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Acting Director of Mission

Acting Special Representative, Hue ^{WAD}

23 September 1954

Operation in the Southern Part of the Province of Quang Nam

On Friday, I talked briefly with a Viet-Nameese officer and later with a photographer who had just returned from the Viet-Nameese army advance into the Southern part of the Province of Quang Nam which was recently evacuated by the Viet Minh.

The officer and photographer stated that the advance into the south was entirely a military operation. They stated that the GAM and Civil Guard forces have not gone into this area and in fact, were in Faifoo. The photographer also stated that all propaganda was being performed by the Army's 5th Bureau.

This is in conflict with the statement of the Government Delegate and the Director of Pacification, who stated that the GAM and Civil Guard forces have already commenced their work. There seems to be some doubt whether the Military authorities are permitting the GAM and Civil Guard forces to operate.

As the roads were torn up and many of the bridges had been destroyed, much of the advance into the South had been made on foot. The photographer stated that the Army Engineers were repairing Route 1 with the help of local labor and were setting up temporary bridges.

The photographer stated that the National Government was confronted with a very difficult problem. The population had been completely controlled by the Viet Minh for 9 years. The people were hostile to the Viet Nameese Army and to the Government. Many people stated that the Army and the Government were subservient to the French. People also said that the National Government was the Government of Bao Dai and that the Viet Minh were responsible for bringing peace to the country.

According to the photographer, most people stayed away from the rallies and movies sponsored by the 5th Bureau; it was difficult to get most of the people to come to these sessions. He further stated that the people in the area were extremely poor, even poorer than those in areas of Central Viet-Nam controlled by the Government.

I am planning a trip to Faifoo and the southern part of the Province of Quang Nam next week with several officials from Central Viet-Nam. The purpose of the trip is to observe the operations of GAM and the Civil Guard on-the-spot and also for determining ways in which the Government or the Mission can win over these people to the cause of the National Government.

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While I do not believe that it is desirable to have too many people on this trip, it is advisable to have someone from the Health and Sanitation, Community Development, Program Support, Agriculture, Education, Public Works Divisions and USIS go along to examine the needs of the area.

WAD/WJ

cc - Assistant Director for Operations

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