

FIELD TRIP REPORT

POLICE AND SECURITY SERVICES

MAY 9, 11, 1960

DARLAC AND PHONG DINH PROVINCES

MSUG POLICE TEAM

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PURPOSES OF THE TRIP

1. To interview Police and Security Services participants who have received training in the United States and returned to Vietnam.
2. To discuss current training problems and future training needs with regional, provincial and municipal commanders of the Police and Security Services.

PROVINCE: Dalat. City of Ban Me Thuot.

DATE VISITED: May 9, 1960

OFFICIALS INTERVIEWED: Regional Police and Security Chief, NGUYEN VAN LUAN.
Provincial Police and Security Chief, VO VAN THIEN.
Chief of Police, Ban Me Thuot, LE QUANG DONG.
Regional Record Bureau Chief, TRUONG DUC TRIEU.

INTERVIEWERS: A. F. Brandstatter, P. M. Shields, V. G. Strecher
and Chuong, interpreter.

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

On Monday, May 9, 1960, the NSUG team contacted Regional Security Chief LUAN. Mr. LUAN was advised of the returned-participant interview program; he offered his approval of the scheduled interview.

II. PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW.

Mr. TRUONG DUC TRIEU, Chief of the Record Bureau, Highlands Police and Security Directorate, was interviewed by the team. Necessary information was recorded for use in the returned-participant study. The Record Bureau was inspected and found to contain a great number of criminal and political-subversive histories.

III. TRAINING.

Security Chief LUAN advised that firearms training is of continuing concern. Presently, his field staff of 900 men in 6 provinces fire 6 rounds of ammunition each week. He believes this should be increased to 20 rounds each week. His office staff of 200 men have no ammunition for revolver practice. Mr. LUAN believes they should fire 20 rounds per month. Chief LUAN expressed considerable interest in participating in a leader tour to the United States.

IV. EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL.

Province Security Chief VO VAN THIEN escorted the team on an inspection of facilities, including the provincial record bureau and identification laboratory. Substantial progress has been made in the photographing of crime scenes and the use of fingerprints in criminal investigation. Extensive criminal dossiers are kept. Mr. THIEN advised that his office lacks fingerprint powders, both aluminum and black, and lifting tapes. He further advised that he could utilize twice as many men for field operations, that his personnel do not have time to rest between missions. He stated that he has sufficient firearms and ammunition for practice.

Mr. LE QUANG DONG, Chief of Police of Ban Me Thuot, advised that the jeeps assigned to his agency are of two-wheel drive, not suited to the terrain during the rainy season. He requested that these be exchanged for the four-wheel drive jeeps located in Saigon.

V. SECURITY.

Chief THIEN reported that the Viet Cong operate in small groups of four or five, mainly for the distribution of propaganda. However, they are armed with revolvers and carbines--some new, but largely old weapons remaining from the Indochina War. Chief THIEN's men go out on intelligence missions, then plan nighttime ambushes on Viet Cong movements.

PROVINCE: Phong Dinh. City of Can Tho.

DATE VISITED: May 11, 1960.

OFFICIALS INTERVIEWED: Deputy Province Chief, NGUYEN THONG DO.
Regional Security Chief, Maj. TRUONG KHAC BINH.
Province Security Chief, TRUONG VAN NGOC.
Can Tho Chief of Police, NGUYEN VAN NO.
An Giang Province Security Chief, LE VAN HUYNH.

INTERVIEWERS: A. P. Brandstatter, P. M. Shields, V. G. Strecher
and Chuong, interpreter.

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

On Wednesday, May 11, 1960, the NSUG team contacted Major BINH, Chief of Security for the Fifth Military Region. He stated that he had been on the job one month, that formerly he was a military operations officer.

II. PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS:

Mr. TRUONG VAN NGOC, Chief of Security for Phong Dinh Province, and Mr. LE VAN HUYNH, Chief of Security for An Giang Province, were interviewed in Major BINH's office. Necessary information was recorded on questionnaire forms for use in the returned-participant study.

III. TRAINING.

The matter of training was discussed with Deputy Province Chief DO and Major BINH. The Province Chief, Major TRAN CUU THIEN, was absent. Major BINH advised that Surete agents work with the Civil Guard in large, combined patrols and strike-forces. For a force of 100 men, Surete agents number 20. He further advised that Surete agents have received no training for this type of action, which is most like guerrilla warfare. Mr. DO advised that, upon direction of the Secretary of State, he would be most happy to send from 5 to 10 men at a time to schools providing training for small-unit strike-forces. Mr. NO, Chief of Police of Can Tho, advised that six of his 95 officers have been trained at the National Police Academy, Rach Dua.

IV. EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL.

Lieut. McAllister, US Navy, MAAG, Can Tho, advised that the Surete was involved in building a large number of wooden boats equipped with 60 hp Swedish diesel engines. Some of the boats have ramp fronts for unloading personnel; others have the conventional bow. Lt. McAllister expressed interest in the financing of the boats. Major BINH advised that the boats are being financed

by the national budget of RVN, and further, that the entire project will shortly be turned over to the Civil Guard for local waterways patrol. Deputy Province Chief DO advised that fire-fighting equipment is sorely needed; he asked whether MSUG was in a position to assist in that respect. He was advised that the MSUG program does not include advisory or commodity support in fire-fighting. Chief of Police MO showed the team a number of riot guns and handcuffs being stored. None of this equipment appears to have been used. Chief MO advised that he has insufficient riot gun ammunition for practice purposes.

V. SECURITY CONDITIONS.

Lt. Colonel Nather, MAAG, Can Tho, advised that ARVN units of one-company strength haven't much chance of survival outside of Can Tho at night. Only larger units are sent out. Mr. HUYNH, Security Chief of An Giang Province, advised that his province is relatively secure and peaceful; however, Phong Dinh Province is the scene of considerable Viet Cong activity. Mr. NGOC, Phong Dinh Security Chief, advised that 70 Viet Cong prisoners had been taken by his personnel in the previous week. While in Can Tho, the team observed large numbers of field-equipped troops; a convoy of 19 truckloads of troops and equipment was leaving the city upon the team's arrival.

Following is unofficial, widely circulated information currently heard in the Can Tho area:

Several months ago, prior to May 1960, two divisions of the North Vietnamese Army crossed the border into Laos, moving southward and engaging Laotian armed forces in widely reported military actions. The North Vietnamese force, estimated at 20,000 men, traveled through Laos, into Cambodia and crossed the frontier into the southern region of South Vietnam. Here, it is said, the North Vietnamese Army divisions are now participating in action against the Civil Guard, ARVN, Police and Security Services and Self-Defense Corps.

It is reported that HO CHI MINH has informed the International Control Commission of the desertion of two North Vietnamese Army divisions and requested information regarding their whereabouts. Further reports indicate that Radio Hanoi has supported HO CHI MINH's assertions with news releases about the desertion. These broadcasts have reportedly been heard in South Vietnam.

There is rumored correlation between the above information and unofficial information that the Viet Cong intend to secure the entire Fifth Military Region by June 1, 1960. Although both stories are current in the Can Tho area, there is no official support or confirmation of either.