

TO: Ralph Smuckler, Chief Advisor

Date: February 6, 1956

FROM: Howard W. Hoyt, Deputy Advisor Police  
Administration-MSU

SUBJECT:

I am reproducing part of Mr. Gilbert Shelby's report on his brief survey of the Municipal Police Department of Can Tho.

I feel that you and others interested in the Internal Security problems of Viet Nam will be interested in this information on the organizations, training, equipment and efficiency of the units on which we depend.

"On January 9, 1956, I in company with interpreter Nguyen The Thong, went to city of Cantho to survey the Municipal Police Department of that city.

Cantho is located in the South Region of Viet Nam, in the province of Cantho which has a population of 600,000. The province is divided into districts with a civilian chief as administrator in each district. Cantho is one of these districts. Mr. Lam is the Delegue in charge of the South.

Lt. Col. Dang Thanh Liem was the province chief when I was there (removed as of January 11, 1956). Mr. Thinh, (Brother of Mr. Lam) is the highway engineer for the province of Cantho and adjoining provinces.

Mr. Tran Thank Qui is the Mayor of the City of Cantho. He is also known as Mr. Long; previously during the French occupation he became a French Nationalist and assumed the name of Long. With the evacuation of the French from the province (there are only five French business men in the province today. One, Mr. Boup was shot to death with four officers of the Gendarmerie in a recent robbery). Mr. Long disclaimed the French citizenship and elected to become a Vietnamese Nationalist. It is reported that he collaborated with every group that controlled the area, including the Japanese.

Mr. Vo Van Si is head of the City Council. Mr. Ty is the Chief of Police. (He is the brother-in-law of Mr. Lam.) He served as a police officer in the Municipal Department of Saigon-Cholon for twenty seven years, before assuming his present position in Cantho, four years ago.

At the time he separated from the Saigon-Cholon Department he held the rank of Commissioner and was in charge of the fourth precinct in Cholon. Chief Ty is a graduate attorney.

Cantho is a city of 80,000, and lies on the bank of the Bassac River. It is entered from the north by ferry boat across the Bassac. It covers an area of about ten square kilometers. It is administered by a Mayor and 12 councilmen, elected for a period of three years. (At present 10 councilmen active, 2 deceased.)

The City Government occupies offices in the City Hall located in the heart of the city. The fire department, equipped with one vehicle is manned by military personnel.

A large hospital is located within the city limits. Ambulance service is maintained by the hospital.

The Police Department consists of a Chief, Mr. Ty and 80 officers. The Mayor stated that next year's budget would provide for an additional 10 policemen. He commented that in 1945 the city had a population of 35,000 and 80 police officers; that the number of officers had not kept pace with the increased population because funds were not available.

The department occupies one station. It appears clean, orderly and adequate; here all the personnel report and are assigned to duty in one of the eight districts into which the city is divided for patrol purposes. The officers wear white uniforms and present an excellent appearance. They are provided with enough material each year to make two complete uniforms, shorts and short sleeve shirts and one uniform with long trousers and a long sleeve shirt. One white helmet is also provided each year.

The officers appear well disciplined. Inductees are examined to determine if they have the required elementary education. They are required to be at least one meter 60 tall and must submit to a physical examination and be able to pass a fire test. They have no training except that they are assigned to work with an experienced officer for at least one month. They are issued a book of rules and regulations written by Mr. Ty. Each week the Chief stated he holds a conference with all of his men, in which rules, law and procedure are discussed. (The area pointed out where these conferences are held appeared large enough for about 10 men).

The men are on duty (7) seven days a week, no vacations are given. If they are sick or busy with the family they are excused by the Chief.

The patrol groups are designated A and B. Group A works from 5:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., rests from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., works from 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Group B works from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Rests from 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. work from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. (This latter period guarding the station.)

The officers, research group, and typists (2) work from 7:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. rest from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., work from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The Chief's salary for the year 1955 was 143,260\$VN. The police officers salaries are considered very low. They range from 1500\$VN per month for the patrol of no rank to 3000\$VN per month for the Chief of Service.

No housing is provided, however each officer receives, in addition to his uniforms, and salary, the regular 300\$VN per month for a wife and 200\$VN per month for each child. The department has no vehicles. Mr. Ty stated that the department had two cars but that the province chief needed them so he took them. Mr. Ty owns motorcycle with a side car which he frequently loans to the department for patrol.

When an emergency occurs the officers either walk, ride their own bicycles or hire a motor-scooter to go to the scene of the emergency. Since there are many armed robberies and disturbances in the city, this arrangement is highly unsatisfactory. The department's communications system is limited to one regular telephone. This is located on a service desk and is used primarily to receive complaints and emergency alarms. The armament consists of the following weapons and ammunition:

1. 30 pistols, about 42 caliber. These weapons are of 1873 vintage. They are pitted and in a state of decay, but are kept as clean and serviceable as possible. Each weapon has six rounds of ammunition. The Chief reported that it's age was unknown but that none of it was under 12 years old. Their experience is that about one bullet in six will fire.
2. 15 modern French automatic pistols, about 32 caliber with 20 rounds of ammunition for each weapon.
3. Two Thompson sub-machine guns, old but usable, 45 caliber with about 100 rounds of ammunition.
4. 12 muskets, make unknown, too old to use, no ammunition, none available because of age of weapons. These weapons are given to men on guard duty, just to impress people.
5. Five French pistolettes ( a small obsolete machine gun) 7.65 caliber, about 4500 rounds of ammo. The Chief stated that they are afraid to use the weapons because of their age and condition.
6. The Department also lists as their armament, one old sten gun, not in working or repairable condition, no ammo;
7. 5 old gas grenades,
8. 10 old hand grenades, none serviceable.

The organization of the department is as follows: One Chief; four secretaries; eight brigade of research (Detectives). 2 re-censor men, one chauffeur, 2 citation to court men, 2 messengers, 2 typists, permanent agents 8, and 5 morals squad men. The balance of personnel are divided into the patrol and traffic control groups.

The department activities for the year 1955 are as follows:

Total cases to court	1300
Broken down as follows:	

Gambling cases:	42	only the operators are prosecuted.
Robbery cases	50	includes pickpockets and burglaries
Labor accident cases	5	negligence on part of employer refusal to arbitrate.
Illegal sales cases	11	opium and gold

Disturbance cases	680	fights etc.
Contravention cases	480	overloading, overpricing, sanitation, noise night, etc.
Illegal shop cases	30	No licenses
Prostitutes to hospital cases:	100	Failed to appear for monthly examination or not registered.
Loafers cases	15	Vagrants three months in jail

In reference to the above it should be pointed out that only these cases where the evidence is conclusive and reviewed by the Court before the hearing are presented to the court. This method assures 100 per cent convictions. The Chief evid surprise when I inquired if a conviction was obtained in all instances and assured me all were convicted.

Fines collected:

Simple fights	1,323,948
Diverse taxes (parking, selling)	285,009
Peace tax motor bike license, auto. lic. prostitutes lic. import lic.	2,758,874
Total	4,376,834\$

City and Police Department Budget.

The total income for the city in 1955 was 8,367,106.26\$. This represented a deficit of about 3,000,000\$ which the National budget provided.

The revenues of the city are derived from real property tax. Homes and buildings are taxed by the square meter of area. All buildings in an area are taxed at the same rate, regardless of value or type of construction. Thatch buildings are illegal in the city but they abound, no effort is made to prevent their construction or maintenance. Licenses and the monies collected by governmental service units also represent an important source of revenue for the municipality.

The Mayor receives a gratuity of 4000\$ a month. The Councilmen receive no salary. Regular city services are supported. Only part of the cost of operating the schools is born by the city.

The Police budget for 1955 was 3,308,800\$ broken down as follows:

Chief's salary	143,260
Clothing	60,000
Supplies	15,000
Civilian and police personnel salaries)	3,090,540

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The area immediately surrounding the city is considered very insecure at this time; within five days preceding this report four officers of the Gendarmerie and a French Nationalist were murdered and robbed in one incident, ten kilometers outside of the city, one man was assaulted, robbed on the river near the city; and another incident, a motor launch was attacked and burned.

However, within the city limits, security is considered adequate, but the two officers assigned to accompany me about in the city in the early evening refused to take me through the thatched house area, stating it was too dangerous for us to go there.