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Mr. Gardner Palmer

Alfred L. Cardinaux

Sabotage of Refugee Resettlement Program

During a conversation this morning with the Commissioner for Refugees, he informed me with great concern that the Government is aware of a plan on the part of the Cao Daists, the Bin Xuyen, and also the Viet Minh to sabotage the refugee resettlement program. According to the Commissioner, the line at this time calls for the systematic burning and destruction of refugee villages. Apparently the Cao Daists threaten to start their actions of sabotage in the province of Tay Ninh where 38,000 refugees are living at the present time, of which about one-half are in territory controlled by the Cao Daists.

The purpose of this action is not so much to hurt or injure the refugees, but to foster discontent among them. It is also planned to cause difficulties for the Commissioner which will require all his attention and divert him from his duties with regard to the resettlement program.

I discussed with the Commissioner the possibility of evacuating the approximately 20,000 refugees from the Cao Daist-controlled territory, but he said that this would be very difficult. We did not further discuss the matter and I do not know what the Government intends to do in order to protect the refugees.

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