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Weekly report for the week ending 5 February 1955

The last weekly report submitted was dated 28 January covering the week ending January 15. There was no weekly report prepared for the week ending January 22 because of the Tet Holidays. This week's report would normally cover the week ending January 29.

The reason for the seven day delay in reporting has been the delayed receipt of evacuation and resettlement statistics from Haiphong the office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and other reporting agencies. In order to provide more current narrative reporting on situations and activities this week's report will be for the week ending 5 February even though the statistical reports herein will be from seven to ten days late. This revised procedure will make possible more prompt preparation of this report and will provide more complete and current information on the situations reported by the Field Representatives.

ESCAPEES AND EVACUATION PROGRAMS IN NORTH VIETNAM

3,829 escapees were reported to arrive in Haiphong during the week ending 27 January. The following week, ending 29 January, only 1,136 persons were reported to have escaped. The data reported for the Tet week ending January 29 may have had some reflux on the actual number of escapees because of the three day holiday taken by the Vietnamese Officials in the North. The representative in Haiphong has been unable to check or evaluate these data.

The escapee operations continue as previously reported. The vast majority of escapees arrived by the Hanoi-Haiphong railroad without permits or passes from Vietminh Authorities. The representative in Haiphong reports several attempts by the French Navy to pick escapees off the beaches at Vinh and Tien Yen. However, both operations yielded only two fishermen and one priest, both of whom were picked up off Tien Yen. The French Navy continues to patrol the coast but it appears that Vietminh restrictions on inter-village movement have reduced the possibilities of escaping by sea to zero.

As of January 28 the total personnel of all categories escaped from North Vietnam is as follows:

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	FRENCH & OTHER TRANSPORTATION			US NAVY	TOTAL
	<u>Air</u>	<u>Surface</u>	<u>Self-Evac.</u>	<u>Surface</u>	
French Military	21,007	47,854			68,861
US Military	6,090	35,268		13,657	55,009
French Civilians	10,642	20,218			30,860
VN Civilians	146,381	68,279	41,328	185,625	441,613
Other Civilians	363	11,695		8,344	20,402
	<u>186,910</u>	<u>183,308</u>	<u>41,328</u>	<u>207,626</u>	<u>619,172</u>

THE EVACUATION OF SUPPLIES AND MATERIAL

The most significant change reported from Haiphong since the last weekly report was the determination on the part of the Vietminh to use all means at their disposal to prevent the continual evacuation of Vietnamese Government-owned supplies and equipment.

The French authorities in Haiphong are scheduled to meet with the Vietminh on 1 March to discuss the evacuation of equipment and material. French Officials are preparing to state that public services in the perimeter are now all in operating condition and will remain so without further evacuation of equipment through the handover date in Mid-March. The French are reported to have stated that this will not prevent the continued evacuation of equipment of American-aid origin which is considered to be of a special category. However, it is now necessary for Vietnamese authorities in Haiphong to provide documentary evidence of American-aid origin for all equipment scheduled for the evacuation.

The French authorities asked the representative in Haiphong to request the Vietnamese services to complete the evacuation of all AEA equipment before 1 March. This request was made to eliminate the need for discussing the continued evacuation of AEA equipment at the 1 March conference with the Vietminh. Mr. Ackley reports only 11 vehicles and approximately 100 tons of miscellaneous equipment known to remain for evacuation. A formal request for the shipment of this material already has been presented to the French Transportation Board.

RESETTLEMENT

Arrangements were made during the week for the members of the Resources Development Advisory Committee to visit the Provinces of Baria and Tay Ninh. The preliminary information available from the field representatives responsible indicate favorable resettlement potentialities in these Provinces.

The Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees reported a total of 234,411 persons in resettlement areas of South Vietnam on 31 January. This represents an increase of 3,014 persons in process of resettlement since the last report dated 18 January. An additional 172 house units were completed during the same period bringing the total number to 17,436 houses.

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The Commissioner General for Refugees again was unable to provide a statistical report on the resettlement program in Central Vietnam. As previously reported the resettlement data gathered by the representatives in Central Vietnam did not agree with the data previously provided by the office of the Commissioner. The reports of investigations by the representatives in North and Central Vietnam indicate that the infrequent reports received from Central Vietnam by the Commissioner are based upon the disbursement of funds for housing units, the disbursement of the resettlement assistance rather than an actual count. From this report it is evident that the statistics from the Government of Central Vietnam are more nearly a justification for funds and materials disbursed during a given period rather than a census of persons in resettlement areas. The representative recommends that in future resettlement officials in Central Vietnam base their statistics upon the registration records of local police and the records of the priests in charge of the individual resettlement villages. The police maintain records of refugees living outside established resettlement villages in the urban areas and parish priests are considered the only persons to have reasonably accurate data on the new settlements. In the opinion of the representative the only manner in which an accurate picture of the extent of resettlement in Central Vietnam can be obtained short of a complete reregistration is to tap both these sources each month. In at least one instance in Quang Tri the Chief of Province was known to have had figures provided by both the police and the clergy but these data were not reported because the Chief of Province felt these data would conflict with his reported expenditures of funds and distribution of material. The representative recommends that Mr. Vinh, the newly appointed representative for central Vietnam of the Commissioner General for Refugees, should be directed to investigate and rectify this situation immediately.

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