership at home and in Indo-China, the French authorities agreed to permit the Japanese to use all Indochinese cities, ports, air-fields, etc. However, the full administration of Indo-China remained in French hands. During the intervening years a number of old nationalistic movements awakened and Ho Chi Minh began to organize guerrilla groups in Tonkin for fighting the French and the Japanese. Through these groups the organization, named Viet Minh, began to give information to the Allies on movements and strategic installations of the Japanese. Ho Chi Minh became the leader of all nationalist movements through this work. Later he began to receive American arms flown in and air-dropped by the Allies and began subtly to take over control from any Vietnamese nationalist opponent.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt at about this time (1943) when discussing the Indo-China problem stated:

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<sup>4</sup> Told to me by a Vietnamese who formerly held the rank of Lieutenant in the French Army during the latter part of the Indo-China War.

"France has had the country for nearly one hundred years, and the people are worse off than at the beginning. France has milked it for one hundred years. The people of Indo-China are entitled to something better than this."<sup>5</sup>

In 1945 the Japanese disarmed and interned the French Army and arrested the French administrators. This action, in the minds of all nationalistic Vietnamese, was the end of French rule in Vietnam. With Japanese permission, Emperor Bao Dai proclaimed Vietnam's independence. He asked Ngo Dinh Diem to form a Vietnamese national government but Diem, not trusting the Japanese, did not answer this invitation. A government was formed, however, but due to many difficulties was ineffective. On August 15, when Japan surrendered, Vietnamese people resolved that never again would they come under a colonist power.

Ho Chi Minh strengthened his Viet Minh communist organization in Tonkin, proclaiming the independence of Vietnam and establishing the "Democratic Republic of Vietnam"; at the same time, killing and driving off the true nationalist Vietnamese. In September 1945, when British troops landed in Cochin-China to relieve the Japanese garrison, a number of Frenchmen were on board. The British permitted French troops, brought to Vietnam on British warships, to land and the French, after re-arming their troops held prisoner by the Japanese, began their campaign to reconquer Indo-China.

In the south a general Vietnamese uprising occurred and the French were sore-pressed in Saigon where severe street fighting occurred.

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<sup>5</sup> Cordell Hull: Memoirs, New York. 1948, p.1597.



The British forces, also using their Indian troops, fought alongside the French in an effort to quell the Vietnamese.

France was adamant. She promised reforms for Vietnam if Vietnamese resistance would cease, but the Vietnamese had had enough of French promises and continued to fight strongly against them. This was the beginning of an eight year-long war that was to rack Vietnam to the core.

In the long run, France claimed that she was fighting a war against Communism. That was true, she was doing so; however, at the same time she was fighting to once again take colonial possession of French Indo-China. Ho Chi Minh proclaimed that he was fighting the French; that the Viet Minh (communist) organization he had built up would fight to the death to oust the French. Popular support eventually went to Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh. What could be so popular as an organization fighting the French? During this long struggle, however, the United States poured millions of dollars worth of modern military equipment into the hands of the French each year so that Communism could be overthrown.

The situation was a mess.

Eventually, after the United States spent four billion dollars in military support of the 200,000-man French Army and on a 300,000-man Vietnamese militia in Indo-China; after eight years of war; after thousands of Vietnamese citizens were killed and other thousands made homeless by indiscriminate bombing and artillery fire, by bayoneting and torture; after thousands of French soldiers lost their lives; the cream of the French Expeditionary force of 15,000 men, trapped

in an absurd position in a fort at Dien Bien Phu, were practically annihilated by the Viet Minh firmly entrenched in the surrounding hills, and surrendered on May 6 to the Viet Minh forces led by Ho Chi Minh. French rule over Vietnam was finished.

Emperor Bao Dai, who had been in Vietnam off and on for several years, had returned to his villa at Nice, on the Riviera. French government officials conferred with him as to a plan or method by which France and Bao Dai could save some portions of Vietnam. French colonial aspirations were not dead. Perhaps if a strong nationalist leader could be found to head a portion of Vietnam in the south, the French and Bao Dai could still retain colonial control. A conference had opened in Geneva, Switzerland, to negotiate some semblance of a treaty with Ho Chi Minh. Yes! Something still could be saved.

French officials and Bao Dai agreed that Bao Dai was to offer the appointment of Prime Minister of the southern portion of Vietnam to Ngo Dinh Diem. Ngo had the reputation of being strongly anti-French and anti-Communist, had voluntarily gone into self-exile to Japan and the United States away from the French, and was presently in Hong Kong awaiting results of the Geneva Conference. Ngo Dinh Diem had complete integrity and had years ago (1933) attempted social reforms while Minister of Interior for the Imperial Government at Hue. His brother had been killed by the Communists. They had burned his ancestral home and a personal library of 10,000 books. Yes! The French agreed; this was the man to bring some semblance of order out of the chaos they had

created and when order was restored, they, the French, could always come back with a show of force and retake the country.

This is as good a time as any to dispel some of the rumors about Ngo Dinh Diem. Even among Americans, as well as among many Vietnamese, it was said that only because of the support of the United States, financially and materially, has his regime survived the past five years. There is, naturally, no way of proving or disproving this. There is no doubt that without American Aid to Free Vietnam, and with aid pouring into Communist Vietnam from Red China, Ngo Dinh Diem would have had an extremely difficult time of it, and would probably have suffered defeat.

That Diem was politically strong and astute, the French all agreed. Educated in Vietnam, after some minor governmental positions he was appointed as head of a large province in Annam. He successfully administered this province for four years under the watchful eyes of the French resident superior. He proved uncorruptible at a time when practically every official was corrupt. At 32 years of age he was appointed Minister of Interior of Annam and Tonkin because reforms had been promised by the Governor-General of Indo-China and Emperor Bao Dai felt that he could trust the judgment of Diem at the head of the ministry and as secretary of the Commission on Reforms. After several months Diem resigned--not because of inability to perform his assigned work, but simply because the French did not intend to permit any social reforms to creep into their handling of the Vietnamese.

Diem is supposed to have retired from political life at this time. Nothing could be farther from the truth. True, he did not hold political office, but his interest in administration never flagged. He maintained close contact with nationalist groups while living in retirement at Hue. His contacts and reputation with the people were such that after the Japanese coup in March 1945, during which the Japanese took over the administration of Vietnam from the French, and Bao Dai had asked for and received the resignation of his Minister of Interior, Pham Quynh (later executed by the Viet Minh), public demonstrations took place in Hue in favor of Ngo Dinh Diem. Bao Dai invited Diem to take the post (equivalent to Prime Minister), but Diem apparently did not receive the invitation. Diem was friendly toward Japan. He knew, however, that the Japanese were not willing to permit radical changes in Vietnam. Perhaps he did receive the invitation but felt that the time was not ripe for the move toward complete independence for Vietnam.

Ho Chi Minh, as astute a Vietnamese leader of the masses as Vietnam had produced, had Diem kidnapped by members of the Viet Minh in early 1946 and taken into the mountains. Several weeks later he had Diem brought before him and asked that Diem persuade nationalist leaders to join the Viet Minh banner. Diem, whose brother had been buried alive by the Viet Minh, refused to cooperate. When Diem after several weeks completely refused to be intimidated, Ho Chi Minh thought it wise to permit Diem to go free rather than to have him

killed. (He probably rues the day he permitted Diem to go.)

In 1945 Admiral d'Argenlieu was appointed Governor-General to Indo-China by De Gaulle. In 1946 he talked with Diem in an attempt to win Vietnamese nationalist support for a Vietnamese government that would cooperate with the French. He could not and would not meet the conditions Diem proposed. French historians of recent Vietnamese history speak respectfully and highly of Diem.

Develiers<sup>6</sup> states:

"Diem is known for his perfect integrity, his competence and his intelligence. .... His reputation is such that real miracles were expected of him."

Paul Mus,<sup>7</sup> a noted author on Vietnam, wrote of Diem (1952):

"...the most respected and the most influential nationalist leader."

During the intervening years--from 1950 to 1954--Diem visited Japan where he took great interest in the methods used by American technicians to put Japan on her feet. It was during this time that he first came into contact with Michigan State College which had sent technicians to Tokyo to assist in the setting up of a democratic form of government. One of the advisors was a young assistant professor, Wesley R. Fishel, and soon a friendship arose between the two men. When Diem visited the United States in 1951, he visited Michigan State College and became interested in and was impressed by the Governmental Research Bureau that had been established to assist visiting foreigners to understand working democracy. The friendship between Fishel and Diem

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<sup>6</sup> Philippe Develiers: Histoire du Vietnam de 1940 a 1952. p.63

<sup>7</sup> Paul Mus: Vietnam: Sociologie d'une guerre, p. 166. Paris, 1953

continued and correspondence was frequent. Diem spent considerable time at the Maryknoll Junior Seminary at Lakewood, New Jersey (Ngo Dinh Diem is a devout Catholic) before going to Hong Kong early in 1954 where he remained until his appointment as Prime Minister.

Ngo Dinh Diem accepted the premiership of that portion of Vietnam still out of Communist hands. Taking office on June 15, he has never made public his thoughts at the moment of assuming the premiership. Vietnam was in a chaotic condition. Could a strong man create peace and prosperity out of chaos?

Six days later, on June 21, the Geneva Agreement was signed partitioning Vietnam.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE TREATY OF GENEVA AND THE RESULT

At Geneva, on April 26, representatives of the great powers, United States, Great Britain, Russia and Red China, met with French, Cambodian, Laotian, Viet Minh and nationalist Vietnam representatives to decide just how Vietnam was to be partitioned. Eventually, on July 21, the Geneva Agreement was signed by interested parties, but not signed by the United States nor by the Vietnamese government of Ngo Dinh Diem.

The principal theme of the Agreement was that Vietnam would be divided into two zones of influence at the 17th parallel. That portion of Vietnam north of the 17th parallel, containing approximately 13,000,000 people and the major industries and resources of Vietnam, was given to Communist Ho Chi Minh and he named this portion the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. South of the 17th parallel were about 11,000,000 people with the rich Mekong delta area under the leadership of Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem, called the Republic of Vietnam.

The most important clause in the Geneva Agreement stated that anyone living in either area, north or south, would be permitted to transfer to the other side and would be assisted in making the move. This movement of people was to be supervised by an International Control Commission consisting of members of the armed forces from Canada, India and Poland. Beginning in August 1954 and lasting until

May 19, 1955, refugees poured out of the Communist zone of North Vietnam into the southern zone. Instead of being assisted in their move to the south as the Agreement had provided, the Communists did everything in their power to stop the masses of people from leaving their zone. Despite this, more than 800,000 northern Vietnamese came south to the free zone rather than to remain under Communist rule. The evacuation of these people, the problems, misery and heartbreak is well described in Thomas A. Dooley's book, Deliver Us From Evil, Farrer, Straus and Cudahy, 1955.

#### Conditions in Vietnam in 1954

To fully explain conditions in Vietnam detrimental to the establishment of a sound government, existing in 1954, would require the space of a volume since many of these conditions did not arise overnight. In some instances, a number of years passed in which a cankersore grew to formidable proportions by 1954.

Vietnam, that is, Cochin-China, Annam and Tonkin, had been declared fully independent at least six times by the French during the interval from 1945 to 1954. Each time a semblance of government by Vietnamese would be formed and would fail. The failure in most cases was due to failure of the French to support the government, and in other instances the failure was due to the selection by the French of pro-French leaders who did not have the confidence of the Vietnamese people. At least one such government, that of Tran Trong Kim formed in 1945 with full authority and backing from Bao Dai, could have

succeeded but the timing was bad. All members of this cabinet were educated in France but were ardent Vietnamese patriots. The cabinet began to prepare a constitution; fiscal reforms were announced and other measures taken to relieve the pressures from the peasants; political parties were permitted; the French language, taught in all schools in Vietnam as the major language, was dropped and replaced by the Latinized Vietnamese language, Quoc Ngu; but the presence of the Japanese forces, defeated but not yet capitulated, the lack of financial resources, and the further lack of a competent force to enforce decisions, caused this government to collapse.

Each provincial government had had a certain following, some large, some small. With each collapse a certain proportion of the population and of the elite became disgruntled.

The Cao Dai and Hoa Hao sects (explained previously under Religion) had, with the consent of the French, built up well-trained armies, the Cao Dai army numbering about 15,000 with a large area around the city of Tay Ninh considered as their territory. The Hoa Hao sect located in the south had their administrative area also protected by a well-trained army of 40,000.

The Binh Xuyen of Saigon and environs, a politico-religious sect, claimed an army of 25,000, but only 8,000 of these were actively supported by the French. They were an organization of bandits; the leader, General Le Van Vien, was once a river pirate. In 1953, by

diverse ways and means, with French approval, they "bought" the privilege of operating Saigon's plush gambling houses, control of the houses of prostitution, black market operations, and sale of opium, from Emperor Bao Dai reportedly for \$1,000,000. The Binh Xuyen control of the above business soon extended to the sale of licenses for various types of businesses to control of the sale of rice and produce brought into Saigon and neighboring cities. Saigon in the early fifties was a roaring wild city. The Binh Xuyen were in full power in Saigon upon Diem's appointment as Prime Minister. They had even taken over the Saigon police department and had infiltrated a number of other police departments in the area. The March 25, 1957 Pacific edition of Time carried a story of the robbery of the villa of General Le Van Vien outside Paris. Two masked men entered the villa, tied up Vien's two nieces and ransacked the house. Leaving with their loot of banknotes and jewelry estimated at \$285,000, the robbers made their getaway. This news item estimates that Vien fled Vietnam in 1955 with \$8,570,000. Vien, upon returning home and finding his home overrun with police, dismissed them, saying, "A miserable little robbery and everyone loses his head."

These sects, surviving for a number of years on subsidies provided by the French and restive now that the French were not in immediate control, were a threat to the security of the Diem government. They controlled one-third of Free Vietnam.

A further problem related to the refugees pouring in from the

north. No one can even make an estimate as to the number of refugees who would have come south if the Communists had not restricted their movements, terrorized and threatened them into staying in the north. As it was, beginning soon after the signing of the Geneva Agreement in July 1954, by March 1955 more than 500,000 had poured into the Free Vietnam ports at Saigon, Cap St. Jacques, Tourane and Nhatrang, with ten thousand additional persons coming in each and every day. These people, homeless and destitute, had to <sup>be</sup> fed, clothed and housed, and eventually resettled in suitable areas so that they, actually alien to South Vietnam (Cochin-China), could again become self-supporting.

The French government and Army still in Vietnam was bound and determined, by fair means or foul, to maintain at least some influence and profit out of this chaos. Pulling strings behind the scene they created an even more chaotic and deplorable condition obstructing Diem with wily rear-guard maneuvers.

One of the stipulations of the Geneva pact was the requirement that elections would be held in July 1956 in both North (Communist) and South (Free) Vietnam. With a preponderance of people in the north, with history proving that no election held in a Communist-dominated country could ever be a "free" election, Diem faced the prospect of winning over the millions of Vietnamese living in the south who had never felt the weight of the Communist hand. Diem had little to fear from the people of Central Vietnam, just south of the 17th parallel,



since for several years they had been under the Red yoke and fully realized what that meant. It was in the south that Diem's government had to "sell" itself.

With the Communist Viet Minh (later called Viet Cong) withdrawing their military forces to the north of the 17th parallel, just how many of these had been left behind as supposed innocent villagers, but with hidden caches of arms and grenades? How many Viet Minh were mingled within the 800,000 refugees pouring south? No one knew, of course, except the Communists, but to think that they would pass up this opportunity to organize cells in the south would be a tragic error since the greatest gains made by the Reds has been by infiltration or by cadres left behind, followed later by terroristic acts which slowly undermined the national government. Diem had to have well-trained police and military forces to ferret out these well-hidden cells. Later events in Vietnam proved the soundness of Diem's theory that the Reds had planted many communist cells in the south.

Further, because of the failure of the French administration in Indo-China to permit Vietnamese to assume any responsibility in government, Diem's administrators in taking over the governmental functions had to cope with personnel unfamiliar and untrained to assume these responsible positions.

There were literally thousands of French people in Vietnam, excluding approximately 200,000 Army personnel. Naturally, the French people were bitterly opposed to Vietnamese administration of

the government. Both the French Army and the French civil authorities, now out of jobs, did everything possible to undermine Diem. Also, the United States, actively supporting the French in Indo-China since they were fighting the Communists (as well as attempting to retain their colonial empire) now didn't quite know what to do. Should they support Diem who appeared to have no other support? It would hurt the prestige of the United States Government to support Diem's government if it should fail while in the throes of infancy. So for a number of months Diem did not have the support of the United States.

Another problem facing Diem was his failure to control the 200,000 man French-trained Vietnamese Army. Led by the pro-French General, Nguyen Van Hinh, Hinh was not about to proclaim allegiance to Diem. Without the support of the Army, with the police in the hands of the Binh Xuyen, is it any wonder that Time<sup>8</sup> called Diem "the beleaguered man"?

Slowly, but surely, Diem, one by one, overcame the obstacles confronting him.

The first crisis came from an expected source. General Hinh came to Diem and issued an ultimatum; either to turn over the reins of the government to him or the army would mutiny and take over in a coup d'etat. Diem coolly stalled and discussed the situation with U.S. Ambassador Donald R. Heath and several of the top American brass heading the US Economic Mission and the American military mission (these agencies had been in Vietnam since 1950 when the US began to supply

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<sup>8</sup> Time, April 4, 1955, p.22.

war material to the French war effort). He informed Hinh that if there was a military coup d'etat, all American aid would cease. With Hinh stymied, he was soon recalled to France by Bao Dai. Slowly the army leaders began to lean toward Diem. Soon thereafter Diem re-organized and appointed to his cabinet several persons looked upon favorably by the sects. In this manner he began to woo cooperation from these groups.

Diem corresponded with Dr. Wesley R. Fishel at Michigan State University, and asked that Fishel come to Vietnam as a consultant with the approval of FOA Washington. Fishel worked closely with Prime Minister Diem. Later, realizing the need of modernization of government, Diem made an official request to Washington that a survey be made by MSU to reveal the needs of Vietnam in better management and administration of governmental functions. This was done by an MSU Special Mission in October.

In October 1954, the French began a campaign against Diem, both in Vietnam and in France, especially putting pressure on Bao Dai. Now fully realizing Diem's anti-French attitude, they knew that they could never resolidify their position in South Vietnam, therefore, the campaign to get Diem fired.

Diem now began to exert some influence on the Vietnamese army, asking that they take over the problems of security in Central Vietnam (south of the 17th parallel), replacing the French army which was regrouping to the south. At this time the United States, through MAAG, took over from the French some of the training of the Vietnamese Army.

Diem took over the control of currency from the French and ordered Saigon police to launch a drive against gambling, corruption and prostitution. To some extent the police responded, but the Binh Xuyen fired bitter protests to Diem.

Diem drafted plans for a National Assembly. This would be Vietnam's first democratic institution. He planned land reforms which would ease some of the burden of the rent paid by tenant farmers.

In November President Eisenhower sent a personal envoy in the person of General J. Lawton Collins, ex-Army Chief of Staff, to Vietnam to confer with Diem. The effect of this action on the part of President Eisenhower and of General Collins' conference with Diem resulted in recommendations that the United States support Diem in his struggle to inaugurate a democratic government. The regular Ambassador to Vietnam, Donald R. Heath, had recommended that the US not support Diem. This move by Collins strengthened Diem's position and, further, promised US aid in feeding, clothing, housing and re-settling the 800,000 refugees gave Diem additional confidence. (The Catholic Relief Services was doing a tremendous job.) Even with US support, however, the odds were against Diem surviving more than several months.

Economic privileges that had been extended toward French products were removed by a joint French-Vietnamese agreement at the instigation of Diem.

Very early in 1955, the United States agreed to furnish American

aid directly to the Vietnamese, instead of funnelling the aid through the French. The American government began to take an active interest in Free Vietnam, since Diem's government had already lasted beyond the outside expectations of the forecasters. With US support becoming stronger each week, Diem began to make moves of his own. His personal contacts with various portions of the Vietnamese Army staff took effect and the national army, moving slowly, began to pressure the troops of the Hoa Hao sect in the south. The armed forces of the sects were making it practically impossible for the refugees to be spread out over a large area of the country in resettlement projects.

The French at this time fell into one of their own traps. To give the Geneva Treaty the aura of respectability, the French had agreed to an inserted clause which would permit any legal Vietnamese national government to demand the removal of French control over the Vietnamese Army. Diem took this literally and demanded the French to remove all French control from the Vietnamese Army. The French complied and Diem appointed Vietnamese officers of his choice to command positions.

In March the Binh Xuyen, acting as spokesmen for the sects, issued an ultimatum to the Vietnamese government to the effect that unless the government left the sects alone, the sects--Binh Xuyen, Hoa Hao and the Cao Dai--would revolt. Accepting the challenge Diem began to apply more and more pressure on the Binh Xuyen until in April that sect, using its army and some loyal police, began to



bombard Independence Palace in Saigon, the seat of Vietnamese government, with mortar shells. After several weeks of street fighting in which a portion of the city of Saigon-Cholon was destroyed by artillery fire and conflagration, the Vietnamese National Army, loyal to Diem, routed the Binh Xuyen who then fled to the swamps adjoining Saigon, pursued by the Army. With this show of force, Diem was able to secure the allegiance of the remaining sects and their armed forces were assimilated into the National Army. However, dissident groups from all sects broke with the main bodies and at this writing (April 1960 ~~five~~ five years later) are still anti-Diem and anti-government, live in the deep jungles about the Vietnam-Cambodian frontiers making sporadic raids into the countryside.

On April 26, Diem received a message from Emperor Bao Dai, who was basking in the sun at the Riviera, dismissing Diem as Premier and appointing one Van Vy as General of the National Army. Diem ignored the dismissal and did not appoint Van Vy as General of the Army. At this moment he was too occupied in fighting the Binh Xuyen. During May, with the Binh Xuyen routed and pursued closely by his army, Diem was now able to control the police who for a number of years had been under Binh Xuyen influence.

In April a three-way contract was signed between the Government of Vietnam, Michigan State University, and the United States through the Foreign Operations Administration (FOA), now ICA, International Cooperation Administration, which authorized the establishment

of an MSU Advisory Group in Vietnam. The contract specified that MSU advisors were to give technical advice to the Vietnamese government in the fields of Public Administration, Public Information, Police Administration, Public Finance, and Economics. During the first week in May, 1955, the Chief Advisor of this Advisory Group, Edward W. Weidner, arrived in Saigon.

NOTE TO THE READER

This volume is a history of the work of Michigan State University's Police Team in Vietnam. The very brief history of Vietnam and the Vietnamese people, and of the events leading to the request for MSU's assistance in several fields by President Diem, is not intended to be a complete history. For thorough coverage of Vietnam, one should read Joseph Buttinger's, The Smaller Dragon, Frederick A. Praeger, New York (1958); Ellen Hammer's, The Struggle for Indo-China, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Cal. (1954), and her Struggle for Indo-China Continued - Geneva to Bandung.

A Dragon Apparent, by Norman Lewis, Jonathan Cape, London (1951) is an interestingly told story of travel through Indo-China (Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) during 1949-50 while the Viet Minh-French-Nationalist war was in progress.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST MONTHS (MAY 27 - DECEMBER 31, 1955)

The survey of public administration and police needs in Vietnam made by the Special Mission was completed in the latter part of October 1954. It was not until April, 1955, that a three-way contract between Michigan State University, the Government of Vietnam, and the Government of the United States, through FOA, was negotiated and signed authorizing the establishment of an MSU Advisory Group in Vietnam. Relative to the work of a police administration team within the advisory group, the signed contract contained in Annex 1, paragraph **11**, the following: *in last document?*

"The University shall assist the Government in developing sound organization and methods in the police services and in improving the training and equipment of the police. The University's staff in Vietnam shall render advice on police work to the branches of the police designated by the Government. The University shall offer courses of training in police organization and methods, and shall assist the Government in the creation and operation of a training center or school for this purpose, according to work plans prepared in advance by the University for approval by the Government."

The first chief of this advisory group, Edward W. Weidner (member and head of the original survey team) arrived in Saigon May 20. <sup>'55</sup> Howard W. Hoyt and Richard W. Rogers, the vanguard of the police administration team, arrived on May 27. <sup>'55</sup> It was October 31 before the entire team complement of eight men was filled. The later arrivals were:

Gilbert Shelby - July 30

Corey K. Dymond - August 6 (Identification Specialist)  
Charles F. Sloane - September 3  
Royce Williams - September 29 (Communications Specialist)  
Joseph Marlow - October 3 (Traffic Engineer)  
Jack E. Ryan - October 31

\* \* \*

With only the original survey team's recommendations for information about the police problems in Vietnam, and these recommendations covering the general municipal police field only, Howard Hoyt and Richard Rogers concentrated on meeting people in the police field and in the Minister of Interior's office to obtain the information so badly needed in order to have comprehensive knowledge of the specific problems of the police in Vietnam; the number of police organizations; number of personnel within each organization; specific duties; amount of training; how well equipped; qualifications of supervisors and commanding officers; and countless other bits of pertinent information necessary for a complete study before plans could be formulated for suggested reorganization, if this was required. They also talked with members of American agencies in Vietnam: US Embassy personnel, people from the United States Operations Mission (USOM) with officials from the United States Information Service (USIS), Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), and others.

They learned that, under the Geneva Agreements, Vietnam was

limited to an army of 150,000. That US military advisory staff was limited to the number in Vietnam at the time of the signing of this pact. That despite obvious violations of the agreements by the Communist North, Prime Minister Diem was hewing to the treaty. Informed groups told them of the insecurity in the countryside, of banditry getting out of hand, and of dissident groups of the sects still terrorizing villages in their respective areas. Of French armed forces intrigue and of stories circulated by the French civilians that the Americans would be bigger colonists than France ever was.

Hoyt, designated as chief of the MSU police team, and Rogers had frequent meetings with the Minister of Interior, Bui Van Thinh, who was remarkably cooperative, and with his Chief of Cabinet, Do van Ro. They discussed the many problems facing the country; the lawlessness in the countryside; the disorganization of the police; the question of loyalty of many of the police personnel, etc. He asked that the police team:

1. work toward streamlining the civil police agencies from administration point of view;
2. review agencies with a view to consolidating them, if possible;
3. concentrate effort toward training of all agencies, which he recognized as a major need;
4. review agencies' physical needs.

After several days it was possible to present a brief picture of the police organization.



1. Garde Civile, Civil Guard, or Bao An Doan.

As of April 8, <sup>1954</sup> Prime Minister Diem had created a National Guard type of organization by the issuance of Ordinance 26, which combined a number of provincial (similar to county) guard units and private plantation guards into one unit. In brief, the ordinance stated that: *original document.*

"All individual guard units ordered into one organization. Headquarters in Saigon and directed by a Director-General. Organization to be on a military company basis. Functions, mainly, to keep law and order in the countryside, and to gather information of a subversive nature. Control of Civil Guard placed under Minister of Interior."

No money was appropriated from the national budget for the operation of the Civil Guard, thus, at least for the time being, the force would be paid at the provincial (county) level. The Vietnamese name for the organization was Bao An Doan, meaning, literally, Corps for Guarding the Peace. This force, poorly uniformed, inadequately equipped with arms and transportation, numbered approximately 68,000, of which 12,000 had some type of uniform. Director-General Ton That Trac, an experienced Civil Service administrator, had just been appointed head of this organization.

2. Suret e, or Cong An, was named Vietnamese Bureau of Investigation by MSU advisors.

This was a force of approximately 4000 men working in plain clothes. The organization's primary responsibility under the French was the repression of any political activity against the government.

Under the present nationalist government, the VBI's responsibilities lie in the repression of Viet Cong activity, ferreting out communist cells, and repress anti-Diem movements. Probably less than 20% of this organization's work was in the criminal field. A Director-General, General Nguyen Ngoc Le of the Vietnamese Army, was at the head, having been appointed June 1, 1954. He had brought with him a number of army officers as aides and appointed them as heads of bureaus.

As the Minister of Interior had stated, the loyalty of many of these men was questionable; many lacked training, and morale was low. They lacked up-to-date investigative equipment and were underarmed, lacked communication facilities, and had but little transportation.

3. Municipal Police, Canh Sat.

The Saigon-Cholon police department was, by far, the largest city organization in Vietnam. Saigon-Cholon was a city of nearly two million population. The Municipal Police numbered approximately 5,000. Poorly uniformed, poorly equipped, lacking in communications and proper police armament, morale was very low. They also lacked proper training in modern police methods and procedures. The three cities, Saigon-Cholon, Dalat and Tourane, were autonomous in principle, and the police were paid from city taxes. Any other municipality and there were at this time approximately twenty cities of over 15,000 population, the police were paid by the provincial budget and thus came under the jurisdiction of the VBI for technical

assistance and equipment. In actual fact it was impossible to make a separate count of municipal police and VBI agents, outside Saigon-Cholon. It was estimated that there were 3000 municipal police in the other cities. The Chief of Police, or Director of Prefectural Police of Saigon-Cholon, is Mr. Tran Van Tu, a career policeman.

4. Gendarmerie.

According to all information at hand, this was a well-trained and -disciplined military police organization under the Minister of Defense. Numbering 717, they were well-uniformed, armed and equipped. Assigned duties were: the investigation of crime by military personnel; investigation of accidents involving military personnel and vehicles and military and civilian vehicles. Personnel wore a distinctive red officer's cap or red tam.

5. Village Militia.

There was supposed to be in existence in several of the provinces, a village-type of guard force, armed, and paid a small monthly salary by the province chiefs. Their principal duty was to prevent the infiltration of villages and village areas by strangers or strange groups.

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During the first few weeks, the two MSU advisors had their offices in their briefcases and did all typing and office work in their rooms at the Majestic Hotel. The Chief Advisor was working madly trying to find office space for the incoming MSU group, totaling

30 Americans, office furniture and supplies, etc.

The advisors had numerous meetings with General Le, VBI, Mr. Trac, Civil Guard, and Mr. Tu, Chief of Saigon Police. They carefully explained the reasons for their presence in Vietnam; that their purpose was to suggest and advise only. The meetings dealt with present organization, police duties, responsibilities, methods of command and supervision, necessary equipment, and proper police arms and communications. They noted the lack of proper organization, equipment, the great need for training at all levels, with basic training of police perhaps the greatest need.

Soon after their arrival, Hoyt and Rogers were asked to meet with the Police Study Committee appointed by US Ambassador Collins and composed of representatives of the Embassy, MAAG, USOM, and Special Assistance Liaison Mission. This committee was chairmanned by Colonel Dwan, MAAG. The advisors were briefed by the members of the committee regarding internal security in Vietnam, and discussions ensued as to resolving the many problems.

*from 9  
all  
ambassador*

The Dwan Report and its recommendations are reproduced.

*note on  
I can report*

"Notes on a Police Structure for Vietnam

1. GENERAL:

a. An effective police structure for Viet-Nam should be capable of ensuring law and order and of cooperating with the Armed Forces in maintaining internal security against Viet-Minh and anti-government elements.

b. The organization of such a police structure into the following principal components is believed sound:

- (1) A National Police and Surete
- (2) Prefectoral and Municipal Police Forces
- (3) A Garde Civile

c. The assigned missions and spheres of operation of each of these components should be reviewed, brought up-to-date, and clearly defined to insure complete coverage of all necessary police functions on the one hand, and to avoid duplication of effort and conflicting responsibilities on the other. Specific suggestions follow.

2. NATIONAL POLICE AND SURETE:

a. The National Police should assume responsibility for performing the functions of administrative and judicial police throughout the country outside of the municipalities. Such functions require personnel of relatively good education who are capable of receiving specialized training, understanding laws and regulations (such as those relating to taxes, commerce and trade, supervision of markets, price control, and of maintaining records relating to such activities), making investigations, taking sworn statements, and giving reliable evidence in court. At the present time such duties are prescribed for both the Garde Civile and the National Gendarmerie. As indicated below, the Garde Civile which is not suited to such tasks, should be relieved of this mission. The Gendarmerie, whose principal tasks have been assumed by the Garde Civile throughout the rural areas of the country, has become an unnecessary organization and should be discontinued. The National Police, whose other functions closely parallel those of administrative and judicial police, should assume this mission. Personnel of the Gendarmerie which is now at a strength of only 717, should be used to provide cadres for the National Police in the field of administrative and judicial police functions, and for the Garde Civile which is weak in qualified cadres.

b. In view of the proposed discontinuance of the Gendarmerie, the National Police should be specifically assigned primary responsibility for patrolling roads, preventing accidents, and ensuring public safety with the assistance of the Garde Civile. Specific responsibility should also be assigned it to maintain a lookout for and to arrest persons wanted by other police forces, or observed in violations of the law in areas outside the centers of population.

c. One specific function that should be primarily the responsibility of the National Police is the maintenance of a nation-wide network of police communications for the rapid transmission of police reports, intelligence, and wanted notices.



Recommendations

a. That the National Police assume full responsibility for performing the functions of administrative and judicial police in the countryside outside the municipalities and that this mission be removed from the Garde Civile and the Gendarmerie as soon as the National Police is capable of assuming it.

b. That the National Police be specifically charged as the police agency with primary responsibility for patrolling highways, preventing accidents, ensuring public order, arresting wanted persons and persons observed in violations of law in areas outside centers of population.

c. That the Gendarmerie be discontinued and its personnel used to provide cadres for the National Police and Garde Civile.

3. PREFECTORAL AND MUNICIPAL POLICE:

a. The existing system of separate police forces for the Saigon-Cholon prefecture and the several municipalities is generally sound. The Saigon-Cholon prefectural police should unquestionably be fully responsible to the prefect and removed from the political arena. This force and the several municipal forces can profit from a survey by experts in police matters with a view to improving their recruitment, training, equipment, organization, and police techniques.

b. The Ministry of the Interior and the Regional Delegates should give consideration to the creation of additional municipal police forces in urban areas now not so served. This would relieve units of the Garde Civile who otherwise are responsible for law and order outside present municipalities from tasks in urban areas for which they are not best suited.

Recommendations

That the Ministry of the Interior in consultation with the Regional Delegates consider the designation of additional municipalities and establishment therein of municipal police forces.

4. GARDE CIVILE:

a. Mission: The mission as contained in ordinance No. 26, 8 April 1955, is not satisfactory in several respects:



(1) Specific mention should be made that the missions of anti-subversion and anti-sabotage are the primary missions of the Garde Civile, outside the municipalities, and that these missions are carried out in cooperation with all other police agencies within their respective spheres.

(2) All reference to the supervision and execution of administrative laws and rules should be excluded. Similarly, the Garde Civile should not exercise the functions of judicial police as prescribed in Art. 5, which should be deleted. The functions of administrative and judicial police are not appropriate to the Garde Civile. Such functions require special training and channels of administration and supervision not consistent with the structure and role of the Garde. Administrative and judicial police functions should be performed by municipal police and the National Police. In cases where administrative and judicial police functions are now performed by units of the Garde Civile, these duties should be transferred to other police agencies and as soon as possible.

(3) Missions of surveillance over airports and sea ports should be clarified since such installations normally are located in urban areas which would come under the responsibility of municipal or prefectural police, or under certain branches of the National Service of Police and Surete. The statement of mission should make clear the division of responsibility among these police agencies in this respect.

(4) Specific mention should be made of the mission to protect life and property in the area outside the centers of population, assisted by the National Police.

b. Organization and Command Structure

(1) It is considered that a Garde Civile of approximately 45,000 is an appropriate size considering the missions it has to perform. The size should be re-examined at the end of 1955 with a view to reducing the size if the situation permits.

(2) The ordinance makes the line of command authority of the Garde ambiguous (Title II). This portion should be revised so as clearly to prescribe that the Garde Civile is commanded by the Director General who is responsible to the Minister of the Interior, and that the chain of command consists of the Regional Commanders at the Regional level, the Company-Group Commanders at the Province level, and the commanders of individual companies. It should be made clear that the Regional Delegates and the Province Chiefs do not command the Garde units in their respective territories, but that they direct the use of the units, through the appropriate Garde commanders, within their respective areas.

(3) The ordinance (Art. 12) refers to the basic units of the Garde, the companies, as "essentially mobile". This implies that there may be a fundamental difference of view as to the purpose of the Garde. The view expressed herein is that the Garde Civile should consist of units implanted in the Provinces to insure stability and continuity in the execution of the functions of law and order, and to permit each unit to develop familiarity with the populace and the security problems of its respective area. This will assist the Garde in apprehending Viet Minh cadres, anticipating trouble caused by Viet Minh covert activity, and taking prompt action in event of such activity. No other police or security agency is capable of playing such a role in the villages and rural areas on a continuing basis. This function requires fixed-type companies covering assigned areas rather than mobile ones. This does not mean that there should be individual static guard posts which pin the troops down and restrict their movement. The view expressed herein is that the companies should generally be located in an area for which they are responsible and within which they would operate freely. If situations arise requiring reinforcement of the Garde units from another Province, it is possible that adjacent units could be called upon. Similarly, certain companies in each Province could be designated as reserve units and be mobile. However, this would not justify considering the Garde companies as "essentially mobile". In event of serious trouble requiring greater assistance, units of the light (territorial) divisions could serve this purpose, since they will be equipped and trained to engage in military as distinguished from police-type operations.

c. Armament. Armament of the Garde composed of carbines, submachine guns, pistols, revolvers and grenades and the withdrawal of rifles as the Government plans is consistent with the missions of the Garde. It is estimated that sufficient weapons of the above types (excluding rifles) are on hand in Viet-Nam to equip a Garde Civile of 45,000 in addition to the requirements of the FEC and the National Army.

d. Source of Funds. It will be necessary for the entire sum set forth in the 1955 National budget for subsidies to the Regions (1,351,000,000\$) to be used exclusively for maintenance of the Garde Civile if a Garde of the size planned is to be supported at the annual cost estimated by the Government.

e. Cadres. Since good leadership will probably be scarce, it would be desirable if suitable personnel discharged from the Army were placed in the Garde to form cadres. This would justify the release of the increased number of Garde personnel necessary to compensate for the introduction of cadres.

f. Use in Time of War: In order to coordinate the activities of all armed elements in time of national emergency, provision should be made in the ordinance that the Garde Civile would be placed under the operational control of the Ministry of National Defense upon order of the President. Further study should be given this question, but a possible procedure might be in time of emergency to attach units of the Garde Civile in each Region to the territorial command of the National Army responsible for the Region concerned thereby augmenting the capability of the territorial divisions to perform their mission of internal security.

#### Recommendations

a. That administrative and judicial police functions be removed from the mission of the Garde Civile as soon as possible and transferred to the National Police.

b. That the Garde Civile have its own separate command structure in which Regional Delegates and Province Chiefs do not have a command role.

c. That the basic Garde units, the companies, be essentially fixed rather than mobile in conformity with the concept that units of the Garde Civile are implanted in the territories of the Provinces.

d. That provision be made for placing the Garde Civile under the operational control of the Ministry of National Defense in time of national emergency upon order of the President.

e. That the Garde be assigned the mission of primary responsibility for anti-subversion and anti-sabotage and protection of life and property in areas outside the centers of population, assisted by other police agencies within their respective spheres.

f. That the ordinance establishing the Garde be modified to reflect the above recommendations.

g. That the Government insure the availability of sufficient funds from its own resources to provide for maintenance of a Garde Civile.

h. That discharged Army personnel who are qualified be used insofar as possible as cadres for the Garde Civile."

Clearly recommended in this report is the formation of a police structure composed of (1) a National Police and Surete (emphasis supplied), (2) Prefectural and Municipal Police forces, and (3) a Garde Civile. Since the present Surete, or VBI organization, is a plain clothes investigation body only, the suggestions in 2. National Police and Surete and under Recommendations, would necessitate the creation of a uniformed branch of the VBI of sufficient strength to carry out the recommended duties of

"b. .... primary responsibility for patrolling highways, preventing accidents, ensuring public order, arresting wanted persons and persons observed in violations of laws in areas outside centers of population."

Thus, the new uniformed branch of the VBI would have all the duties of a state police organization.

The report suggested that the assigned duties of the Garde

Civile be revised

Subversion and

anti-sabotage; that

"4. Garde Civile a. (2) All references to supervision and execution of administration laws and rules be excluded (from original order of mission of Garde Civile)."

Subparagraph (4) states:

"Specific mention should be made of the mission to protect life and property in the area outside the centers of population, assisted by the National Police."

The Swan report thus, was clearly advocating two National or State Police-type organizations to function in Vietnam. This concept was contrary to good police administration and was not recommended by MSU in their recommendations to the Vietnamese Government.

It is interesting to note in the daily report of June 22, 1955, of a meeting at which Colonels Jorgenson and Valeriano and Captain St. John, MAAG, George Boudrias, Special Assistance Liaison Mission, Dr. Weidner, Chief Advisor, MSUG, and Chief Hoyt were present. The following was discussed:

"Colonel Jorgenson reported to us on his recent report to the Ambassador (US Ambassador Collins). He seemed pleased with the progress made to date, was anxious to receive our recommendations on additional manpower and equipment needs, and was promised this report in a rough-estimate form within ten days. It was pointed out among our group that the increase in manpower and equipment needs over and above the original requests to FOA are due in part to the fact that the need for a Garde Civile as a civilian police force was not apparent when the original committee studied the problem last October. Neither did this committee take into consideration the possible development of the VBI nationwide and its needs. Most of the study was made on municipal needs and the possibility of provincial police units."



Due to the great need for training, arrangements were made, with considerable assistance from MAAG, for the sending of ten Civil Guardofficers to the Philippines to take a six-week police course with the Philippine Constabulary. These ten men left Vietnam on June 15. <sup>year</sup> On June 27, ten men selected from all three police services, the Civil Guard, VBI, and the Saigon Municipal Police, were entered in a 12-week English-language course. One of the great difficulties at this time was the language barrier, which later resolved itself due to the proficient interpreter-translators we were able to employ.

Work was begun on a "Work Plan" for "Police Administration" to be submitted to USOM, the American Embassy, and to the Vietnamese Government. While they worked on the "plan," Hoyt and Rogers made arrangements for a second group of twenty police officers, twelve from the Civil Guard, to attend the Philippines Constabulary school for six weeks.

During a brief interlude from "office" work, the team visited the eight companies <sup>of Civil Guard</sup> in training at an Army encampment at Quan Trè near Saigon. Accompanied by Director-General Trac, their report of the trip made on June 16 was as follows:

"8:00 A.M. ....

Director-General Trac rode in a red jeep with two officers armed with machine guns. Valeriano (MAAG Colonel) was in the second jeep with two more armed officers. We followed in a jeep with three bulletholes in the windshield. It is about 15 to 20 kilometers to Quan Trè. We enjoyed seeing the countryside. The training camp was clean and well kept. They had about 500 men on the parade ground whom we inspected. Only a small percentage had firearms. They (the Vietnamese



Civil Guard) were from the north and had been in the army for about eight years. They looked like a good group. There are no facilities for police training at the camp. Director Trac has a training plan, but it has not as yet been approved by the Minister of Interior. It was obvious that at this time the Garde Civile is strongly military, and it will be a major problem to change them over to a police organization. They seem to understand this and are going to try and do something about it. Returned to Saigon at 10:30 A.M."

During one of their frequent meetings with the Minister of Interior, he mentioned the serious state in which he found the police. That he found it extremely difficult to select men from the police for more important police positions since he did not know who was loyal to the government. This was a serious point. When one considered the various phases of governmental control that Vietnam had been subjected to during the past fifteen years, there can be no doubt that grave questions could be asked regarding the loyalty of the police as a group. Since 1940 Vietnam had passed through the hands of (1) French government; (2) French-Vichy government; (3) Japanese control; (4) Nationalist Vietnamese Government; (5) return of French control; (6) several pro-French Vietnamese governments; (7) Viet Minh or Communist government; (8) Saigon and environs, Binh Xuyen control; and, finally, (9) Diem's nationalist government.

How many of the police in the several organizations were still loyal to France? How many were Communist and remained within the department as a source of information to the Communists and to foment trouble when the occasion arose? These problems were disturbing. In this respect the two MSU advisors suggested the use of certain

procedures for the purpose of screening all police personnel. The suggestions were accepted and a security check system was installed by the latter part of August. This worked very well and is still being used for the screening of government employees.

During June, July and August, the atmosphere in and about Saigon was heavy with intrigue, rumors and suspicions. The city was infiltrated by Communists, Communist sympathizers, Binh Xuyen adherents, and members of the dissident sects. Rumors of all kinds spread rapidly. For example, when several Americans were ill of hepatitis and two died after evacuation to Clark Field, Philippines, the rumor was started that hepatitis would strike the entire American colony. That the Americans had better "get out".

The streets of Saigon were filled with soldiers of the French Expeditionary Forces, composed mostly of Arabs, Indians, and Senegalese. The French Foreign Legion was conspicuous and the Vietnamese police had their hands full.

Several bombs were exploded in Americans cars, but fortunately no one was injured. Power and water installations were bombed repeatedly and there was seldom a night when power failure due to sabotage did not darken the entire city.

On June 2, the two MSU police advisors submitted to USOM and to the Vietnamese Government their first formal report in the form of a "Work Plan - Police Administration". The original of this report was submitted to Prime Minister Diem by US Ambassador Collins on June 3. Hoyt and Rogers discussed the points of the report with Minister of Interior Bui Van Thinh. Portions of the report, pertinent

to the work, are hereby reproduced.

"TECHNICAL ADVISORY STAFF

"At the time of the original survey and report, it was not apparent that it would be necessary to develop as extensive an internal security force as is now proposed. Most of that study was confined to municipal police problems and needs. It did not contemplate the following:

National Police Force. Responsible authorities have determined that it is necessary to establish a centrally directed and administered national police force of approximately 25,000 men.

Vietnamese Bureau of Investigation. It is likewise necessary to establish a centrally directed and administered bureau of specially trained investigators, specialists, and technicians to centralize records, files, laboratory facilities, enforcement of certain national regulations and national interests.

Centralization of Police Records. It is essential that all police records be reorganized and centralized immediately in the VBI under the personal direction of competent staff members of this police team. As soon as Vietnamese personnel have had enough training and experience, they would, of course, take over.

Modernizing Fingerprint System. The Vietnamese officials insist, and we concur, that the fingerprints now on file be reclassified and refiled in the uniform Henry system. This project, likewise, will demand staff members to actively direct this operation for at least a year.

Scientific Crime Laboratory. The present facilities are inadequate. It will be necessary to re-equip the crime laboratories and train its personnel.

Centralized Police Training Academy. Because of the increase in the internal security responsibilities, and as a result, an increase in the size of the police forces, the police training plans must be revised to include a sizeable central police training academy to handle basic training for all police personnel. It must accommodate a class of 400 students

for ten weeks; and it should be able to conduct simultaneously six other courses of approximately six weeks, each handling fifty students.

Police Field Service. Because of the size of the internal security forces, it will be essential that our staff have six men active in the field, giving advice and suggestions and specialized training at the operations level.

#### ORGANIZATION

##### The National Police

The National Police has as its primary mission the handling of the present subversion problem. It seems important that the National Police be a civilian police in every respect. We feel that the suggested Vietnamese Police Academy should be apart from any military encampments, directed and instructed by civilian personnel on civil police matters, modified, of course, to fit the present conditions in Vietnam. Considerable emphasis will have to be placed on leadership training and public relations. It is hoped that the National Police will be so trained and distributed that they will very soon popularize themselves with the populace through extra services and courtesies. They are to work themselves into the confidence of the citizens they serve, be considered their protectors both day and night, have their homes in the villages.

From the organization point of view, they are under the direct command of their superiors right up to the Minister of Interior. However, operationally they are to look to the province chief or communal leader for advice. They will have to be so organized, trained, and equipped that they can quickly become a mobile support task force. The government must depend entirely on this civil police force to maintain law and order and cope with civil disturbances under normal conditions. However, they must be trained to work with the military in case of a civil crisis or an attack from the outside. In time of war, at the discretion of the President, the National Police could be under the direction of the military.

##### The Vietnamese Bureau of Investigation

The V.B.I., formerly Sûreté, is expected to be a force of about 4,000 in strength. Its responsibilities will

generally be the same as those of our F.B.I. in that it will maintain the central criminal files, scientific crime detection laboratory, and furnish these services for all enforcement agencies of the country. It will be responsible for the investigation and prosecution of major crimes; assume the additional responsibilities that are carried by other agencies in the States such as immigration, customs, narcotics, internal revenue and income tax, and alcohol tax. It will screen all intelligence information, and postal control, etc.

The V.B.I. will be a force of men specialized and technically trained in their respective fields. They will work with the other two police agencies and coordinate all efforts in the problems in which they are interested. There must be especially close liaison between the V.B.I. and the National Police.

#### Municipal Police Forces

The municipal police are presently directly under the Minister of Interior, and it appears expeditious to have this relationship continue. However, it is hoped that they, too, will look to their mayors and city councils for direction and eventually become independent municipal police departments. They are to look to the Vietnamese Police Academy for training of new recruits as well as in-service, specialized, and all other training which the Academy will offer.

It will be necessary that the basic ordinances regarding the various police agencies be revised, inserting the civilian functions that are necessary in eliminating the references to military standards and procedures such as enlistments, etc.

See Appendix II organizational chart.

#### EQUIPMENT

Repeated efforts have been made to secure accurate inventories of existing equipment in the different enforcement agencies. The results, although not considered completely accurate, have been taken into consideration in preparing this report.



### Communications

Police services are no better than their communications system. The existing public or governmental communications systems are inadequate and undependable, and do not provide the secrecy that is essential in police communications.

Police communications must be separate and apart from any other communications even for normal routine operational purposes. In emergencies, it is very important that the police communications system be clear for police traffic.

We are advised that a V.H.F. system would be the most efficient. It gives thorough coverage for limited areas, eliminates climatic interferences, would be less susceptible to enemy "jamming". The purchase of this equipment should be on a contract basis with the manufacturer, calling for the original engineering services and the responsibility of installation, and stipulating a completion date. Qualified engineers and technicians are not available on the open market. The rough estimate is \$850,000. This item of expense is not included in this report.

The MAAG has in Vietnam, as surplus, army communication equipment that almost duplicates the above recommendations except that it is on the 40- to 50- megacycle band. This band is already crowded with army traffic of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, is easily susceptible to jamming, and is vulnerable to climatic and seasonal interferences. However, it is here, and it has the added advantage that men trained in its use and maintenance are available in Vietnam. This equipment can be transferred to civilian use with appropriate authorizations. This should be done at once to give the police the communications that are most essential for the present emergency conditions. Serious consideration should be given to the contracting for the V.H.F. equipment recommended above at some future date.

### Transportation

The estimates for transportation equipment were arrived at following a series of meetings with American transportation experts who know conditions, and estimates of needs made by directors of the Vietnamese National Police, V.B.I., and Municipal Police of Saigon-Cholon. (We found their estimates in most cases lower than ours.) Again, much of this equipment is available in Vietnam on these surplus lists, and can likewise be made available with appropriate authorization. Some additional equipment will have to be procured.



### Weapons

Firearms should be of the type suited for civil police duties, and uniform throughout the police services. They must also be adequately equipped for civil disturbances, which was quite apparent in the recent trouble. We should have sufficient weapons available to properly equip all the police services.

Much of the equipment recommended under weapons is likewise in Vietnam and can be made available to the police agencies by appropriate authorizations.

### Crime Laboratory

A crime laboratory with trained personnel is essential to any effective police operation. The present laboratory equipment is anticipated and very limited. It is necessary that they have photographic equipment, microscopes, and miscellaneous testing equipment. This lab, although located in and operated by the V.B.I., will serve all police agencies. We estimate that an efficient crime laboratory can be established for approximately \$100,000 along with their present equipment.

### Other Miscellaneous Equipment

To expedite this report, no consideration was given to the many other items necessary for efficient operation, such as typewriters, handcuffs, binoculars, knives, clothing, and field equipment."

The original survey team (October 1954) had, admittedly, made only a hasty study of the police problems. Because of the uncertain conditions outside Saigon, it would have been extremely dangerous to have visited the sect areas which at that time were policed by the sects themselves. There was no Civil Guard, as such. It, therefore, came as no surprise that the picture in the police field had changed rapidly since their survey. Due to these changed conditions it was necessary for Chief Hoyt to revise his thinking completely when faced with the facts he had accumulated, thus necessitating a

request for additional personnel for the police team, if a thorough job was to be done for the police of Vietnam. Hoyt, in this report, recommended that the MSU police team be expanded.

The original plans called for a total of eight men on the police team. The report stated:

"All the Michigan State University Police Advisory staff of the existing contract, we hope will be in Vietnam by the first week in September, and will be assigned as follows:

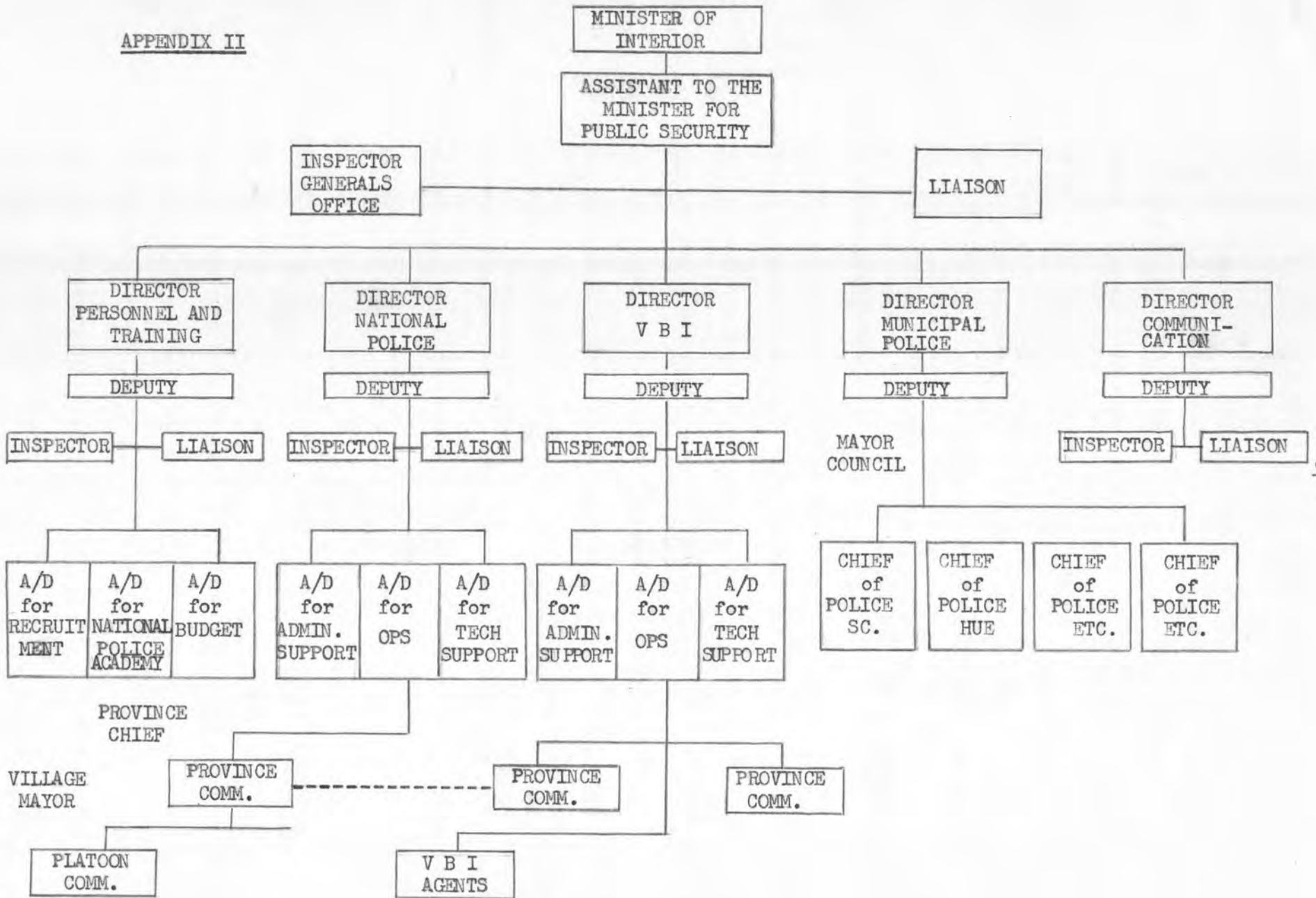
- 1 Coordinator, Police Program (Howard W. Hoyt)
  - 1 Liaison with Municipal Police (Gilbert Shelby)
  - 1 Coordinator with National Police Services (Richard W. Rogers)
  - 1 Coordinator with V.B.I. (Jack E. Ryan)
  - 1 Director, Police Training (Charles F. Sloane)
  - 1 Advisor in Police Communications (Royce Williams)
  - 1 Traffic Engineer (Joseph Marlow)
  - 1 Consultant in Identifications and Records (Corey Dymond)"
- (The names in parentheses are the original assigned personnel.)

Chief Hoyt now recommended increasing this staff by ten men, plus two secretaries necessary to expedite the office work. The men would be assigned in the following categories, in addition to the original list given above:

- 2 Police Training
  - 1 Crime Laboratory
  - 1 Identification and Records
  - 6 Police Field Services
- 
- 10

This first report contained specific recommendations for police weapons and equipment; however, as time progressed, the original estimates were frequently changed as the overall police picture became

APPENDIX II



clearer by personal observations during field trips throughout the south and central portions of Vietnam.

As the chart for the proposed overall reorganization of the police indicates, the police services would remain under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Interior. A suggested change was in the creation of a new position directly under the Minister called Assistant for Public Security. Briefly, other recommendations were: an Inspector General's office, for inspection of all three recommended forces and for liaison with the National Army. All three services would be headed by Directors, plus a Director for Personnel, Training and other administrative services, and a Director for Communications. Each Director would have a Deputy and each service would contain the position of Inspector. The suggestion of creating the position of Director of Municipal Police was a sound one since it was necessary to maintain all municipal police throughout the country at the same level of efficiency and this could be done only by close supervision of their activities.

On receiving the police team's recommendations, the Minister of Interior indicated his general approval of the proposals and asked that he be permitted time to study the proposals carefully. Shortly thereafter Minister Tinh acted on these recommendations as follows:

- 1) He appointed General Nguyen Ngoc Le (Director General of VBI) as the Coordinator of Police, but still retaining his position as head of the VBI. This action created a

dilemma. It subordinated the Director-General of the Civil Guard, who had a much more difficult job and larger force with more problems, who now had to report to Le, another Director-General, regarding any move he made. Le was made directly responsible to the Minister of Interior and would be Chief Hoyt's counterpart.

- 2) A Director of the proposed police training school was appointed, supposedly as a beginning toward a Division of Administrative Services. The Training Director, Mr. Do Van Ro, Chief of Cabinet for the Minister, was a civil service career man and had no police background.
- 3) Appointed a committee from within his office to search for a suitable site for a police training school. He asked that the MSU advisors assist in solving the problems which would come up in the process of establishing a training school.

DESPITE THE FACT THAT THIS FIRST REPORT WAS CAREFULLY EXPLAINED TO MINISTER THINH AND SUGGESTIONS MADE AS TO THE NEED FOR MEN WITH EXCELLENT POLICE ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUNDS TO FILL THE ABOVE POSITIONS, THE APPOINTMENTS WERE MADE WITHOUT ANY DISCUSSION OF THE CAPABILITIES OF THE PERSONS SELECTED.

During July, twenty police training films arrived from East Lansing. These would have to be reviewed to find those appropriate to the problems in Vietnam.

On the morning of July 20, a parade was organized in downtown Saigon, ostensibly to protest the presence in Saigon of Communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam members of the International Commission for Supervision and Control (ICC), which was supervising the Geneva Agreements. The parade entered Rue Catinat and slowly marched to the Majestic Hotel next to the waterfront. Upon arrival there the peaceful parade turned into a riotous mob and, before the morning was over, the Majestic Hotel was a shambles as the mob poured into the hotel and demolished furniture, broke windows, entered guests' rooms and ripped, tore and destroyed. The police, in this instance, were conspicuous by their absence, having been chastised for interfering with and arresting leaders of a much smaller demonstration several days before. Hoyt's and Rogers' rooms were entered and all clothing, typewriters and other personal belongings were destroyed.

Gilbert Shelby arrived in Saigon on July 30, and Corey Dymond on August 6. With this added assistance, Chief Hoyt began to branch further afield. He assigned Shelby as Municipal Police and training advisor and asked that he concentrate efforts on the beginning of a police training school. Corey Dymond, our identification expert, was assigned to the VBI, and Rogers was now assigned as advisor to the Civil Guard.

(At this point, because of the divergence of assigned responsibilities, it is necessary for the authors to treat police team projects separately since it is impossible to give a day-by-day or



even a week-by-week account of progress made by each advisor.)

Civil Guard.

Mr. Rogers, realizing the very great need for civil police training for the Civil Guard and that a Civil Guard basic training school was in the distant future, contacted a number of MAAG officers who were advisors on military training at ARVN's (Army Republic Vietnam) Quang Trung Training Camp, 15 kilometers from Saigon. Eventually, arrangements were made for the basic training of Civil Guard enlisted personnel at this camp. It was proposed, after considerable discussion, that inasmuch as the Civil Guard at this time was a paramilitary organization with assigned civil police duties, it would be wise to give both military and police training. A six-week course was devised of which four weeks would be devoted to basic military training under ARVN instructors and a two-week very basic police course would be given by the Civil Guard officers presently in training at the Philippine Constabulary School in the Philippines. Thus, plans were formulated for the acceptance of 500 Civil Guardsmen per week. This meant that when the school was in full operation, at the end of the sixth week there would be 3000 men in training at all times. Colonel Tran Tu Oai, Commander of Quang Trung, stated he would prepare the basic military course and Rogers was to prepare the police curriculum.

At this same time Rogers made arrangements with Colonel Oai for the acceptance of a small number of Civil Guard officers to ARVN's

leadership training classes, also being held at the Quang Trung Camp.

On September 5, the first 500 Civil Guardsmen arrived at the Quang Trung camp and Civil Guard military training was on its way. Rogers had prepared a very basic police curriculum and had briefed the first ten Philippine-trained officer-instructors on methods of instruction, assigned the lecture material, obtained blackboards to be used by the instructors from devious sources, and devised a teaching schedule. Four weeks later these ten instructors began the police training of the first 500 men. By December 31, 5000 men had completed this basic training and returned to their units.

By October 1, through his excellent contacts with Director-General Trach, he was able to secure the temporary release of 100 officers and NCO's for assignment to the leadership classes. By the end of the year these 100 men had graduated and an additional 120 were enrolled in these classes. ~~So he stated that this change would be temporary and that, for the present, the Civil Guard would work closely with ARVN and could function more efficiently during this emergency period if under military control.~~

#### Police Training.

Gilbert Shelby was introduced to the various members of the Department of Interior with whom he would have to work closely on the problem of police training. A search was immediately begun in and about Saigon for a building and site which would be adequate for the establishment of a school. Eventually a site was located in the

city of Saigon which consisted of several dilapidated buildings, the unused portion of a Vietnamese day school. This was the best site to be found in Saigon, and even though the building space and outside area was not large, it was thought to be sufficient for about 120 day students. The buildings consisted of one long concrete building which would be converted into two classrooms capable of accommodating fifty students each, and a large assembly hall; a long low shed to be made into offices for the school office staff and first aid station; a large roofed area to be used for a judo ring and weapons training. An ideal site would have been one which would have adequate space for boarding-in students, but, at the moment, this was not possible. Several weeks were required before permission could be obtained from the Minister of Education for the use of these buildings. In the meantime, planning for the remodeling of the buildings and site was begun so that once the area was turned over to the Ministry of Interior, bids could be obtained on the work required. The following work had to be done: A wall had to be constructed to separate the police school (called the Police Academy by all of us) from the elementary school; wall changes and ceiling repairs to all buildings; remodeling of the Director's office; installation of lights and fans in the two classrooms and assembly hall; installation of acoustical drapes in classrooms and assembly hall; remodeling the shower area and installation of modern toilet facilities; construction of a vault for storage in office of

the Director; cleaning and painting of all buildings; construction of platforms for instructors in classrooms and a stage in the assembly hall; cut opening in property wall for gate and driveway near the Director's office; erection of a flag pole in drill area; leveling the grounds for parade and drill purposes; furniture for students and instructors to be constructed; <sup>AND</sup> remove squatters off property.

By September 1, work had begun on the remodeling of the property and progress was being made, with a target date of October 1 for the opening of the school.

On September 3, Charles F. Sloane arrived in Saigon to join the team and was assigned to work with Shelby in getting the school into operation.

A number of problems were encountered before the school finally opened its doors. When inquiry was made as to the seating arrangements in the two classrooms, the two advisors were informed that the French seating method was a desk with an attached bench seat at which ~~two~~ <sup>three</sup> students sit, work and study. Since there were certain disadvantages to such a seating arrangement, even in a police school, it was suggested that individual chairs with desk arms be manufactured. When after some difficulty the advisors provided a picture of such a chair and it was shown to the officials concerned, an initial order of 120 desk arm chairs was placed with a furniture manufacturer.

Shelby and Sloane worked out a basic police course curriculum and submitted this to a committee designated by the Minister of Interior,

consisting of Mr. Do Van Ro, Director of the Police Academy (merely a figurehead); a Mr. Nguyen Van Huong, formerly Chief of Police of Hanoi and appointed Deputy Director of the Academy; Mr. Tu, Saigon Chief of Police; General Le, Director-General of Police and Security; and Mr. Trach, Director-General of Civil Guard. After several meetings and considerable discussion, the following basic police curriculum was accepted:

1. Administrative organization of Vietnam. (This included the Legislature, Executive and Judicial branches of the government.)	27 hours
2. Elements of penal law and procedures.	18 "
3. Traffic regulations and problems.	18 "
4. Traffic accident investigation; laws of arrest.	12 "
5. Criminal investigation.	40 "
6. Criminal identification; fingerprints, portrait parle.	12 "
7. Military training, close order drill, military courtesy, weapons training, pistol, rifle, submachine gun, grenades, target practice.	48 "
8. Judo; the falls, defensive tactics, disarming tactics.	30 "
9. Civics; police ethics; public relations.	10 "
10. First aid.	
	<i>total <math>\frac{6}{221}</math> Hours</i>

Four full-time and twenty-one part-time instructors were selected to teach at the Academy. Shelby and Sloane interviewed each instructor regarding his police background and the subject he was



assigned to teach. They had the prepared lectures translated into English and went over each one carefully, suggesting changes where required. Since the French method of teaching is solely by lectures, it was suggested that a three-week instructor training course be given before the opening of the Academy so that the latest teaching methods could be discussed. Under the guidance of Professor Frederic Wickert, Chief, In-Service Training Division, MSU Vietnam Project, such a course was instituted. The course consisted of the various teaching methods, such as, class participation; conferences; audio-visual aids; demonstrations; solving of practical problems; use of lecture outlines; etc. This course was received with enthusiasm and it was gratifying to watch the interest of the class as the training progressed.

The target date of October 1 came and passed and still many problems had to be worked out before the school could open. It was learned that a number of the police and VBI agents could barely read and write. It was decided that some method of screening must be devised in order to have students in the class of approximately the same level of intelligence and education. With the assistance of Professor Wickert and four Vietnamese high school teachers, a basic seventh grade level, 100 question multiple choice short answer examination was drawn up and tested by the seventh grade at the Petrus-Ky school in Saigon. With minor changes, this examination was given to 200 students reporting to the half-completed Academy and <sup>117</sup>~~124~~ students selected to attend the first class.

On November 8, the Vietnamese National Police Academy opened its doors. An elaborate opening ceremony was held and was attended by the Minister of Interior, the Director Generals of the Civil Guard and VBI, Regional Delegate of South Vietnam, other dignitaries, and the MSU Chief Advisor and police team. The 38 students from various cities and provinces in Free Vietnam and 86 students from the Saigon Police Department settled down to a six-week course of varied police training.

With the opening of the Academy, Shelby began working closely with the Municipal Police of Vietnam; Sloane was designated as training advisor to the Academy and the police in general.

#### Identification:

Corey K. Dymond's work in the identification field began shortly after his arrival in Saigon. In his own words he describes the problems he found and how he was able to overcome some of these difficulties:

"Arriving in Saigon, Vietnam on August 6th, 1955, the first two weeks were spent in getting oriented to the cities of Saigon-Cholon. Much of this time was spent accompanying some other members of the group, while they were carrying out their assignments and, at the same time, meeting the various officials whose offices were located in Saigon-Cholon.

A meeting was scheduled with Brigadier General Nguyen Ngoc Lê, then Director General of the National Police and Security Services, together with George Boudrias, to serve as an introduction to General Lê and to discuss with him, matters relating to the present system of taking and filing fingerprints. While this was done through Mr. Boudrias acting as an interpreter, General Lê stated, that the

present bureau was only slightly better than nothing, and any change would be an improvement. Also, that we would be given their full cooperation to make whatever changes we deemed necessary.

Later, a meeting was scheduled to meet with Deputy Director Pham Van Hên, who is in direct charge of the Identification Bureau, located at 27 Filippini Street, Saigon. Mr. Pham Van Hên conducted us on a tour through the bureau, explaining its various functions and answering any questions we might raise. The building consists of the ground floor and one floor above. The ground floor houses the fingerprint identification bureau, consisting of the filing section, the location where the fingerprints are taken, a section utilized for the anthropometrical measurements of persons fingerprinted, a section for taking photographs, a section where the fingerprints are searched and a waiting room where prisoners are detained until they have been fingerprinted and photographed. This room, at the time of this visit, was in very poor condition due to the fact that the sanitation facilities were nil. The male and female prisoners were not segregated, neither were there any toilet facilities as far as was discernible. It might be well to state here, that all prisoners or arrested persons, are transported to this building from Saigon-Cholon and surrounding areas to be interrogated, fingerprinted and photographed. The daily average of people handled amounts to approximately 150 per day according to their records.

Since the specific duty was to organize an identification section and a central records section, one of the first things to determine, was the method employed at the present time.

It was found that the method in use is called the 'POTTECHER' system of classifying and filing fingerprints. The prints are classified with the aid of an instrument called the 'GABARIT' which actually is a type of measuring instrument, therefore, cannot be used on the fingerprint impression of young persons not fully matured.

The impressions are taken on a card approximately 5 x 7 inches, with the impression of the right hand on one side and the impressions of the left hand on the

reverse side and taken in reverse order, i.e. starting with the little finger on the left side of the card and continuing with the ring, middle, index and thumb.

The cards are then classified with a very meager classification and searched against those already on file. The cards on file are grouped by classification and date of birth with very little margin to compensate for misinformation as to birthdate. It is the practice of awarding any operator an extra 5 piastres if he should identify a person under an alias name.

The cards are filed in the following manner:

There are several rows of open shelving approximately ten feet high, which are divided into openings about 1 x 1 x 2-1/2 feet. The cards are filed in open wooden boxes that fit into these spaces. In order to search an incoming fingerprint, the operator takes the box or boxes which corresponds with the classification of the new print, carries it to his desk and the search is made from there. These shelves and containers are not covered or protected in any way and since the windows contain no glass, the cards become very dusty and dirty. The room is very poorly lighted, as you can observe from the above illustration.

From the information gathered, it was ascertained that the bureau had an authorized strength of 65 people. At no time, however, were there ever more than 12 to 15 present at any of the times we visited the bureau.

It is very obvious that the present system is obsolete and working conditions are far from favorable. It was decided to talk with the authorities regarding the organization and implementation of a more modern and efficient system, which could receive and handle fingerprints from every branch of the government in one centrally located bureau.

It was agreed, that the 'Henry system' be introduced to the Republic of Viet-Nam, due to the fact that it is nearly a universal system in use throughout a major part of the world. This would allow the taking and filing of fingerprints on the standard 8 x 8 inch card, and if necessary, could be sent to or exchanged with, other countries if and when the occasion should arise.

A number of books, Practical Fingerprinting by B.C. Bridges were ordered, since they are brief but complete in their contents and very well illustrated. These textbooks were acquired through American Aid.

The next step was to recruit 20 people to take this training. Late in October of 1955 this was done and the 20 people were selected by Brigadier General Nguyen Ngoc Lê. They came from the three law enforcement agencies, namely, the VBI, Civil Guard and Municipal Police, and among them were five females.

No test of any kind was given these people to determine their ability, but it was found that they were quick to grasp the fundamentals of the instruction course. Mr. Nguyen Ba Minh was assigned as supervisor and interpreter, as he had a very good command of the English language as well as French and Vietnamese.

None of the 20 trainees could speak any English, therefore, it was necessary to work through an interpreter at all times. Also, the Vietnamese language does not contain words for many of the technical terms, thus it was necessary to actually manufacture words to be used, or to teach the trainees the English pronunciation of them.

It was decided to give this first class 2 hours of English each day, dividing it to an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon. It was remarkable how easily they were able to learn the technical terms, such as, the names of the patterns and their classification values."

By December 31, Dymond was well pleased with the reception the Henry system of fingerprint identification had received in Vietnam and was extremely pleased with the abilities of assimilating this technical knowledge as exhibited by his class.



Municipal Police.

Once the Police Academy was in operation, Shelby devoted his time to a study of the Municipal Police problems. He found conditions in the Saigon Department similar in every respect as those found in the Civil Guard and the VBI, i.e., this metropolitan city department lacked transportation, communications, weapons and training at every level. He conferred with Director Tran Van Tu and the seven precinct commissioners and visited each precinct and post within this department. He gathered the required material necessary to understand thoroughly the problems confronting this organization so that responsible recommendations for changes could be made.

Communications.

Royce Williams, our communications engineer, arrived on September 29. He began a survey of the communications needs of the Saigon Police with the view of recommending a radio system and to set up a training system for the proper use of the equipment.

Williams visited all Saigon Police precinct stations and posts and gathered the material needed before any recommendations for equipment could be made, such as, topography of the city, extreme distances, estimation of growth and study of the existing state-owned broadcasting stations, in order to avoid interference on wave bands.

In November, Williams was invited to accompany Director-General Le, VBI, on an inspection tour of Central Vietnam. This trip would be invaluable to Williams, since it would give him a good idea of the

topography of this portion of Vietnam which would include the mountainous as well as the sea coast and plain areas. Upon his return Williams became ill. On December 15 he was evacuated to Clark Air Force Base Hospital, Philippines, for treatment. He was sent to the states on January 10, 1956, and died on January 30. This was a blow to the team and the communications project.

Traffic Control.

Traffic conditions in Saigon in 1955 were deplorable. We had all viewed the traffic problems to be seen in Tokyo and watched the orderly traffic of Honolulu and Hong Kong. Saigon's traffic was really a problem even when compared to Tokyo's mass of traffic.

Saigon, in less than ten years, had grown from a bustling city of 600,000 people to a bulging metropolis of more than one and a half million. Another million people lived in the suburbs and, as in any other city in the world, it seemed as though the suburbanites worked in the city and the city dwellers worked in the suburbs. It was estimated that the metropolitan area, the city of Saigon and the suburbs extending to ten kilometers outside the city, contained 70,000 registered cars, trucks and buses, 5000 taxis, 300,000 motorbicycles and bicycles, 20,000 motorcycles and scooters, 6000 pousse pusses (a foot-pedaled type of rickshaw), 3000 motorpusses, 2000 pony carts, and innumerable ox carts. This traffic, when mixed with hordes of pedestrians, military vehicles weaving in and out of traffic ignoring all laws, was an utter and complete chaotic mess. During the peak

traffic loads four times daily, the mass of pressing vehicles was overwhelming. Motorcycles, scooters, bicycles and motorbicycles usually carried at least one passenger; frequently a family of three, and often four persons would be astride a scooter. Pony carts loaded sky high with goods or filled with people; jeeps whose capacity is four containing nine and ten persons; oxcarts loaded with lumber piled so high that it practically lifted the oxen off their feet; push carts so loaded that the pusher was unable to see the road ahead; all of these things added to the confusion.

The Vietnamese pedestrian appeared to us to be a fatalist. He would step off the curb and walk directly in front of a vehicle as though he were begging the vehicle to strike him. If one has seen the pedestrian traffic in Times Square in New York the week before Christmas, one gets the idea of pedestrian traffic in Saigon every day of the year. To add to the problem, there were 52 traffic circles within the city. No matter in which direction you traveled, eventually you would wind up at a traffic circle into which several streets poured their traffic.

There was also the rule of "the vehicle on the right has the right of way," with no stop streets and no through streets; thus, at almost every intersection it was necessary to stop the vehicle. With so much traffic moving on the streets, frequently four vehicles arrived at an intersection simultaneously and either all four stopped and debated over who should go first or all four tried to cross at the same time.

Streets adequate for the pre-war population were now entirely inadequate for the masses of people. An adequate city transportation system would have helped in easing the situation, but the few buses in operation, bulging with people, were unable to make a dent in the transportation problem.

Joseph Marlow, our traffic engineer, arrived on October 3. After a short period of orientation he began to work with the Saigon Municipal Police, the Police Traffic Bureau, and the City Public Works Department.

Shortly after his arrival, Marlow was invited to make a field trip to Central Vietnam with Director-General Le of the VBI and Royce Williams, in order to observe some of the traffic problems in that area. During this trip transportation difficulties arose, making it necessary to "rough it" in the jungles for several days. Upon return to Saigon, Marlow became ill. Upon recovery he began plans for one-way streets in an effort to alleviate the traffic ills, and an order was placed for laning machines, laning paint, and other essential material. This was all that could be done during the remaining days of 1955.

Suret e or Vietnamese Bureau of Investigation (VBI).

Jack E. Ryan arrived in Saigon October 31, bringing our police team to full strength. Speaking fluent French, he was designated deputy chief of the police team and was given the assignment of advisor to the VBI. He slowly made the necessary contacts within that

organization so vital to the success of an advisory program. He made a thorough study of the organization, its manpower, equipment, table of organization, method of operation, etc., in order to understand the problems confronting it.

The General Picture.

Howard Hoyt's position as chief of the police team was an extremely important key post. The work of coordinating the police program with other MSU Vietnam Project programs rested squarely upon his shoulders. With advisors working in Field Governmental Administration, the Presidency, etc., it was extremely important that one division in MSU was not making recommendations regarding governmental reorganization in contradiction to the Police Division's recommendations. This problem also carried through to the USOM operations. Hoyt had to establish and maintain liaison with all the American agencies in Vietnam.

Weekly staff conferences were held with the police advisors, at which time each assignment was thoroughly discussed and the problems encountered threshed out. The conferences aided in keeping each advisor informed of problems and progress made in individual fields.

(Italics) June 6. The Communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam demanded meetings with representatives of Diem's government in order to prepare for the coming elections in July 1956 to unify Vietnam.

(Italics) July 16. Prime Minister Diem, in answer to the above demand, declared that South Vietnam would not take part in any



general elections toward the unification of Vietnam unless these elections were guaranteed to be free in the North as well as the South. That South Vietnam was not bound by the Geneva Treaty since South Vietnam was not a signatory to the treaty. *(end of italics)*

Hoyt and Ryan, his deputy, during the early part of the program kept close contact with both the Minister of Interior and his staff and with Prime Minister Diem through frequent conferences.

On September 30, at a conference called by Prime Minister Diem, he began the conference by requesting that the police team inaugurate schools for technicians working in the crime laboratory. He asked that we survey the facilities of the laboratory and review the qualifications and capabilities of the laboratory staff. He gave several examples of what could have been done, in recent police cases, if personnel had been better trained and properly equipped. Hoyt briefed him on the future plans of the police team; on surveys already conducted and the training already being given to the Civil Guard.

The Prime Minister immediately, on mention of the Civil Guard, branched off into the security in rural areas. He plainly stated that neither he nor the population of Vietnam had confidence in the Civil Guard. That the Civil Guard was composed of many sects, former pirates and groups from the north and they had questionable loyalty to the present government. That the Civil Guard was commanded by inefficient officers and that it was common knowledge that various criminal acts such as thefts, shakedowns, rape, etc., were being committed by its

members. He stated that in his mind it was questionable whether this organization could gain the confidence of the villagers and rural people, even if remodeled into a more respectable organization. That in his opinion the Civil Guard could not cope with and would be totally ineffective against the sects, Communists and gangs of criminals. He stated that with 6000 villages to protect, the proposed authorized strength of the 45,000-man Civil Guard force was inadequate to protect each village. That he needed a minimum of ten policemen for each village.

Prime Minister Diem stated that it was essential that local elections be held this fall and that the elections be free of any pressures or threats against voters from disloyal villagers. That many of the present village notables presently holding office were mere pawns of the disloyal inhabitants and could easily be defeated and replaced if the population could vote without fear of reprisal. Diem then proposed the following: that a rural militia be organized for the protection of the villages. Recruitment of personnel would be from each village and the personnel would remain in their "home" village. That the majority of the men selected would be veterans, thus would not require thorough training; would be organized, supervised and trained by ARVN which, he stated, was now a well-organized and trained force. That on October 1, he intended to send one ARVN battalion, approximately 450 men, to each province chief.

That the advantages of creating a rural militia under ARVN were:

1. Could be quickly integrated into the ARVN, thus creating a larger military force.
2. Could be equipped with more effective weapons.
3. Would be under direction of province chief who, he feels, better understands the security problems in the villages within his province.
4. AMERICAN AID TO THE AMOUNT OF \$<sup>10</sup>70,000,000 FROM MILITARY ASSISTANCE FUNDS WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR SUCH A FORCE. THIS MONEY IS LIMITED BY CONGRESS TO MILITARY AID AND NOT AVAILABLE TO CIVIL POLICE FORCES. (Emphasis supplied)

Prime Minister Diem stated that his big problem would be in financing a police program. That he cannot financially support a properly trained and equipped Civil Guard.

Before the conference ended, Diem did agree that there were already too many policing organizations in existence; internal security should be provided by civil authorities; civil police should be under the Minister of Interior; all civil police should be centralized at some point so that coordination of effort could be assured; and that all civil police should be uniformly trained and equipped. Diem agreed to all this, but he insisted that the country had to be made safe immediately and not six months from now, and that elections would have to be held very soon. That the plan for creation of a Rural Militia is the best plan so far advanced to him. (Emphasis supplied)

Chief Hoyt was not asked to express an opinion as to his thinking relative to the creation of a Rural Militia. In fact, the sudden termination of the conference precluded the offering of an unsolicited opinion on the matter.

(Italics) On October 23, a popular referendum was held to elect a chief of state. The referendum was held throughout the country and was relatively free of interference and disturbance. Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem received 5,721,735 votes as compared to Emperor Bao Dai's 63,017. Author's note--Some villages in reporting the number of votes reported totals far exceeding the entire population, men, women and children, of these villages.

(Italics) On October 26, Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem proclaimed South Vietnam a republic and, as a result of the referendum, appointed himself President of the new republic.

Free Vietnam was now the Republic of Vietnam.

\* \* \* \* \*

On September 15, Chief Hoyt had ordered all advisors to collect pertinent information regarding the four police services in Vietnam so that Dr. Ralph Smuckler, Research Coordinator of the MSU Advisory Team, could assemble this information into a comprehensive research report. Data on equipment, police personnel, organization and training was included in this report which was published on December 1. Excerpts from the "Report on the Police of Vietnam" will be used to develop following chapters on each police service.

On November 21, Chief Hoyt and Deputy Chief Ryan were again invited to a conference by President Diem. This meeting lasted more than four hours and consisted of the following discussions:

After the usual amenities, President Diem opened the discussion by talking about the Philippine Constabulary. That this organization is the "eyes and ears" for President Magasaysay. That the Constabulary report such emergencies as floods and other disasters, illegal activities and efficiency of governmental employees. He asked Hoyt and Ryan what they thought of such a system.

Hoyt informed President Diem that not only did the Philippine Constabulary perform the above duties, but also investigated all complaints received by the President who encouraged criticism, complaints regarding inefficiency, and suggestions from the people. That the President passed complaints to the Constabulary, who would then submit a preliminary report within 48 hours. Thus, the people knew that the President acted on their complaints and governmental employees, realizing they were under close observation, behaved themselves.

President Diem exhibited a keen interest in this type of service, but was advised that such service would not be possible by his Civil Guard at the present time. That at present he did not have a unified Civil Guard organization since they are employed, paid and equipped by either the Province Chief or, in some cases, by the Regional Delegate. That all Civil Guard reports go to the Province Chief and that, under



present conditions, the majority of reports never go beyond the Province Chief. That if he eventually expects service and efficiency from the Civil Guard organization, it must be centrally controlled.

Hoyt and Ryan presented a summary of the police team's studies and recommendations relative to internal security. They explained the method by which these recommendations were arrived at, such as, through conferences with Vietnamese governmental and police officials and American police and public administration experts; through the review of reports, surveys and studies of present police operations and through inventories of equipment in possession of the various police agencies. That the recommended plan submitted to the President and the Minister of Interior had the approval of the American Government. This plan called for only three law enforcement agencies in Vietnam, all to be under the guidance of the Minister of Interior. That these three police agencies are:

1. Municipal Police--To number between 5000 and 6000 men and to be uniformly equipped.
2. Civil Guard, Rural or National Police--To number 45,000 and to be uniformly equipped. The Civil Guard to have responsibility for law and order in all Vietnam outside the cities. They are to police the smaller cities, villages and hamlets, and are to live in these communities and become a part of them.

The Civil Guard to be responsible also for the collection of intelligence and the submission of reports of intelligence collected.

The Civil Guard to be responsible for internal security in the rural areas up to the point of war, at which time the President would declare an emergency and call upon his national Army.

3. Surete or Vietnamese Bureau of Investigation--To number approximately 4000.

To be considered specialists in plain clothes. To have the following responsibilities for enforcement:

- a. Investigate the serious crimes (certain felonies).
- b. Immigration and customs laws.
- c. Tax evasion.
- d. Postal inspection and postal laws.
- e. Violation of narcotic laws and any other federal criminal laws specifically assigned by the law-making body of Vietnam.
- f. The VBI to operate the Central Criminal files and Identification Bureau.
- g. To operate the Central Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory.
- h. To analyze all intelligence reports and coordinate appropriate action.
- i. To direct all counterespionage activities.

Hoyt stated that this plan had the approval of the Vietnamese police officials and that the Minister of Interior was agreeable to

this proposal. The President was told of the material aid available under this plan, such as, transportation equipment, firearms and ammunition, communications and training and advisory staffs.

Hoyt further emphasized that only the above three police organizations be recognized as civil protection forces. That the Gendarmerie, a small force now comprising 753 men, be disbanded, since its responsibilities and functions are identical with the above three civil police agencies but are under the direction of the Minister of Defense. That since the personnel within the Gendarmerie are well-equipped and -trained, they would create a rich leadership cadre to the Civil Guard (National Police).

Hoyt went on to state that there was no reason whatsoever why the traditional village volunteer police or protection forces could not continue as heretofore. However, he emphatically stated that this group should be unarmed and non-uniformed and should be a supplement to the Civil Guard. That this force should be trained by the Civil Guard and be under their direction.

President Diem discussed the present internal security problems of Vietnam. That he was slowly withdrawing the military units of ARVN out of the provinces, leaving only one ARVN battalion in each province, and that a battalion of Civil Guard will augment ARVN in each of the provinces. That the anti-government elements have already taken advantage of ARVN's withdrawal by burning 57 houses in Long Xuyen, killing village notables in Tra Vinh and shooting up cars

traveling the highways. That some Civil Guard were killed last week by an attack of Hoa Hao in Chau Doc Province, and that many armed bandits are reorganizing under the Viet Cong. That there are areas still under the control of enemy dissident groups and brought out maps to show Hoyt and Ryan the troubled areas. He further stated that the rice harvest was just beginning and that the farmers and the country needed this harvest badly to save the economy. That his solutions to the internal security problem was:

1. Pay the village notables more money so that they will not be reluctant to serve. This was ordered done yesterday.
2. Has ordered that the village notables be armed with pistols.
3. Has ordered more Civil Guard units into the troubled areas to work under military commanders. (Emphasis supplied)
4. That the Minister of Interior objects to military commanders telling the Minister of Interior where to assign the Civil Guard and what they are to do, etc.; and that there is no province that can be handled by the Civil Guard alone. That the Civil Guard is weak administratively and he has learned of various improper acts, such as, payroll padding, etc. That these matters are being corrected by Director-General Trach and the guilty will be punished, but he has little faith in the Civil Guard; therefore, he is transferring the Civil Guard from the Minister of Interior to the Minister

of Defense. That this move is not as drastic as it sounds since the Civil Guard will be used by the Minister of Defense but administered by the Minister of Interior. (Emphasis supplied)

President Diem claimed that Minister of Interior Bui Van Thinh recommended this change yesterday, and justifies the change by stating that the original commission he appointed ten months ago recommended that the Civil Guard be placed under the President, due to the present emergency. (Emphasis supplied)

Hoyt and Ryan told the President that they were well aware of his problems, but that they were advisors to his government; therefore, they could not agree with his solution of the security problem. That:

1. The Civil Guard was the foundation for the present and future internal security of Vietnam.
2. That the government has not supported the Civil Guard, either financially or in spirit.
3. That the Civil Guard should remain under the Ministry of Interior as a civil police agency fully supported by the Government.
4. That the transfer of the Civil Guard to the Minister of Defense would in no way solve either the weaknesses of the organization or increase its ability to resist enemy forces.

(Note by authors: The Civil Guard was transferred to the Ministry of Defense by decree of President Diem on November 19,



~~three~~<sup>two</sup> days before this conference. This was not known by the advisors at the time of the conference.)

The year 1955 was fading out rapidly for the police team. Each advisor, in his respective field, was busily building for the future and the overall picture in terms of cooperation and enthusiasm on the part of Vietnamese counterparts and police officials was bright. The National Police Academy took on the role of in-service specialized training by setting up a special ten day course for a second group of Civil Guard instructors in Methods of Instruction. Chief Hoyt made a field trip into the western and northern provinces with the Minister of Interior. Proposals were being worked out on reorganization of the forces into modern police lines and all of us looked forward to 1956. As Chief Hoyt reported in the Second Report of the MSU Vietnam Advisory Team, December 31, 1955:

"In each of the three police agencies, we have been met with enthusiastic cooperation and our assistance on many lesser details not included in this report has been solicited. Minister of Interior Bui Van Thinh has been particularly warm and cooperative. These relationships should continue to produce progress toward a more effective civil police force in free Vietnam."

IF WE KNEW THEN WHAT WE KNOW NOW DEPARTMENT

Sometime shortly after the arrival of the police team, the Chief Advisor should have made certain that President Diem officially notified ALL members of his official family, both at the capital and throughout Vietnam, giving the reason for MSU's presence, the type of advisory functions that would be performed, etc.

This was never done.

We believe, now, that such clearance by the President would have saved many embarrassing moments for the police advisors, trying to explain to a province chief the purpose for which MSU was in Vietnam; that we were cleared by the President; that he should frankly tell us his security problems, etc. Without such full and complete clearance, we were in contact with many personages who either avoided talking to us or were less than frank in answering questions. Our status was a sub rosa one, never clearly defined.

CHAPTER VI

CIVIL GUARD

(Authors' Notes: The following is the Introduction appearing in "Report on the Police of Vietnam," dated December 1, 1955, by the Police Team and Dr. Ralph H. Smuckler. Chapter I of this report, dealing with the Civil Guard, is used to develop the Civil Guard activity of 1956 and 1957.)

"INTRODUCTION

The police situation in Viet-Nam is confused and difficult to describe with precision. As might be expected, the years of warfare have left their imprint on police organizations. The brief period of relative calm preceding this report has not been sufficient to even begin to compensate for the years of disorder. Yet, security throughout the country is essential for the various government programs such as the resettling of refugees, the extension of agrarian reform and the improvement of health. In a country at peace, this security is highly dependent on the adequacy of the police organizations.

Police in Viet-Nam belong to a variety of organizations, each of which will be considered separately in this report. At least five types of police organizations can be identified--municipal (communal) police, Civil Guard, Gendarmerie, Security Police (Sureté), and rural organizations of various types. While each of these has a rather specific function that it concentrates on, several are authorized to perform a rather broad police function. Organizationally, three of them, the Civil Guard, Municipal and Security Police, have been until recently under the same leadership within the Ministry of Interior, while the Gendarmerie operates within the Ministry of Defense and the rural police, though usually under the District and Province Chief, may have a variety of relationships. In mid-November, the Civil Guard was transferred to the direct control of the Presidency.

Understanding the structure of the police system in Viet-Nam requires some knowledge of the regional and provincial administration which operates throughout the country. There are three regions south of the 17th parallel-- the Pays Montagnards Sud (P.M.S.), South and Central Viet-Nam. (Now named Central Viet-Nam Highlands, South Viet-Nam and Central Viet-Nam Lowlands, respectively. Authors) Each of these regions is headed by the Delegation of the government for the region. There is a Delegué in administrative charge of each region through his leadership of the Delegation. At each of these regional headquarters there are a series of governmental services maintained, including the police and security service. These regional services are responsible to the Delegué for administrative matters but report to their central ministry in Saigon on technical matters.

Each of the regions includes a number of provinces. The P.M.S. has four provinces and the city of Dalat; South Viet-Nam has twenty-one and Saigon-Cholon prefectorate; Central Viet-Nam has nine plus the city of Tourane. Within each of these provinces there is a province chief, his headquarters staff and bureau and a series of provincial services corresponding to the regional services for the most part. Police, Security and the Civil Guard are included in these provincial services. As is the case at the regional level, the services are responsible to the Chief of Province for administrative matters and are related to the central ministry through the regional service on technical matters. The remoteness of some of the provinces from Saigon as well as other reasons has caused some province leaders to become relatively strong while others are weak. There is considerable variety in details and in the way the system operates in practice, but the general organizational pattern is essentially as summarized. Only the military and the court system are set up to operate outside of the regional and provincial administrative structure.

Understanding of the police situation in Viet-Nam also requires some knowledge of the nature of the security and police problem. In addition to the many crimes and misdemeanors of concern to police in the United States, there is a much greater problem of 'security' both in the countryside and to some extent in the city as well. In the rural areas this security threat takes the form of eruptions of open warfare between government forces and armed sects and bandits. Provinces in the extreme south and west are considered unsafe for travel because of these eruptions and the existence of armed banditry along the

highways. Viet-Minh subversive activities add greatly to the problem. Provinces in these regions are under military province chiefs instead of the usual civilian leadership and they include Bac Lieu, Rachgia, Longxuyen, Hatien, Cantho, Sadec and Chaudoc. Military province chiefs still hold appointments in Cholon and Giadinh because of the recent campaign against Binh Xuyen in these areas close to Saigon. Within Saigon itself frequent nighttime and late afternoon bombings of government buildings were an indication of unsettled times and the nature of the police problem. These bombings which began immediately after the demonstrations and riot of July 20, 1955 did not end until several months ago. Police in Viet-Nam face not only the problems of robbery, traffic control, vice, civil disorders and other more or less routine police situations, but the pressing problem of providing physical security. In this operation the army plays a large role but police, too, have had to operate and organize to meet the situation as best they can. For the present, at least, the security problem appears to be the most important single problem facing the country.

As has been indicated three of the police forces have operated until recently under the control of the Minister of Interior. These three, the Civil Guard, Municipal and Security Police, are the most important from the standpoint of overall function, size, equipment and present commitment. Within the Ministry they were under the control of General Le who is Director-General of Police and Security. The Gendarmerie, under the Ministry of Defense, is a more limited police force. The rural police units are now in the process of being organized in many provinces. Both the form they will eventually assume and their relationship to other police organizations are not clearly understood at present. Though they will be discussed in this report, it is not possible at this time to present much detailed information about them.

Most of the information in this report is based on interviews with police or government officials or on official police records. While the data is the best available at this time, it should be used with caution because of the general unreliability of information in a country going through the war situation and rapid changes that Viet-Nam has undergone during the past decade. Where reliability of data is particularly questionable, a note to this effect is made in the report. All tables contain data on which information is supposed to be accurate.



CHAPTER I

The Civil Guard

A. FUNCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Civil Guard which was created in April, 1955, has general police responsibilities throughout Viet-Nam. In areas where prefectural or municipal police operate, the Civil Guard coordinates its activities with these units. But in all other areas of Viet-Nam, the Civil Guard is, for all practical purposes, the only general police agency. The function of the Guard was defined from the outset to include:

1. Protection of public security and the maintenance of order.
2. Enforcement of laws and administrative rules.
3. Assistance in the pacification of portions of the country, by replacing the military in recently occupied zones.
4. Guarding public buildings, convoys, communications, and national monuments, other than those protected by the military.
5. Special guard duty at sea and airports.
6. Responsibilities for public security and safety at time of national disaster, i.e. floods, storms, fires, etc.

At this stage of its operations the Civil Guard is primarily a semi-military organization taking over operations from the military as the situation becomes less tense. It has the power to perform as a general police organization but because of the nature of the police problem in Viet-Nam it has had to operate as a semi-military organization devoting most of its attention to the security problem and to highway patrol. The Civil Guard report for the months of September and October, 1955 include accounts of actual engagements fought against bandits and communists although most activities consisted of patrols, manning of guard posts, and seizure of illegal arms, equipment and materials.

In order to carry out this operation, the Civil Guard, or Garde Civile as it is commonly called, is deployed throughout the three regions of the country. A national headquarters is maintained in Saigon and provincial and regional commands operate out of their respective capital cities.

The Civil Guard is under the direction of Director General Ton-That-Trach who was nominated for the post by the Minister of the Interior and appointed by President Diem. Until recently, he was responsible to General Nguyen-Ngoc-Le, Director General of Security and Police Services of Viet-Nam, and through him to the Minister of Interior. Organizational structure of all units of the Garde Civile have been fixed by decree of the Minister of the Interior. On November 19, 1955 President Diem transferred control of the Civil Guard to the Presidency. Whether or not this is an extremely temporary shift is not known at present. Assurances have been given that in the long run the Civil Guard will remain a civilian police unit though in the immediate future there is some room for doubt.

The Garde Civile is an outgrowth of the provincial guard system operating up to this year. These provincial guards or the national guard, as it was called in some parts of the country, were combined into the national Civil Guard in April.. While the extent to which central control really operates over the Guard in some provinces is somewhat doubtful given the recentness of the change, the Civil Guard is now conceived of as a civilian police service under the control of Saigon and stationed in the various provinces as other services of the national government are.

#### B. ORGANIZATION

1. Headquarters. In addition to the Director General, the headquarters organization consists of the cabinet of the Director, a Personnel Service, Administrative Service, Technical Service and Communications section. Two directors, one for civilian affairs and the other for military, are provided for but have not been appointed.

Chief of Cabinet: Lt. Nguyen-Trong-Dau  
Personnel Service Executive Officer:  
Mr. Nguyen-Van-Tho  
Director of Administrative Service:  
Mr. Ngo-Van-Sieng  
Director of Technical Services:  
Captain Tran-Thanh-Chieu  
Communications Section:  
Lt. Dao-Van@Khang

ORGANIZATION OF SAIGON HEADQUARTERS OF CIVIL GUARD

Director General

Cabinet

Personnel Service

- I. Active Personnel
  - Province
  - Regional
- II. Recruiting Office
  - Recruitment
  - Reenlistment
- III. Personnel Administration
  - Transfers
  - Promotions
  - Decorations
  - Penalty
  - Dismissal

Administrative Service

- I. Administrative and Financial Office
  - Budget
  - Salary
  - Office Materials
- II. Legislation and Arbitration Office
  - Elaboration of regulations (Statute, Ordinance, Decree)
  - Arbitration ("contentieux") matters

Technical Service

- I. Intelligence Office
  - Collection, investigation, exploration, study of all documents concerning security situation
- II. Military Training Office
  - Military training
  - Military school
  - Charts
- III. Civil Affairs Training Office
  - Administrative and judicial police training
  - Civic Action
  - In-service propaganda
- IV. Equipment Office
  - Plan and supply equipment, weapons, uniforms, mechanical outfits
  - Transportation provision and reparation

Communication Section

- Use of wireless transmitters to communicate with other posts
- Training of radio specialists and operators

Headquarters personnel and equipment are provided for in the organization plan prescribed by the Minister of Interior. The plan has never been fully implemented but it does give some idea of the size and scope of the envisioned headquarters unit. As explained by Civil Guard officials, the personnel provisions are being met but the equipment plan has not been followed.

Planned List of Active Personnel  
and Equipment for General  
Headquarters of the Civil Guard

	<u>Personnel</u>			<u>Vehicles</u>			<u>Weapons</u>				<u>Radios</u>		
	Officers	NCO	EM	Bikes & Motorcycles	Light Vehicles	Trucks & Other Heavy Vehicles	Pistols	Carbines	Rifles	Light & Medium Machine Guns	SCR 193	SCR 694	SCR 300
Director General and Cabinet	5	15		4	6		7	3	8	2			
Personnel Service	4	13	3		4		4	6	3	6			
Technical Service	5	45	41	10	4	15	15	17	37	11			
Administrative Service	3	13	2		3		3	7	4	4			
Communication Section including Escort Service	3	27	48		2	6	8	2	24	31	4	4	6

2. Regional Headquarters. A regional headquarters of the Civil Guard is maintained in each of the three regions of Viet-Nam.

<u>Region</u>	<u>HQ Location</u>	<u>Director</u>
South Viet-Nam	Saigon, 5, Lucien la Couture	Lt.Col. Tran-Vinh-Dat
Central Viet-Nam	Hue, Palace	Lt.Col. Le-Dinh-Hien
P.M.S.	Dalat, Pavilion A, National Administration School	Cao-Xuan-Thieu

Regional organization corresponds roughly to the central headquarters structure. In addition to the Director, each regional headquarters has a personnel office, a technical office, an administration office, a correspondence office and a communications section.

As is the case in all civilian and police governmental organizations the regional office is responsible for activities throughout the region. In the case of the Civil Guard, the regional director works under the Administrative guidance of the specific Regional Delegué who controls all services of the government in his region. The three regional directors are responsible to their respective Delegué for administrative matters but report to the Director General of the Civil Guard on technical, police and equipment matters.

According to the original plans of the Minister of the Interior a substantial regional organization would be maintained. Though these plans have not been fully implemented, the planned equipment and personnel lists for regional headquarters give a view of its planned size and composition.



Planned List of Active Personnel  
and Equipment for Regional  
Headquarters of the Civil Guard

	<u>Personnel</u>				<u>Vehicles</u>			<u>Weapons</u>				<u>Radios</u>		
	Officers	NCO	EM	Total	Bikes & Motorcycles	Light Vehicles	Trucks & Other Heavy Vehicles	Pistols	Carbines	Rifles	Light & Medium Machine Guns	SCR 193	SCR 694	SCR 300
Director and Cabinet	3	3	3	9	2	2		3	5	1				
Personnel Office	1	7	2	10		1		1	2	2	5			
Technical Office	4	24	13	41	15	1	2	4	16	18	3			
Administrative Office	1	7	1	9		1		4	2	3				
Communication Section including Escort Department	2	14	26	42		2	3	5	13	9	17	2	2	3

3. Provincial organization. Within each province, the Civil Guard command consists of 1 provincial commander, 1 deputy provincial commander, a correspondence office, personnel department, administrative department, technical department and a communications section.

The basic unit for the Civil Guard is the company consisting of one command platoon and four operating platoons. The plan calls for each company to consist of 158 persons commanded by a captain or a lieutenant. All the companies in a province are commanded by the provincial commander who is responsible to the Province Chief on all non-technical questions. At present, the units within a province fall within the budget of the Province Chief also. This is viewed as a temporary situation and central budgeting is planned after the first year's operation.

Within the provinces the Civil Guard is deployed in guard and patrol posts throughout the province. For example, in Tayninh companies are divided into platoons of thirty men each and there are about 20 guard posts throughout the province. Most of these are along transportation routes and at bridges. The number of men at each post will vary from a minimum of about 12 to as many as fifty in some of the key posts in provinces of the insecure South. Civil Guard personnel are rotated within company areas and then whole companies are rotated over a period of a few months. The assignment in the posts is to guard the particular bridge or section of the highway and maintain patrols whenever necessary to secure the area against highway bandits, Viet-Minh and rebellious sects.

As prescribed by the Minister of Interior, the provincial command should follow the general lines of the table below. In actual fact, up to the present, the Civil Guard has not been able to obtain equipment at the prescribed levels and in some provinces personnel assigned to the province command is also below the specified number.

Planned List of Active Personnel  
and Equipment for Provincial  
Command of the Civil Guard

	<u>Personnel</u>				<u>Vehicles</u>				<u>Weapons</u>					<u>Radios</u>				
	Officers	NCO	EM	Total	Bikes & Motorcycles	Light Vehicles	Trucks & Other Heavy Vehicles				Pistols	Carbines	Rifles	Light & Heavy Machine Guns	Total	SCR 193	SCR 694	SCR 300
Director and Cabinet	2	2	2	6	1	2				3	1	2		6				
Personnel Office	1	3	2	6						1	4			5				
Technical Department	1	16	12	29		1	1			11	7	8	3	29				
Administrative Office	1	3	2	6						1	3		2	6				
Escort and Communications	1	11	24	36			2			3	13	9	13	38	2	2	2	

The Provincial Command has charge of all Civil Guard companies in the province. This number varies considerably from one province to another depending on the nature of the security situation in the province. Each company ideally consists of 158 men broken down into one command platoon of 30 men and four operating platoons of 32 men each. The general breakdown of organization, equipment and personnel in a Civil Guard Company is described in the table which follows. It should be noted, however, that many variations occur in this breakdown and the proposed equipment has not been obtained as yet.

Civil Guard Company Planned  
Personnel and Equipment List

	One Command Platoon	Each Operating Platoon (4 Platoons)			Total (Five Platoons)
		Command Groups	Firing Power Group	Assault Group	
<u>Personnel</u>					
Officers	2	1			6
NCO	9	2	4	3	45
EM	19	2	8	12	107
Total	30	5	12	15	
<u>Weapons</u>					
Pistol	3	1	2		15
Machine Gun	2		2	11	54
Rifle	16		5	2	44
Grenade Launchers			2		8
Mortar (50mm.)	1				1
Carbine	9	4	3	2	45
Dagger				8	32
Total	31	5	14	23	
<u>Vehicles</u>					
Jeep	1				1
Light Truck	1				1
GMC	1				1
<u>Radio</u>					
SCR 536	2	1			6
SCR 300	2				2
SCR 625				1	4
<u>Light Tools</u>					
(Shovels, Hoes, Axes, etc.)	15	4	12	15	139

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C. PERSONNEL

The Civil Guard consists of 44,429 officers and men. Most of the personnel come from the former national guard and have military training backgrounds. The breakdown by province and region is given in the following table.

Civil Guard Personnel by Province (November 1, 1955)				
<u>Province</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>NCO</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Gia Dinh	27	271	1,793	2,091
2. Cholon	11	142	1,127	1,280
3. Tay Ninh	8	74	700	782
4. Thu Dau Mot	21	266	1,335	1,622
5. Bien Hoa	15	130	1,040	1,185
6. Vung Tau	1	10	156	167
7. Ba nia	6	67	368	441
8. Tan An	14	125	998	1,137
9. My Tho	30	358	2,096	2,484
10. Ben Tre	40	243	1,538	1,821
11. Tra Vinh	41	230	1,082	1,353
12. Go Cong	10	92	736	838
13. Vinh Long	16	150	1,327	1,493
14. Sa Dec	5	77	583	665
15. Chau Doc	8	173	1,124	1,305
16. Long Xuyen	3	71	802	876
17. Soc Trang	34	237	1,883	2,154
18. Can Tho	14	198	1,598	1,810
19. Ha Tien	1	25	282	308
20. Rach Gia	10	97	1,036	1,143
21. Bac Lieu	11	123	1,060	1,194
22. Thi Nghe	4	26	213	243
Headquarters (S.V.N.)	23	64	58	145
Total for South Viet-Nam	353	3,249	22,935	26,537



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<u>Province</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>NCO</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Dalat	9	55	231	295
2. Dong Nai Thuong	14	49	313	376
3. Ban Me Thuot	6	17	125	148
4. Pleiku	6	23	126	155
5. Kontum	5	29	116	150
Headquarters	10	21	35	66
Total for P.M.S.	50	194	946	1,190
1. Quang Tri	10	122	570	702
2. Thua Thien	13	170	992	1,175
3. Da Nang	8	72	363	443
4. Quang Nam	16	208	1,212	1,436
5. Quang Ngai	9	64	1,093	1,166
6. Binh Dinh	4	32	478	514
7. Phu Yen	11	124	910	1,045
8. Khanh Hoa	17	108	746	871
9. Ninh Thuan	1	11	434	446
10. Binh Thuan	5	73	765	844
Headquarters	--	---	---	---
Total for Central Viet Nam	95	984	7,563	8,642 (1)

SUMMARY

South Viet Nam 26,537

P.M.S. 1,190

Central Viet Nam 8,642

TOTAL: 36,369

Assigned to Central HQ 8,060

TOTAL: . . . . . 44,429

(1) The total does not include the effective personnel of the Central H.Q.

The monthly pay scale for the Civil Guard as compared to the National Army is shown on the table which follows.

Pay Scale of Civil Guard and National Army (November, 1955)			
<u>Pay in Piastres (Monthly)</u>			
<u>Rank</u>	<u>Civil Guard</u>	<u>National Army*</u>	
		<u>Beginning Level</u> (single)	<u>Maximum Level</u> (married with 5 children)
Lieutenant-Colonel	9,200.₺	7,031.99₺	13,101.38₺
Major	7,860.₺	5,630.99₺	12,687.38₺
Captain	6,020.₺	4,482.99₺	11,090.38₺
Lieutenant	5,050.₺	3,713.99₺	9,706.38₺
2nd Lieutenant	4,580.₺	2,744.99₺	8,338.38₺
Senior Company Sergeant-Major	3,220.₺	2,013.99₺	7,919.38₺
Company Sergeant- Major	2,900.₺	1,871.99₺	7,585.38₺
Senior Sergeant	2,500.₺	1,589.98₺	7,025.39₺
Sergeant	2,260.₺	1,523.99₺	6,818.38₺
Senior Corporal	2,020.₺	1,448.98₺	6,581.38₺
Corporal	1,430.₺	561.00₺	3,159.38₺
Private 1st Class	1,310.₺	446.99₺	2,841.38₺
Private 2nd Class	1,250.₺	395.99₺	2,763.38₺

\*The pay system in the army is so complex that the maximum figures used here are subject to question. The maximum figure includes various supplements such as family allowances, living allotments, and an increase for each child which the Civil Guard salaries do not include.

The most common complaint heard from Province Chiefs about the Civil Guard is that there are not enough of them. As the national army is withdrawn from a partially pacified area it is up to the Civil Guard to take over and maintain stability and security. This takes a considerable force in some provinces because of the many bridges and posts to be guarded. The Civil Guard force is rarely considered large enough by province officials to do this important job.

Although the central headquarters maintains that the Civil Guard does not get involved in caring for and moving families, this was not found to be the case in the provinces. With some exceptions, the Civil Guard officers and men had their families with them wherever they were assigned and upon inquiry it became clear that the Civil Guard had provided transportation. Of course, this is the tradition in Viet Nam and the Guard is not the exception.

In Central Viet Nam as well as in the South, Civil Guard strength is increased by the inclusion of northern Vietnamese national guardsmen who have come across the parallel. In the Center, they number over 2,400 men. The national guard is the former designation of the Civil Guard and these men from the North are assigned to Civil Guard provincial commanders.

#### D. EQUIPMENT

The Civil Guard is not well equipped and a common complaint of provincial commanders is that they do not have enough weapons, mobile equipment or ammunition. As was mentioned in connection with the established organization personnel and equipment lists for headquarters, region, province and company which were discussed above, the equipment portions are far from being met at present.

The following table gives the data on armaments throughout the Civil Guard. It does not give the condition of rifles which are in many cases old and in bad condition. (According to the estimate of the chief of technical services, 50% are unusable.)

## P.M.S.

Headquarters				
Dalat	10	44	89	10
Dong-Nai-Thuong	6	26	60	8
Ban-Me-Thuot	6	26	60	8
Pleiku	6	26	60	8
Kontum	<u>6</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>8</u>
Total for P.M.S.	34	148	329	42

## General Headquarters

Battalion I	24	77	494	30
Battalion II	24	78	490	30
Battalion III	75	230	495	40
Battalion IV	75	230	485	40
National Command	<u>9</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>129</u>	<u>9</u>
Total HQ (Saigon)	207	693	2,093	149

SUMMARY

South Viet Nam	540	2,594	28,452	455	2,032
Central Viet Nam	176	2,007	8,121	210	
P.M.S.	34	148	329	42	
General Headquarters	<u>207</u>	<u>693</u>	<u>2,093</u>	<u>149</u>	
TOTAL	957	5,442	38,995	856	2,032

Civil Guard Weapons  
(November 1, 1955)

<u>Region and Province</u>	<u>Pistols</u>	<u>Sub- Machine Guns</u>	<u>Rifles</u>	<u>Auto- matic Rifles</u>	<u>Grenade Launchers</u>
South Viet Nam					
Headquarters	37	74	4,715	91	540
Gia-Dinh	144	516	2,370	33	114
Thi-Nghe	17	60	5	2	
Cholon	19	77	1,314	3	36
Tay-Ninh	19	105	659	18	55
Thu-Dau-Mot	42	591	1,897	70	145
Bien-Hoa	47	464	1,664	50	147
Baria	5	36	368	9	34
Tan-An	15	100	1,007	39	36
My-Tho	24	44	2,416	10	83
Ben-Tre	24	20	1,587	1	215
Tra-Vinh	12	39	613	7	5
Go-Cong	7	41	882	3	
Vinh-Long	27	50	1,128	10	10
Vung-Tau	3	17	185	4	8
Sa-Dec	15	45	545	8	46
Chau-Doc	14	46	1,295	16	220
Long-Xuyen	9	48	505	10	13
Can-Tho	24	54	1,529	16	78
Soc-Trang	15	41	1,587	5	103
Ha-Tien	5	14	179		
Rach-Gia	12	73	1,258	44	121
Bac-Lieu	4	39	744	6	24



The weapons have been derived from three main sources:

- (1) Old weapons brought in from old national and provincial guard units;
- (2) weapons donated by the French;
- (3) weapons on loan from the Vietnamese Army.

The Civil Guard has very few trucks or vehicles of any sort. In those areas where water transportation is the main or only means of travel, they are equally short of boats. Many of the vehicles used by Civil Guard are borrowed from the national army. The following table presents data as of mid-1955. The situation has not improved materially since then.

Civil Guard Vehicle Inventory  
and Requirements  
(July, 1955)

<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Number Needed*</u>	<u>Now Existing</u>
Bicycles	86	0
Motorcycles	14	1
Light cars	6	1
Jeeps	402	10
Light trucks	348	10
G.M.C.	317	11
Ambulances	35	1
Total	1,208	34

\*Needs are estimated by the Civil Headquarters on the basis of a 45,000 man Civil Guard.

shipment in about two months. In some provinces at present, province chiefs have supplied some uniforms to the Civil Guard.

#### E. TRAINING

An army training base, Quangtrung, has been providing training to Civil Guard personnel during the past six weeks. The course consists of four weeks of para-military training

- Civil Guard.

Civil Guard man on  
guard duty.

USOM Photo  
Lab #40820



Technical Services  
Building, Civil Guard.

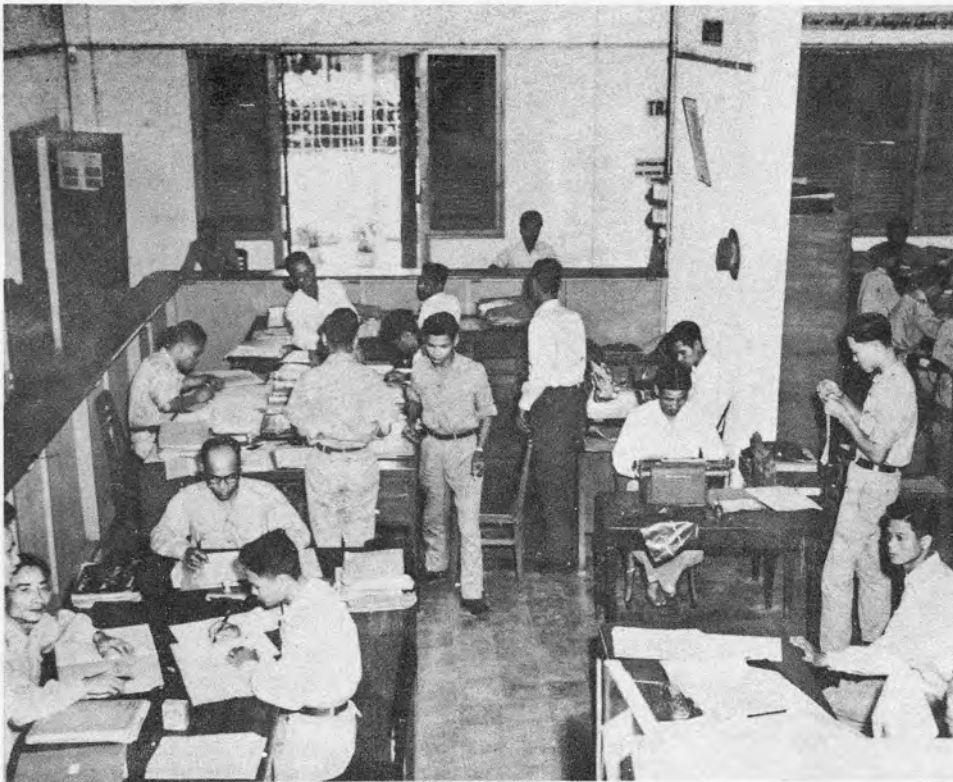
USOM Photo  
Lab #40854





Central Headquarters  
Building, Civil Guard  
Saigon.

USOM Photo  
Lab #40843



Central headquarters  
showing congested office  
space.

USOM Photo  
Lab #40844

followed by two weeks of police instruction arranged by the MSU police team. Five hundred civil guards are started in the course each week and a total of 3,000, therefore, are in some stage of training at any one time. While this is considered a temporary emergency situation, and the training leaves something to be desired from the standpoint of a civilian rural police force, the training is being sought by almost every province commander for groups of his own men. Up until the beginning of this operation at Quangtrung, the Civil Guard had poor training facilities and individual provincial commanders were responsible for most of the training that did exist. Also in operation at Quangtrung is a military leadership course which 300 Civil Guard officers are attending.

Other training opportunities are being developed through the National Police Academy and contacts in the Philippines. Officers of the Civil Guard were among the two groups of trainees graduates from the special course put on by the Philippine Constabulary school.

The background of most of the Civil Guard personnel would indicate that most of them have had some military training. Many, however, are illiterate and the level of training has certainly not been high on the average throughout the Guard."

\* \* \* \* \*

Richard Rogers had the gigantic task of advisor to the Civil Guard. The police team's thinking regarding the Civil Guard was that the present organization, dilapidated as it was known to be, could, with proper support from the Vietnamese Government, become a first-rate national police. In order to become first-rate, however, a careful weeding out process should be instituted in order to eliminate the illiterate and the bad elements, and to institute modern recruiting procedures for new personnel. If the Civil Guard was to become a civil police agency, a number of radical changes would have to be made.



Rogers made a very careful study of the headquarters organization and then began to visit the various Civil Guard commands in the provinces. These contacts, both at headquarters and in the field, gave Rogers a "feeling" regarding the organization impossible to obtain in any other manner. Always uppermost in his mind was the great need for training at the command level, since proper organizational ability and leadership would be vital in creating a civil police organization out of this hodge-podge military body. He worked closely with a number of the outstanding Vietnamese military personnel assigned from ARVN to the Guard. In explaining his ideas these men whole-heartedly supported the civil police plan for the Civil Guard and worked toward this goal.

One of the grave problems confronting the Guard was the fact that despite the three regional commands and the general headquarters in Saigon, once the Civil Guard were detailed to a particular province both the regional and headquarters command lost control of these men. The province chief took it upon himself to be the military and police commander and "took over" the leadership of these groups. The regional delegate did little, if anything, to change the situation; thus, with loss of control the central Civil Guard command was powerless to demote or promote, release or hire, or make any changes in the field. Since province chiefs were paying the salaries of the Civil Guard, an early recommendation suggested that this national police force be paid from the national budget. By decree signed in



January, President Diem ordered the Civil Guard to be paid from the national budget from central headquarters. Many months were to pass before this decree was fully implemented.

The organization of the Civil Guard along military lines was entirely acceptable for a national police organization. Some minor changes were recommended, such as, an inspection system emanating from central headquarters, regional headquarters, down to the province level. This was important for in no other way could uniformity in procedures, reports, training and deployment become standard except through such a system. Field trips revealed that in the provinces the Civil Guard had lost their individuality and had to work under ARVN commanders, therefore, recommendations were made that the Civil Guard be returned to the control of the Ministry of Interior; further, that central headquarters have constant control of Civil Guardsmen in the provinces through the regional commands. These recommendations were never approved. Even though on May 7, 1958, the Civil Guard was returned to the jurisdiction of the Minister of Interior, the province chiefs, today, still have full authority over the activities and direction of the Civil Guard provincial organizations. Central and regional commands are mere equipment distribution centers. Today (1960) after five years of recommending changes, there are 38 provincial Civil Guard organizations instead of one national organization.

As originally stated, fifty ARVN officers were assigned to the Civil Guard as a nucleus of officer material. This was an

excellent idea. However, instead of keeping these officers in the Civil Guard, by the time these men were indoctrinated in the philosophy of police work, they were returned to the army. As an example, one of the finest young ARVN officers we have had the pleasure of working with was a Captain Tran-Thanh-Chieu. Intensely loyal and eager (members of his family had been killed by communists), he became very interested in the Civil Guard and became imbued with the philosophy of Civil policing. Since it was impossible to send Chieu to the states for command police training due to being military personnel, we were able to persuade ARVN command and MAAG to send Chieu, in June, to the military command school at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. We had the promise of ARVN that upon his return from the states, Chieu would be reassigned to the Civil Guard. When he returned to Viet-Nam in 1957, Chieu, then Major, was assigned to ARVN and we lost a capable officer, one who would have made excellent contributions to the success of the Civil Guard.

In August 1956, four Civil Guard officers, after completing extensive English courses, were sent to Michigan State University for one year of intensive police training. Due to illness, two of these men returned to Viet-Nam in November. The other two men continued their courses and returned to their respective commands. Two Guard lieutenants attended MSU from January to December, 1957, and two more lieutenants a similar course in 1958. In cooperation with the British Embassy, arrangements were made for eight officers

to attend a six-week course on police techniques in Malaya. These men returned enthusiastic to do a good job. To July 1, 1959, 53 Civil Guardsmen had attended third country police training.

During August, Rogers accompanied Director-General Trach; Colonel Tran-Vinh Dac, Commander of the South Viet-Nam Regional Civil Guard; Lt. Colonel Le-Dinh-Hien, Commander of Central Viet-Nam Regional Civil Guard; Major Nguyen-Van-Luong, Commander of the Civil Guard Training School at Quang Trung, and Mr. Bui-Duc-Thinh, Director of the Civil Defense Corps of Viet-Nam, on an observation<sup>four</sup> of one week to Malaya. They visited the police headquarters in Singapore and the training school. They visited a number of precinct stations and police outposts. Later they flew to Kuala Lumpur, capital of the Federated Malayan States and visited the national Malayan police headquarters, recruit training school and other points of police interest. They found very interesting the Jungle Fighting School where various demonstrations were put on for the group. Later a visit was made to the Officers Training School at Kuala Kuba Bahru. Upon return to Viet-Nam, these man had a different outlook relative to the Civil Guard. They realized that a police force could do a much better job in working with the populace than could an army-type of organization.

Unfortunately, as has happened so frequently in Viet-Nam, two weeks after Director-General Trach returned from Malaya, he was transferred out of the Civil Guard to become a fonctionnaire at the

Civil Service Department. Thus, all of the valuable information he had obtained from his trip went down the drain.

Brigadier-General Tran Tu Oai, was appointed Director-General of the Civil Guard. General Oai was most cooperative with the MSU police team. As is usual in these cases, general transfers were made at various levels. Major Luong, head of the Civil Guard training school, and a visitor to Malaya, was transferred to the Presidential Guard, and new faces appeared in the various offices with whom we had contact.

In April 1956, the police team had prepared a recommendation to be submitted to the Minister of Interior and to General Le, Director-General of the VBI, entitled Report on the Proposed Organization of the Law Enforcement Agencies of the Republic of Viet-Nam, trying, once again, to clarify the muddled police situation. This report follows. <sup>Relph</sup> *Use attached report, here, beginning with preface*

Once again the team was attempting to secure a clear-cut separation of police power and a definite answer as to the Vietnamese concept of the Civil Guard. During the frequent conferences held regarding material aid for the police, the team's concept of the Civil Guard leaned heavily toward a state police-type of organization. The Vietnamese concept was always along military lines and they constantly requested tanks, half-tracks and similar military equipment for the Civil Guard.

The above recommendation was submitted, but nothing happened.

In December 1955, Dr. Edward Weidner, Chief Advisor of the MSU Advisory Group, returned to MSU campus at East Lansing. On March 12, 1956, Dr. Wesley R. Fishel arrived in Saigon as Weidner's replacement. Dr. Fishel was a personal friend of President Diem and on several previous occasions had spent time in Viet-Nam as a special consultant to the President.

During the interval April to November, the team awaited some reply or action to our recommendations, but none was forthcoming. When questioned regarding the proposals, Vietnamese government officials merely stated that the proposal was under study. On November 17, 1956, Dr. Fishel and Chief Hoyt were invited to a conference with President Diem. The Memorandum for the Record, written by Chief Hoyt, is quoted in full.

"At 3:15 P.M. on Saturday, November 17, 1956, Doctor Fishel and I had a conference with President Ngo dinh Diem. During the conference, Doctor Fishel asked me to review for the President's benefit the progress being made with the different police services. I started with the Municipal Police, complimenting very highly the progress that has been made in many areas within the Saigon-Cholon Municipal Police Department. I passed on to him many compliments we have heard on the efficiency with which they handled this last national ceremony (first Independence Day). I complimented Director TU for his efficiency as a police administrator.

I, then, moved on to the Civil Guard, and advised him that we were very happy with the ability that the new Director General TRAN TU OAI seems to display. I told him that we noticed a decided increase in their efficiency and morale. I pointed out that General Oai is a strong believer in training. The President interrupted to say that General Oai apparently had an erroneous idea as to what his Civil



Guard was supposed to do - that he was operating it as a second Army. The President's idea seems to be that the Civil Guard, rather than being controlled from a central directorate, was to be controlled from province level by province chiefs. He said definitely that the Civil Guard in the province are directly responsible to the province chief, and not to General Oai. He pointed out that since the province chiefs are held accountable for security within their province, they must have at their disposal the weapons with which to control security. Since this is in direct conflict with the recommendations that we have made in several reorganization reports prepared at the request of this government, and since it is in conflict with our verbal recommendations and statements made to government officials - all the way from the President on down, I was quite surprised to hear this statement. To make sure I understood right, I gave a few hypothetical problems and asked how he felt they should be handled.

I asked if the province chief, in his opinion, was capable of determining how a police action should be carried out to solve a security problem that had developed. He stated that, in his opinion, he felt the province chief could make such a decision and that it would be up to the province chiefs to direct the Civil Guard as to whatever action they should take. I asked him if this applied as well on matters involving ordinary crimes and his reply was "yes". I, then, asked that if the Civil Guard were successful in apprehending the group that ambushed a government party the day before and killed 4 or 5 people, were the Civil Guard to go ahead and secure the statements from witnesses and prepare the case for court? He said "no" - that they were to turn the case over to the military because, in this case, the bandits were members of one of the sects. I then asked how they were to determine they were members of sects and then hand them over to the military, rather than the group being ordinary criminals and turning them over to civil courts. He said in the case in question, the Gendarmerie would be called in to determine if they were just bandits or operating as sects. This, of course, would involve three separate policing organizations -- the Civil Guard, making the apprehension; the Gendarmerie, determining what the criminals are; and the military, then proceeding with them, if they are from the sects.

All of our recommendations and the recommendations of our MAAG officers have been that the Gendarmerie be

dissolved and that their highly trained personnel be absorbed in the civil police agencies and the military police units.

I then asked that if this same method of operation is to apply to the Surete or Security and Police (VBI), as he calls it. His answer was that they too are operating directly under the province chiefs. He points out that the Director General in Saigon, General Nguyen Ngoc Le, at present would have direction only on technical supervision. Operationally, they are under the province chiefs.

I then asked him if he still agreed there should be a Central Records for all criminal and political records. He agreed that this would be good. He felt that the province chiefs would have no objections to having copies made of all crime reports. I pointed out to him that in the past some province chiefs have made the decision that certain criminal cases should not be reported on through to Saigon. This did not seem to worry him too much. He did state that if there were any aggravated cases, they should be brought to his attention and he would see that the province chiefs are instructed correctly.

I then pointed out to him that at his request last January we had prepared a rather lengthy and thorough report on our recommendations for the organization of all civil police agencies within Viet Nam, spelling out definitely the responsibilities of each agency. I asked him if he approved of this report. He did not answer this question, but went on to another matter. A little later, I pointed out that at the request of his government the first of July this year, we had prepared our recommendations on the re-organization of the Surete, and I asked for his reactions on that. He did not speak to this point either. He indicated that he was making some major decisions regarding the police during this coming week, and I am not sure whether this referred to the Central Files and Records, or whether it referred to personnel changes within the Surete.

He talked at some length about the duties of the Regional Delegate. He pointed out that they are no longer acting as governors, but are inspectors of the central government. He stated that if there are cases where the province chief is not cooperating with the security forces, or whose orders are making the security operation more difficult, the matter should be brought to his attention - that he would dispatch the Delegate as his inspector and that changes would be made.

We gathered that he is definitely going to move General Le. His specific criticisms of him on this date were:

(1) He had hired a chauffeur from some other branch of the government who had a bad driving record.

(2) He had a clerk working in the Surete who was a former member of the Dai Viet, and that although this had been called to his attention, the man was still there.

I gathered that he either has not seen any of our reports, or that he has forgotten their contents. It also seemed apparent that he has forgotten all former verbal conversations we have had with him about our reorganization recommendations for the civil police. He did advance one point that was refreshing, if it is carried through; namely, that at each province level, there should be a council on security affairs, presided over by the province chief, with membership composed of the head of the Civil Guard in the province, the military commander and the police and security commander. He pointed out that the province chief would be the top man. This would mean that the council would be about as democratic as the faculty meetings of the Institute (National Institute of Administration) when they are presided over by Mr. Thong.

HOWARD W. HOYT, Chief  
Police Program Division"

The year 1956 was rapidly coming to a close. All advisors were working hard at their respective assignments and there was plenty of work to be done. However, as far as making any impact at the top of the police hierarchy in reorganizational changes, our progress was nil.

The problems encountered by the MSUG police team were related to the Country Team on December 4, 1956 at the office of US Ambassador G. Frederick Reinhardt.

"The following consists of a brief resume of the recollections of the writer of the Country Team Meeting held at 10:45 A.M., Tuesday, December 4th, 1956, in the Office of the Ambassador, Mr. G. Frederick Reinhardt, at the United States Embassy in Saigon:

This meeting was attended by the following individuals:

Ambassador Reinhardt, Mr. Barrows, Mr. Haraldson, General Williams, Colonel Finn, Mr. Anderton, Colonel Lansdale, Mr. Speer, Mr. McKesson, Mr. Anderson, Dr. Fishel, yourself, and the writer. It is to be noted that there were also two or three other individuals whose identity is unknown to the writer.

After very brief introductory remarks by Dr. Fishel, you will recall that you presented a detailed account of the MSU Police Administration Program in Viet Nam, in its relation to the Vietnamese Government, from the inception of this Program in 1955 until the present time. You cited the fact that MSU's thinking in terms of the needs of civilian police forces in Viet Nam was presented during several meetings held with former Minister of Interior, Mr. BUI-VAN-THINH, as well as with President Diem. During the course of these meetings held during the latter half of 1955, and in early 1956, these Vietnamese officials agreed in general with the proposals advanced by yourself and Dr. Weidner. You recall that Ambassador Reinhardt also agreed that he had, himself, discussed and presented to President Diem the proposed thinking of the MSU Police Team, in connection with suggested reorganization of civil law enforcement in Viet Nam.

You, also, advised the Country Team that in July of 1956, a meeting was held with Mr. CHAU, the Acting Minister of Interior of the Vietnamese Government, in connection with the proposed reorganization of civilian law enforcement in this country. At that time, Mr. CHAU appointed a committee which he agreed to head at the outset, for the purpose of studying the MSU proposals. Shortly thereafter, copies of the MSU overall civil police reorganization plan and copies of the suggested reorganization of the VBI were forwarded to the Palace for Mr. CHAU's attention. You pointed out to the Country Team that as of December 4, 1956, no meeting of this Committee has actually been held.

You declared that in spite of original agreement by President Diem and two Ministers of Interior, the reorganization plans have not been implemented; that the Civil Guard



has been increased in number; that no Central Identification Division has been created within the VBI; that no decision has been reached as to what exactly should be done in regards to a Central Crime Laboratory; that the Gendarmerie, instead of being incorporated either in a civil law enforcement organization or in the Army as a Military Police Battalion, has been increased in number from approximately 700 men in 1955, to some 1,300 in 1956. In addition, the President issued a decree on October 24, 1956, in which virtually complete control of all law enforcement, whether local or national, has been returned to the hands of each individual Province Chief. This action, as you pointed out, is in direct opposition to the thinking embodied in the overall reorganization plan of April 1956. You asserted that instead of progressing in terms of reorganization, the Vietnamese Government is going in reverse.

For a few minutes, you discussed the current situation with regard to the Civil Guard, in which you pointed out the number of Civil Guard which existed in 1955 - then you briefly related the changes in personnel which have occurred since that time. You explained to the Country Team that at one point the number of Civil Guard personnel dropped to some 45,000, but that during the past several months, this figure has increased so that we are now at a point where the personnel of this organization totals approximately 54,000. Again, this indicates that the Vietnamese Government has not accepted our thinking in limiting the number of people in this agency. The efficiency of General OAI, the Civil Guard Director, was pointed out; which opinion was supported by General Williams.

A comparison was made between General OAI and General LE, in terms of leadership qualities. Dr. Fishel pointed out that General LE had fallen into disfavor with the President by virtue of the fact that, according to the President, General LE had failed to remove from VBI Headquarters a number of young military officers who the President (according to Dr. Fishel) described as being 'unsavory characters'. Dr. Fishel declared that President Diem also disapproved of General LE on the latter's reported fondness for women, in spite of the fact that the General is married. Dr. Fishel stated that during the course of a meeting which he had the occasion of having with the President immediately prior to the Country Team Meeting, that the latter disclosed his having appointed one Mr. VU-THINH-HUAN (?) as Assistant to Mr. CHAU, in charge of internal security. He, also, declared that the President intended to make a decision with respect to General LE's replacement within the following 2 or 3 days.



During the course of the meeting, General Williams expressed a strong interest in the MSU position with regard to the Gendarmerie. He stated that had he known what the MSU stand on this organization was some 6 months ago, that he would have taken necessary steps so that a final disposition would have been made with regard to this organization. He declared he was most happy indeed to learn that another American group in Saigon agreed with his thinking as to the final disposition of this agency. At this point, Colonel Finn related the early American recommendations regarding this group. He stated that the Gendarmerie is carried with the Vietnamese Army Tables of Organization, and that they are included in the Defense Department payroll.

It is to be noted, that during your briefing of the existing situations, viz., the civil police agencies in Viet Nam, the large organization chart, showing our suggested reorganization was being passed among the members of the Country Team. A brief discussion was held, in which several members of the Country Team expressed their opinions with regard to the impact of the Presidential Decree of October 24, 1956. You pointed out that it was our opinion, based upon information received from the field, as well as from Saigon (Rogers' trip to My Tho; interview of General Le and Tran-Ba-Thanh), which indicated that the Province Chiefs are interpreting this decree to the effect that they now have full control over all civil law enforcement agencies which operate within their provinces. According to Dr. Fishel, this is a misinterpretation on the part of the Province Chiefs and that President Diem is aware of this misinterpretation. Dr. Fishel pointed out that other parts of this decree were very ambiguous and poorly worded, and that this has been called to President Diem's attention. You will recall that the Province Chiefs now have complete control over administrative, as well as operation, functions of all police organizations in their respective province. This control even goes to the point of permitting the Province Chief to release, according to his whim or desire, any individuals arrested by any of the police organizations in his province. It is believed that the Province Chief also now has authority to have arrested those persons whom he designates. As a result of this particular decree, it is now impossible for the heads of civil law enforcement agencies to transfer or promote any people within their organizations without first having the approval of the Province Chief involved.

Mr. Speer discussed his experiences regarding the Korean National Police relations with the Korean Provincial Governors following the recent war in that country.

Mr. Barrows declared that he was in sympathy with your concern over the obvious failure of the Vietnamese Government to implement the reorganization plans, which said Government had approved as far back as October 1955 (?). Mr. Barrows reiterated your worry over the fact that with one million dollars of American Aid already enroute, or about to be shipped to Viet Nam, and with some 5 to 6 million dollars of American Aid being considered for future shipment to this country, that failure to put into effect an efficient organizational structure would greatly increase the possibility of misuse and improper maintenance of this equipment.

Ambassador Reinhardt pointed out that he had come away from this particular Country Team Meeting with two salient observations:

- 1) That the Police Advisory Team is being blocked from making its fullest contribution by officials in the top levels of the Vietnamese Government.
- 2) In spite of the lack of implementation of reorganization plans on the part of high-ranking Vietnamese Government officials, that the MSU Police Advisory Team is making progress at the lower levels of various police echelons.

Ambassador Reinhardt suggested that the Country Team should wait a few days before deciding what action should be taken, in order to give President Diem additional time in which to make personnel changes in the top levels of the police organizations, as previously described by Dr. Fishel."

(Italics) A number of national events occurred during 1956 which reveal the progress made by Diem's government. On March 4, general elections were held throughout Viet Nam for the election of members to the newly created Assembly. It should be noted at this point, that there was no opposition party as such. All members

elected to this first assembly for a four year term were of the President's party. Thus, for the next four years, Diem had a rubber stamp assembly . He had no tolerance for anyone disagreeing with him or his policies.

(Italics) On March 15, the newly elected Assembly, consisting of 123 deputies, held their opening session at the old French Opera House. At the opening session Diem appointed a committee to draft a Constitution for Viet Nam.

(Italics) The month of July had been awaited with bated breath. The elections for the unification of North and South Viet Nam were supposed to have been held during this month, according to the Geneva Agreement. No unusual incidents occurred during the month and the country, as a whole, breathed a sigh of relief.

In April 1956, Minister of Interior Bui-Van-Thinh was appointed Ambassador to Japan. The Minister, a member of cabinet of the Vietnamese Government just before President Diem took over the reins, had supported Diem from the very beginning. During the crucial times of 1954 and early 1955, Thinh aided Diem in many ways. However, the appointment to the ambassadorship was to get Thinh out of Diem's hair, since Thinh was outspoken and at times disagreed with Diem's policies. Thus, the transfer. We on the police team felt that we were losing a personal friend. Thinh had been very helpful in many ways and because of his frankness, we always knew exactly what he thought of our efforts.

Replacing Bui Van Thinh was Nguyen Huu Chau, Secretary of State to the Presidency, who now would carry two portfolios.

The Family of Diem.

The father of the Diem family, Ngo Dinh Kha, was a mandarin first class and was reputed to be one of the four pillars of the Imperial Court at Hue. Of nine children in the family, seven survived to maturity and the six boys in the family received good educations. The family was not wealthy by any means, but they were well-to-do in every sense of the word.

The five eldest brothers during their mature years became known as the "Five Tigers". This name was given to them because of their apparent astuteness and brilliance. These five were:

1. Ngo Dinh Khoi, the eldest child and during the war in Indo-China, province chief in Central Viet Nam. He was buried alive by the communists. He was the son-in-law of Nguyen Huu Bai, Prime Minister of Bao Dai court in Hue and godfather to Diem.

2. Ngo Dinh Thuc. Studied to become a Catholic priest and was ordained.

3. Ngo Dinh Diem.

4. Ngo Dinh Luyen, studied architecture in France.

5. Ngo Dinh Nhu, studied archives in France.

The sixth and youngest brother, Ngo Dinh Can, was not as brilliant as his brothers and, thus, was not a so-called tiger.

The seventh member of the family, Ngo Thi Thanh, a sister, was the wife of the chief of a village council in Central Viet Nam.

When Diem took over the government in 1954, the family consolidated their position in and around Diem. For example:

Ngo Dinh Thuc, by this time a Bishop of Vinh Long, maneuvered long and hard to be appointed Apostolic Bishop of Free Viet Nam. This was circumvented by the Vatican who appointed an Italian to this position. Soon after this appointment, the new Apostolic Bishop warned the Catholic Diocese to refrain from politics, something Thuc wanted the Catholics to become involved in. Ngo Dinh Thuc had his hand in the distribution of supplies to the refugees. Much difficulty arose from the preferential treatment given the Catholic refugees over those of the Buddhist religion. When one considers that less than ten percent of the entire population in Free Viet Nam is Catholic, it was no wonder that bitter feelings arose from the favoritism shown.<sup>10</sup>

Ngo Dinh Luyen, the fourth brother, was appointed Ambassador to England, Tunisia, Italy and Belgium.

Ngo Dinh Nhu with his charming wife was appointed Special Advisor to the President and moved into Independence Palace.

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<sup>10</sup> Vietnam, The First Five Years. Edited by Richard W. Lindholm. Bernard B. Fall on Father Harnett, p.93. Michigan State University Press (1959)



Ngo Dinh Can, the youngest brother, remained in Central Viet Nam (Hue) and set himself up as "king" of Central Viet Nam. Absolutely nothing could be done by province chiefs or regional delegates without first clearing the matter with Can.

The sister, Mrs. Ca Le who died early in 1960, was the mother-in-law of the present Minister of Defense, Tran Trung Dung. It is a fact that Madam Le became very wealthy in a few short years through being awarded contracts to supply goods to ARVN and contracts to build Army camps throughout Central Viet Nam. She reportedly left a cash estate of 600,000,000 piasters, or the equivalent of US\$ 8,000,000. At least six large private schools located in Central Viet Nam were owned lock, stock and barrel by Mrs. Le.

The Ngo Dinh Nhu family has become firmly entrenched at the Palace. From the very beginning the vivacious Madam Nhu has had her way in politics and other transactions. The newly designated two-portfolio Minister of Interior, Nguyen Huu Chau, was Madam Nhu's brother-in-law, being married to her older sister. Her father, Tran Van Chuong is Ambassador to the United States. Not more than one year ago a Paris Match edition carried a story about some of the world's wealthiest women. Madam Nhu was reportedly number seven on the list. Vietnamese returning from France have stated that a number of properties in Paris, among them a theatre, are owned by Madam Nhu, who came from a middle-class family. Many, many stories have made the rounds about this woman. How many are true or not true is not known; however, when even officials of the government state

that she has her fingers in every pie, some of the rumors must hold water. She was elected assemblywoman in 1956 and took much pleasure in telling assemblymen to "shut up" when they questioned some of the governmental procedures.

This is the family Diem leans on. He accepts the advice of his brother Nhu over the advice of his cabinet.

X A A X X

Rogers kept in close touch with the command personnel at the Civil Guard. Even though the Civil Guard were disappointed at the slowness in which certain problems concerning the Guard were being solved, they were always eager to show the improvement being made, such as, weekly and monthly reports being submitted to headquarters by the provincial commands; chains of command being established and Divisions of Supply and Finance being organized and functioning.

Equipment was a major problem and when the team heard of a surplus of Lisbon Program vehicles which had been in open storage for almost two years, arrangements were made to have these transferred to the Civil Guard. In October 1956, the following vehicles were so transferred:

60 Renault 5-T cargo trucks  
40 Hotchkiss 1 1/2-T cargo trucks  
81 Renault 1 1/2-T 4x4 cargo trucks  
24 Peugeot 3/4-T pickup trucks  
67 Jeeps, 1/4-T 4x4 CJ3A, civilian type  
9 Peugeot 3/4-T ambulances  
6 Hotchkiss 18 h.p. sedans  
6 Renault 11 h.p. sedans  
7 Peugeot light sedans  
3 Motorcycles, Terrot  
30 Bicycles  
5 Firefighting units, mobile  
10 Water trailers, 2W.  
5 Flatbed trailers, 4 W. 5 ton

TOTAL 353

Some of these vehicles were in poor shape. The majority were operable after some overhauling. A number of vehicles in very bad condition were stripped for the spare parts they contained. The acquisition of these vehicles immediately made a great difference in the morale of the Guard and, with the knowledge that American Jeeps had been ordered for their use which would augment their present fleet, the command felt that there had been a major victory over the feelings of the government toward the Guard.

General Oai had purchased a large quantity of khaki uniform cloth and the personnel of the Guard were beginning to be properly uniformed. Training at Quang Trung continued even though frequently interrupted by holidays when the men in training would be called out to assist in the handling of crowds. A blue-grey type of material was purchased and used to manufacture officers caps for the officers and tams for the men, thus distinguishing the Guard from military personnel. Tear gas demonstrations were given by MSUG advisors to the Civil Guard and during December, 25 officers and 60 NCO's were selected to participate in the Malaria Eradication Program. These men were given two weeks of training by the Department of Health and six weeks of driver training and motor maintenance by military instructors.

Things were looking up for the Civil Guard, with the capture of Ba Cut, the notorious Hoa Hao bandit, by a platoon of Civil Guard who had undergone training at Quang Trung and led by a captain who had attended a command course / ~~there~~ sold everyone on the great need

for training. More and more civil guardsmen were being assigned to ARVN military classes to study driver training, communications, motor vehicle maintenance, social action and health and sanitation.

On March 14, having completed his contract with MSUG, Rogers departed Saigon for the United States. Mr. Verne Dagen, arriving on May 7, replaced Rogers as the advisor to the Civil Guard.

On May 28, a ceremony was held at the Civil Guard Headquarters attended by Vietnamese government officials; Mr. Leland Barrows, Director of USOM, Saigon; and MSU police advisors, during which 100 American aid jeeps were turned over to the Civil Guard. Other material such as tear gas supplies, revolvers, handcuffs, surplus radio equipment and electric generators had been previously given to the Guard. A number of guardsmen had been trained by MSU staff in the proper use of audio-visual aids equipment and a number of pieces of this equipment had been turned over to them. All of this aided in building morale within the organization.

During the early portion of 1957, the training program for the Guard at Quang Trung began to slow down. ARVN was embarking on an extensive training program for the many army units being withdrawn from the provinces and space allotted to the Civil Guard would be taken up by ARVN trainees. By the end of June when the final group of Civil Guard graduated from Quang Trung, 19,000 Guardsmen had completed this basic training and 2,000 officers and NCO's had completed one of several various types of courses offered by ARVN.

Assistance was rendered to the Civil Guard, at their request, in the opening of an officers training school. The work done by the police team on this and other Civil Guard training projects will be discussed in the chapter devoted to training.

During July, after conferences with the Country Team relative to the status of the Civil Guard, the Ambassador and Mr. Leland Barrows, Director of USOM, backed the MSUG police team in their proposal that all aid be withheld from the Civil Guard until a clearly defined concept of the duties and function of the Civil Guard be issued by Vietnamese government officials. From all observations made, the Civil Guard was a second army, performing all the functions of an army, but few functions of a police organization. American aid money set aside to procure equipment and other police material for the Guard amounted to more than three million dollars.

The police team's thinking was in this vein--if the Civil Guard was another Vietnamese military force, then any support given them should be channeled through MAAG. Of course, if the Guard was a military organization, then this was in violation of the Geneva Agreement. The police team insisted that a decision be reached on the Guard status to insure that American aid for police would not in fact be going to its military organizations. The police team continued to hold that the short and long range problems of internal security in Viet Nam could be more readily



assured through the development of police forces along civilian lines rather than along military lines.

During the latter part of 1957, additional recruited police personnel began to arrive and the police team began to expand its program. Everett Updike, Verne Dagen and Melvin Handville were assigned to work with the Civil Guard. Frequent field trips were made to all parts of Viet Nam observing, suggesting, and advising.

On November 2, the Government of Viet Nam, through the Minister of Interior, furnished MSUG, USOM and MAAG with a document entitled "Organization of the Civil Guard." This document, drawn up with full approval of President Diem, was purported to clarify any misunderstanding as to the function and duties of the Civil Guard. The police team carefully read this new concept of the Civil Guard and found that nothing had been clarified. A careful analysis was made of this document, which was then embodied in a report submitted to the American Ambassador and the Director of USOM on November 7. This report follows. *Ralph: attached Report should be quoted, here.*

On November 26, a meeting was held with the Minister of Interior, attended by Mr. Them, Mr. An, Professor Thanh, Messrs. Montgomery, Sheinbaum, Dorsey, Rosenfeld, Wood, Stoutenburg and Ryan, to discuss aspects of the new MSU-GVN contract. At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. CHAU, the Minister of Interior, stated that:

"... with certain minor differences of opinion with regard to wording, he felt that MSU and GVN were very close to complete agreement with regard to this

particular contract. He stated that in the overall, agreement was had in all domains with the sole exception of the Civil Guard. He declared that the decision as to whether the American Aid to the Civil Guard would come from ICA or from MAAG was a decision entirely up to the United States Government. He stated that in fact it was immaterial to GVN as to the source of this particular aid. It was brought to the attention of Minister Chau that a decision would first be required from the Vietnamese government as to whether or not the Civil Guard was to be considered as a civilian police organization or as a military organization. To this, the Minister answered that in the mind of the President, the Civil Guard was to constitute neither a civilian nor a military police organization. He pointed out that the program as envisaged by the President was not to go into effect for at least two years. He requested that MSU and USOM consider the continuation of giving material aid to the Civil Guard in the interim. At this point, it was pointed out to the Minister that the police advisors of MSU would be strongly opposed to continue aiding the Civil Guard materially until such time as the actual status to be given this agency had been determined. It was once again brought to the Minister's attention that orders for equipment for the Civil Guard and for other police forces in Vietnam have been blocked for over four months by reason of GVN's failure to clarify the Civil Guard status."

By the end of 1957 it was very apparent that the Vietnamese government was dragging its feet relative to any reorganization of the police forces of Viet Nam.