

John T. Dwyer

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF
A CENTRAL RECORD BUREAU SERVICE

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Vietnam Technical Assistance Project

August 1957

WESLEY R. FISHEL
Chief Advisor

HOWARD W. HOYT
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P R E F A C E

Recommendations for the establishment of a central record bureau in a police service, regardless of its size, represents an assignment of considerable magnitude. If the project is to be carried out in an orderly fashion, there must be much preliminary work in the nature of overall planning, agreement on common goals, and a scheme of analysis which is sufficiently detailed to anticipate diverse problems, yet flexible enough to meet the emergencies inherent within the Viet-Nam technical assistance program.

The following report is the first effort by the MSU Police Advisory Team to prepare a document which can serve as a guide for subsequent plans to assist the police services of Viet-Nam in the upgrading of police records. It has been prepared in a relatively short time, and the author is aware of certain shortcomings and deficiencies; however, it is hoped that the ideas expressed herein will be of some assistance to those who carry on this work.

This report has been predicated upon several basic assumptions, the paramount one being that responsible leaders in the government of Viet-Nam are sincerely interested in upgrading the police service of the Republic and will lend administrative support to those functionaires charged with the responsibility of directing the civil police services. This calls for a type of cooperative effort which has not existed heretofore, but which is absolutely essential to the success

of this project. It is also assumed that the central record bureau project will be evaluated in terms of its merits and potential value to the police service, and not in terms of personalities who will be involved in the program. Finally, it is taken for granted that this record bureau program will be recognized as merely one phase, important as it may be, of the total program of police technical assistance and will be carefully integrated with other projects now under way.

The material in the following pages can be divided into two general categories; informational and operational. Considerable attention is devoted to concepts and ideas in the early chapters. This is done to provide background material for the development of training courses in record bureau management. Experience has shown that if the total value of a central record bureau operation cannot be summed up in several concepts of management and service, the introduction of isolated files and bureaus defeats the end goal...that of a centralized service. Thus, several chapters are devoted to explorations of concepts and ideas which are important to successful administration of the record bureaus. The operational aspects of the report are self-explanatory; at this stage being primarily concerned with the integration of the Filippini Street records with those proposed for Camp des Mares.

Probably the most important concept advanced in this report is the idea that basic suggestions presented here can be used at both the local and national level. Proper interpretation

of the principles set forth can result in the establishment of police record bureaus at all levels of service which are uniform in policy and procedure, and represent a maximum of economy and efficiency.

In summary, it is hoped that these recommendations will be useful to members of the MSU Police Advisory Team and to their Vietnamese counterparts in continuing the program of assistance to the law enforcement services of Viet-Nam.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The police service can be divided into several areas of specialization. These usually include patrol, detective or investigative, traffic control, crime prevention, training, and technical services. The last division frequently is made up of such units as records, laboratory, communications, jail, motor pool, etc. It is only natural that each service regards its particular function as one of the most important within the police operation, and no intelligent administrator will deny the fact that all of the divisions must work in harmony, if the police service is going to be successful.

Experience has indicated, however, that certain activities within the police service can be grouped together in logical arrangements, thus making for efficient administration and organization. In some instances, the very nature of the work dictates the organizational structure that should follow. In other cases, tradition, personal prejudice, or ignorance has fostered the development of tables of organization which are completely unworkable and inefficient. Police record and identification bureaus can be singled out as the units which probably have suffered the most abuse and mismanagement, and occasionally have literally become dumping grounds for inferior personnel. It is only within recent years that police administrators have demonstrated the value of record bureaus by giving them the attention they deserve. These changes have occurred in several large departments and are slowly being adopted by

many smaller organizations. Therefore, a report on the establishment of a central record bureau for the police services of Viet-Nam is predicated on the knowledge that the police records and the administration of those bureaus in Viet-Nam is no different than those found in many other parts of the world.

Scope of Report

The preparation of a report for the establishment of a central record bureau suggests a project which may be staggering to visualize, but which can be reduced to relatively simple and basic concepts of administration and organization. Police records literature, in general, has concerned itself with the minute details of record forms, sizes, colors, filing systems, distribution of copies, etc., and has failed to set forth basic principles or schemes of analysis which are applicable to all police record systems. There is no question about the importance which must be attached to the day-to-day operation of a record bureau, but it is this very concern with isolated detail that has promoted the disorganized and uncoordinated growth and development of record bureaus.

This report will attempt to set forth a number of concepts which are fundamental to the administration and organization of police record bureaus. Experience has shown that these concepts are fundamentally sound, which means that with slight modifications they can be adapted to any existing system. It is important

to understand that the administration of the central record bureau represents a way of thinking which concerns itself only with the best interests of the agencies to be served. The analysis and solution of problems which arise must be settled on the basis of what is right, not who is right. Experiments should be tried, the results evaluated, and then appropriate action taken.

In addition to setting forth certain basic concepts, this report will concern itself with specific recommendations about certain record bureau operations which are now in effect, or which may be introduced at a later date. Attention will also be directed to the integration of existing records with new procedures.

Thus, in summary, it is hoped that the following report may serve as a guide for the future establishment and development of a central record and identification bureau for the civil police services. Naturally, it is impossible to anticipate all difficulties which will arise, and it is presumptuous to assume that this report will be adequate in all areas, yet, it is prepared in an effort to fill a void in the present police program and to assist those who have the responsibility of implementing this assignment.

Chapter I

THE CENTRAL RECORD BUREAU CONCEPT

The term **central record bureau**¹ has many implications. It is the purpose of this first chapter to explore and define these ramifications and to create an atmosphere, or way of thinking, which will describe a **central record bureau** in its fullest measure. It is difficult to establish any priority, or order of importance for the subjects to be discussed, for all are of equal importance to the successful administration of the bureau. Therefore, the reader is urged to treat each topic with equal attention and then to group them into a total concept of a central record bureau.

Before considering some special aspects of the problem, it might be well to define the role of records within the police service. Basically, police records are merely devices for making a permanent (or semi-permanent) record of police activities, and setting up a system whereby these bits of information may be referred to at a later date. In some instances, the police are required by law to maintain certain records; in other cases, the records are kept to facilitate police operations. References were made in the Introduction to the importance of various police functions, and it was suggested that administrators

¹ The term **central record bureau** will be abbreviated CRB whenever necessary in the remainder of this paper.

frequently regard the record bureau as a necessary evil, which has really little administrative value. Consider, for a moment, the picture of a police department which attempted to operate without any records. The experienced officer knows that much of his work would be made impossible or extremely difficult, and he would soon establish his own primitive record system if he wanted to continue his police work. In addition, the courts and other law enforcement agencies would find it difficult to carry on their activities without the smooth transfer of information...all extracted from police records. Thus, it is reasonable to say that a police record bureau can, and should be, regarded as one of the important units within the police service. This suggests immediately that the administrator must give as much attention to the problems of the record bureau as he may to some other branches of the service.

The importance of the record bureau arises not from the mere existence of the records, but rather, from the manner in which they are used. The function of the record bureau can be summed up in one word...service. This means service to its parent organization, service to neighboring police departments, service to the courts, service to the penal administrators, and indirectly, through their proper use, service to the community and the nation. Thus, the record bureau, properly administered, becomes one unit of the police department which serves more people and agencies than any other branch of the department.

What is meant by a central record bureau?

As we shall see in later chapters, the term central record bureau will have many ramifications. However, it is important at the outset to accept the principle that the concept of a central record bureau leaves no room for decentralization or local autonomy. It is also pointed out that a centralized record bureau does not necessarily imply a totalitarian or police state. A central record bureau is important to the small police department, and it is equally important to the nation. Once the principle of mutual cooperation and service for the common good of law enforcement is accepted by all agencies involved, the issue of a central record bureau being synonymous with a totalitarian police state is meaningless. Many examples can be cited of inefficient record bureaus in so-called police states...and...many examples can be shown where cooperative, central record bureau exist in authonomous, democratic communities. Thus, we repeat again, the IDEA of the central record bureau, and all that it implies, is of much greater significance than petty bickering about prestige, status, protocol and the other trivia which plague bureaucracies. Therefore, we shall direct our attention to the basic elements which constitute the concept of the central record bureau.

Position within the Table of Organization.

As mentioned earlier, the police record bureau is frequently grouped with several other police functions and placed in the

technical services division. This is a natural grouping and is basically correct IF there are competent staff officers to assist the chief or director. Again, experience has shown that a very capable director of police, surrounded by mediocre or incompetent staff officers will fall victim to the traditional organization scheme where the record bureau is put in a rather remote spot within the table of organization, providing no direct communication between the chief's office and the record bureau. This, in effect, provides a neat system whereby unfavorable crime statistical information can be distorted before it reaches the director, and only that information which subordinates approve will be turned over to the chief.

The conclusion, therefore, is obvious. If the police record bureau is to serve the function outlined in the previous paragraphs, it should occupy a position in the table of organization which provides relatively direct channels of communication to the office of the director. Subordinate officers charged with these responsibilities must be capable and trustworthy men, dedicated to the administration and operation of the police record division.

While this report is concerned primarily with the establishment of a central record bureau within the VBI (Sureté) at the national level, these comments are equally pertinent to the Civil Guard and metropolitan police departments. The Michigan State University Police Advisory Report of April 1956, entitled Report on the Proposed Organization of the Law Enforcement

Agencies of the Republic of Viet-Nam refers to the responsibilities of each agency. Specific reference is made, in each case, to the need for the agency to maintain adequate records and to submit them to a central record bureau; in this case, the VBI (Sureté). Therefore, it is apparent that much is to be gained if there is uniformity within the organizational structure of the record bureaus in the three agencies.

The MSU Report of July, 1956, entitled "A Preliminary Report on the Proposed Reorganization of the Vietnamese Bureau of Investigation", which is still under consideration by the Director of the VBI, presents an organization chart wherein the record division is administered by an assistant director, who has relatively direct access to the director of the VBI.

The present organization of the Saigon-Cholon Municipal Police Department makes a commissioner responsible for the record division. The commissioner is directly responsible to the Director.

The current organization chart of the Civil Guard shows the Record Center as a part of the Inspection Service, which includes the Administration and Finance Team, and the Military Affairs Team. This arrangement is not recommended, for it places the record division in a heterogeneous group, and does not give it proper recognition.

It should be apparent from the foregoing discussion that basic reorganization of any police structure, whether national or local, should provide a place for the record bureau within

the first line of command, unattached to any other services, and with relatively direct access to the director of the police organization.

Rank of the Record Bureau Administrator.

All administrators recognize the fact, that even the poorest organizational structure can be made to function if highly competent persons are assigned to each position. They also know that it is virtually impossible to staff government, and private organizations, with such capable men in all positions. This difficulty can be resolved to a certain extent if there is a good organizational structure and well-qualified individuals are given sufficient authority to carry out their duties. However, there must be no mistake about the technical knowledge, integrity, and administrative ability of the record bureau director before he is given this authority.

In other words, once the position of the record bureau within the table of organization has been established, the Director of the police service is then ready to select the record bureau chief. This man must have a thorough knowledge of police records, their function and use; he must be quite familiar with police procedures; he must have unquestioned loyalty and ~~honesty~~ honesty, and he must have good administrative ability.

Assuming that a man with the above qualifications has been selected, the Director of the police service should bestow upon him a rank which is equal to other commanding officers, or, in

other works, the chief of the record bureau should not be outranked by other police executives, but should enjoy status equal to the Director's immediate command staff. The Director should also impress upon members of the service that in all matters pertaining to police records, the head of the record bureau has complete authority, subject only to revision by the Director.

Physical Location of Central Record Bureau.

Discussion about the actual physical location of a central record bureau may appear superfluous at first glance. However, if this matter is not given intelligent consideration, serious blunders may occur, and to some extent, negate the potential value of the bureau. When planning the location of a central record bureau, whether it be for a municipal police agency, or for a national bureau, several common problems arise. The solution to these problems is substantially the same in all cases.

This paper does not propose to present detailed floor plans for design of the record division; however, the general principles to be followed by the architects are quite clear. As described earlier, one of the important functions of the record bureau is to provide service. This means, service to the law enforcement officers who use the bureau, and service to all citizens who have legitimate reasons to make inquiry at the record bureau. One measure of efficiency of the record bureau is the promptness with which these inquires can be answered.

In order to provide this service, consideration must be given to the planning and design of the bureau. The following points are suggested:

1. The record bureau should be located in a spot where it is readily available to the law enforcement officers. This means, some central location, convenient to their post of duty. In a metropolitan police department, this obviously means the headquarters post. Precinct stations should only keep those records which are needed for daily work, with the original reports being sent to the central office. The VBI and Civil Guard should have record bureaus at their headquarters, again conveniently located insofar as headquarters personnel are concerned.
2. The record bureau should also be designed in such a manner that citizens can come to the bureau and transact their business with ease.
3. When planning the record bureau, it is important to design the counters and information stations in such a way that the police officers will not have to conduct their business at the same counters as the citizens. In other words, the two sections can be separated by a partition, or appropriate counter design to provide prompt and efficient service to all those having legitimate business to transact.

4. In addition to service considerations, attention must be given to the security of the bureau. Basically, this means that only employees of the record bureau be permitted inside the office. All business is to be transacted over counters, and no one, regardless of rank or authority, is to be permitted in the bureau office.

The above recommendations are summarized as follows:

The central record bureau should be readily available to law enforcement officers and citizens; designed so that both groups can conduct their business without interfering with each other; and administered in such a manner as to provide maximum security for the records.

Chapter IIREASONS FOR A CENTRAL RECORD BUREAU

Before discussing the reasons why a central record bureau should be established, it is probably wise to examine the present state of affairs as a basis for proposing any changes. Police administrators are prone to defend the existing system, and it is only after careful analysis of the entire record system that one is able to tell whether or not a central record bureau concept exists in the true sense of the word. The results of the analysis should indicate what changes or improvements are necessary, where they are most urgently needed, and how they should be implemented.

Most police record bureaus have developed without any real guidance or planning. As the police service has become more complex, it has been a simple matter to develop a new form to satisfy the current emergency, employ additional people to process these records, and then pass this system from one administrator to another. There have been relatively few careful studies of record bureaus done with an eye to measuring the efficiency of the bureau, the need for all of the existing forms, identification of badly needed missing forms, and an evaluation of the use of the record bureau by the entire police agency. The absence of such critical reviews has also contributed to the undirected growth of the record bureaus.

In order to determine whether or not a police agency has a

central record bureau, the chief administrator should ask the following questions:

1. Are ALL police records pertaining to criminal matters housed in one central office?
2. Do some subordinates keep original records in their own bureaus? i.e. burglary, auto theft, homicide, vice, etc.
3. Can complete records about an individual, i.e., finger-prints, personal description, dossier; and complete records of the investigation of a criminal case, i.e. investigators reports, correspondance, information from other police agencies, be found in the same office?
4. Can law enforcement officers making legitimate inquiries about the above matters receive the information they need at any hour of the day or night, and all days of the year?
5. Is the above information available quickly; this means a matter of a few minutes or within one or two hours?
6. Can the director of the police agency obtain from the record bureau chief accurate statistical information about criminal activity, stolen and recovered property, disposition of cases, traffic statistics, etc. within a reasonably short time?
7. Can citizens, making legitimate inquiries of the police, obtain satisfactory information in a quick and courteous fashion?

8. Do all precinct stations or district headquarters provide the central record bureau with uniform and accurate information about police problems in their jurisdictions?
9. Are all forms and reports designed and approved by the director of the record bureau before they are adopted for general use?
10. Can the record bureaus of the three police agencies, Municipal, VBI and Civil Guard exchange accurate information quickly for the performance of their duties?

If, after studying the above questions, the police director feels that his agency is providing all of these services in a satisfactory manner, he may then feel that he has a good central record bureau. If not, there is considerable room for improvement.

Naturally, the above list of questions is not complete, and the chief of the police service is encouraged to develop similar questions to further analyze the record bureau. It is also important to understand that each of the above questions suggest additional problems which will have to be resolved as each is explored fully. This list has been prepared as a guide to suggest a type of analysis which may be applied to a study of the police record system.

The reasons for establishing a central record bureau are obvious to the administrator; however, some discussion about

specific advantages for the police service may help to clarify the matter for line and staff officers. Efficiency and economy are the usual watchwords given for the establishment of a new program, and there is no question about their being applicable to the police record situation. The efficiency of the record bureau can be measured, in one sense, by noting the number of places an officer may have to go in order to obtain desired information, or noting the number of different files a clerk may have to search to supply the information. Consider the following example:

It is not unusual for an investigator to require information about the criminal history of a particular individual, a resume of an investigation which may have been conducted several months or years ago, the disposition of a case, information as to whether or not a suspect is wanted by the police of another jurisdiction, the description of some property stolen in a recent burglary, and the address of a witness which he had interviewed some time ago. In fact, the investigator may wish to have all of this information within a matter of minutes before he begins an interrogation or leaves his station for work in the field. If he has to make inquiries in several different offices, some of which may not be open at the time of his call, his work is hampered and time is wasted. On the other hand, if he can go to one central bureau, state his problem, and learn quickly whether or not the information is available he can carry

out his work with efficiency and dispatch.

The economical features of the central record bureau are usually not apparent until detailed cost accounting and performance budget studies have been made. With a decentralized record bureau, the cost per individual item, i.e. file cabinet, desk, salary of clerk, is not too high. However, if the duplication of records and total cost of operation is studied, the cost of the decentralized record bureau becomes excessively high. Substantial savings in capital expenditures and salaries can be effected with the organization of the central record bureau. The police administrator, through the chief of the central record bureau, should be certain that orginal copies of all records are kept in the central bureau, and duplicate copies are filed in precinct or district stations only as long as they are needed for current work. These sub-stations should not be permitted to accumulate large files merely for the purpose of having the files. The record chief is cautioned, however, not to eliminate necessary records merely for the sake of economy. It can be stated that: Substations should be provided with all of the records necessary for the officers to perform their work quickly and efficiently. As soon as the records have served their purpose, which is frequently within a matter of a few weeks, or a few months at the most, the copies in the sub-stations may be destroyed, for the originals of all of these records will have been filed in the central record bureau at the time they

were first prepared. These sub-station records are known as "working copies". If the investigator needs to refer to the original records at a later date, they will always be available at the central record bureau. Experience has shown that the precinct or district stations usually do not have emergency need for the records after an investigation has progressed for several weeks. By this time, the case has either been cleared, or more urgent cases have arisen.

Probably one of the most important features of the central record bureau, if it is used and understood properly, is the administrative use which the director can make of the bureau. Departmental efficiency, difficult as it is to measure, is usually determined by some sort of survey and personal visit to various branches. Records are studied occassionally; however, the significant impressions are based upon the "in-person" contacts. This method unquestionably has merit, yet is filled with short-comings. Proper use of a well organized and efficient central record bureau can correct some of these deficiencies. The following paragraphs will describe briefly some of the types of information which can be provided by the record bureau and used for administrative control and constant evaluation of the police agency. The suggestions set forth are based on the assumption that the central record bureau is functioning with maximum efficiency. Granted this efficiency, the following procedures can be carried out:

The central record bureau will assemble crime statistics for all sections of the nation. These will be broken down by city, village and province. Total population figures for each corresponding division will be made available. The crime statistics must be recorded on a monthly and yearly rate. Once a satisfactory amount of data has been assembled, average rates for specific types of offenses can be established according to community, population, location, and sociological factors which affect crime rates. This also can be correlated with urban vs. rural areas, and attention also should be given to the political atmosphere as it affects guerrilla activity in various localities.

Analysis of these data will enable the director to evaluate the police services in each locality according to the following factors:

1. Are the various chiefs of police services reporting accurate crime rate figures?
2. Do the reported incidents of criminal activity and police action correspond in some measure with the reports of the tribunals?
3. Are some police services doing a better job than others, based on cases cleared, arrests and convictions?
4. Are some localities experiencing an abnormally high crime rate, which may suggest either poor enforcement, previously inaccurate figures, the need for additional police services, or an unusual shift in the normal crime rate of the locality?

5. Are some localities reporting an unusual reduction in crime; suggesting improved or superior police work, false reporting indicative of questionable police work, a decrease in population thereby possibly calling for a reduction in police manpower, or a change in the criminal population of the area?

Further analysis of the above data will enable the director to reassign police officers in accordance with the needs of the situation. This will mean addition or reduction in forces, removal of incompetent commanding officers, promotion or recognition of deserving officers and/or redeployment of men, as needed in critical areas.

Furthermore, if the above data is made available in semi-annual and annual reports to all commanding officers, they will be in a position to evaluate their own efforts and strive toward general upgrading of their work? This type of information, when published in an honest and forthright manner will also bring the police problems to the attention of those government officials who are concerned with the welfare of their country. This type of accurate information is the only foundation upon which appeals for solution of police problems can be based.

SUMMARY

This chapter has summarized the principle reasons why a central record bureau is essential to good police organization

and management. Reasons of efficiency, economy, and administrative control have been presented in general terms which can be applied to the several police agencies of Viet-Nam.

Chapter IIIUNITS WITHIN THE CENTRAL RECORD BUREAU

In keeping with the development of a simple central record bureau concept, it is appropriate to discuss the units within the record bureau in basic and concise terms. Therefore, this chapter will not contain elaborate descriptions of individual forms to be used, but rather, will treat the essential types of records useful to the police service. Furthermore, if the choice of basic records is fundamentally sound, expansion of the service presents no problem.

As mentioned earlier, one administrative problem is being able to maintain central control of various record divisions and prevent the wasteful duplication of effort found in the decentralized bureaus. Similarly, the major problem of the record bureau chief is design, distribution, and control of the individual record forms. One of the easiest ways to solve many of the police problems is to design a new form, establish a separate file for it, and then probably discard it within a few months or a few years at the most. Besides being wasteful of labor, supplies and money, this method suggests basic flaws in the reporting system and a reluctance or inability to make a thorough analysis of the problem and institute a long range solution. If, however, the policies and procedures of the record bureau are logical and correct; if they are thoroughly understood by all members of the police service; and if they

are incorporated with all phases of police training programs, both basic and advanced, the need for constant revision of forms and procedures will be minimized. Therefore, the following paragraphs will contain suggestions for the establishment of these basic files which experience has shown to be efficient, economical and workable.

The basic ingredients of police work are the same throughout the world, and the information to be provided by record bureaus is equally similar. Inasmuch as this paper is devoted primarily to criminal police matters, the information to be provided by the record bureau can be reduced to two basic categories:

1. Information about people
2. Information about incidents.

This type of analysis, the identification of the problem and its reduction to basic elements, is essential to the planning of an efficient central record bureau organization. Other units within the bureau will be treated in a similar fashion.

Information about people:

Records and files which contain information about people may carry many names or designations peculiar to separate police agencies. The following terms are merely suggestions, subject to modification in different localities. The important point is...can this type of information be located quickly and accurately?

1. Master Name Index File:

This file card is usually 7.5 x 12.5 cm. (3 x 5") and contains the name, address and other appropriate information about the subject. This additional information may include Viet-Nam National identification number, record of any previous arrests, disposition of case, brief personal description, possible reference to case files, local police identification number, and Henry fingerprint classification.

Ideally, the master name index file should contain the names of all people brought to the attention of the police. This recommendation, however, is frequently difficult to carry out because of the number of typists and file clerks required. The following list suggests a number of types of names to be included. The record bureau chief must then decide what categories to include depending upon the limits of space, personnel and budget.

Names to be included are:

All persons arrested.

Suspects.

Wanted Persons.

Missing Persons.

Witnesses.

Complainants.

Victims.

Persons injured.

Persons killed.

Selected names mentioned in correspondence.

Licensees over which the police have jurisdiction.

Juvenile offenders.

The above cards should be filed alphabetically, by name, and some attempt should be made to investigate the possibility of filing a duplicate card by Viet-Nam national identification number. This is suggested because of the duplicity and uncertainty of many names.

2. Fingerprint Identification File.

The fingerprint file still remains the backbone of any system of positive personal identification. The VBI (Sureté) has used the Pottecher system of classification and filing fingerprints. This file is currently housed in the Filippini Street office. During the period 1955-57, Mr. Corey Dymond, of the MSU Police Advisory Team, trained a group of technicians in the classification and filing of fingerprints according to the Henry system. File cabinets have been turned over to the VBI at Camp des Mares, and a group of technicians under the direction of Mr. Nguyen Ba Minh is continuing the work organized by Mr. Dymond.

Recommendations for the integration of the Pottecher and Henry files will be discussed in detail in a following chapter. It is sufficient for this present topic to point out that the fingerprint files are essential to the total group of records which contain information about people. These files are an integral part of the central record bureau, and when properly cross-indexed with master name file cards, form the nucleus of the bureau.

3. Personal Identification Jackets: (Dossier)

The individual dossier contains all of the information which the police have amassed about an individual brought to their attention. This may be the result of an investigation, arrest, trial and conviction, or the accumulation of information while the individual may have been under surveillance. The dossier usually contains such items as copies of arrest records, investigative reports, correspondance, news items, information obtained from other police departments, statements or confessions made by the subject, extra fingerprint cards, photographs, and any other pertinent information. This material is kept in an appropriate file jacket; each jacket should be filed numerically and cross-referenced to the master name index card and fingerprint card.

The importance of this file is obvious. When an investigator requests information about a certain individual he should have to make only one inquiry at the central record bureau. If the bureau has any record of the man, the master name index card will contain the dossier file number, and the investigator can be provided with one complete file on the subject.

4. Arrest Reports:

Individual arrest reports are included in category of information about people. It should be understood, however, that the individual arrest reports should be kept at municipal police, or district headquarters only. It is not necessary to send copies of these to a national central record bureau. Only the pertinent information extracted from the arrest report and transferred to the master name index card is needed in the national central record bureau.

The other equally important part of the record bureau is that unit which provides information about incidents or things. If this description of a group of police files is not clear, consider the matter in the following light: a group of files has been described where the officer uses a name, or fingerprint classification, to obtain information about a particular individual, and he usually is interested primarily in information about the subject. In this second category, files about

incidents, the officer is seeking information about a particular case or investigation which the police may have conducted; or he may be interested in information, description and value of a piece of lost or stolen property. Finally, the police administrator is interested in the crime statistics of the community, or nation, all of which has to do with incidents or things brought to the attention of the police.

1. Case file:

This file contains all of the reports prepared by police officers on a particular investigation. It is filed numerically, and when an investigation is continued over a long period of time, all subsequent reports must be given the same original case number and filed in one jacket. This enables the investigator to obtain complete information on any case by making inquiry at the central record bureau. The case files should be cross-referenced by name and location.

2. Lost or stolen property:

While some persons may question the value of a lost or stolen property file, there are numerous examples where information found in this file has been helpful in the solution of a case. In addition, the file enables the police to provide information to victims of burglaries about the recovery of their property, and is also necessary to keep investigators advised about reported stolen

property. This file can be maintained on 7.5 x 12.5 cm. (3 x 5) index cards and cross-referenced either by serial number (if available), or description of object reported lost or stolen.

3. Crime statistics:

Monthly, semi-annual, and annual reports of crime statistics, trends in crime rates, and total figures describing police activities represent the summation of all incidents brought to the attention of the police. While this information may have little immediate value to the investigator, it is of inestimable worth to the administrator.

SUMMARY

This chapter has presented a brief introduction to the basic units of the central record bureau. The problem was reduced to simple concepts of information about people and information about things. A minimum number of fundamental records were proposed, along with brief descriptions of each separate file. Detailed descriptions of these files will be presented in subsequent chapters.

Chapter IVSERVICES TO BE RENDERED

As discussed in previous chapters, the primary function of the central record bureau, whether it be at the municipal or national level, is to provide service to authorized law enforcement officers requesting information. In addition to providing this information for immediate use by investigators, the bureaus should provide various types of statistical information which are necessary for efficient management of the police service.

The accumulation of this information can be traced in an orderly and logical fashion. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to an outline of the manner in which the information is assembled and the responsibilities of the bureau for its dissemination.

Practically all of the information collected by the central record bureau has its foundation in the original reports prepared by the field investigator. This dependency upon good, accurate reporting suggests immediately that the record bureau head must take the lead in establishing report writing classes and training programs which can be carried to all of the officers within the service. The record chief must prepare the basic instructional material, including such topics as style of report writing, manner in which offenses will be described and classified, description of suspects, description of stolen property, and other

information usually found in the police report. Once the reports have been forwarded to the central record bureau, information for separate files is extracted and filed in the central bureau.

It has been stated several times that the concepts presented in this paper can be used at the municipal, district and national levels. The reasons for this kind of uniformity are obvious and every effort should be made to establish an atmosphere of co-operation which will be conducive to efficient record bureau administration.

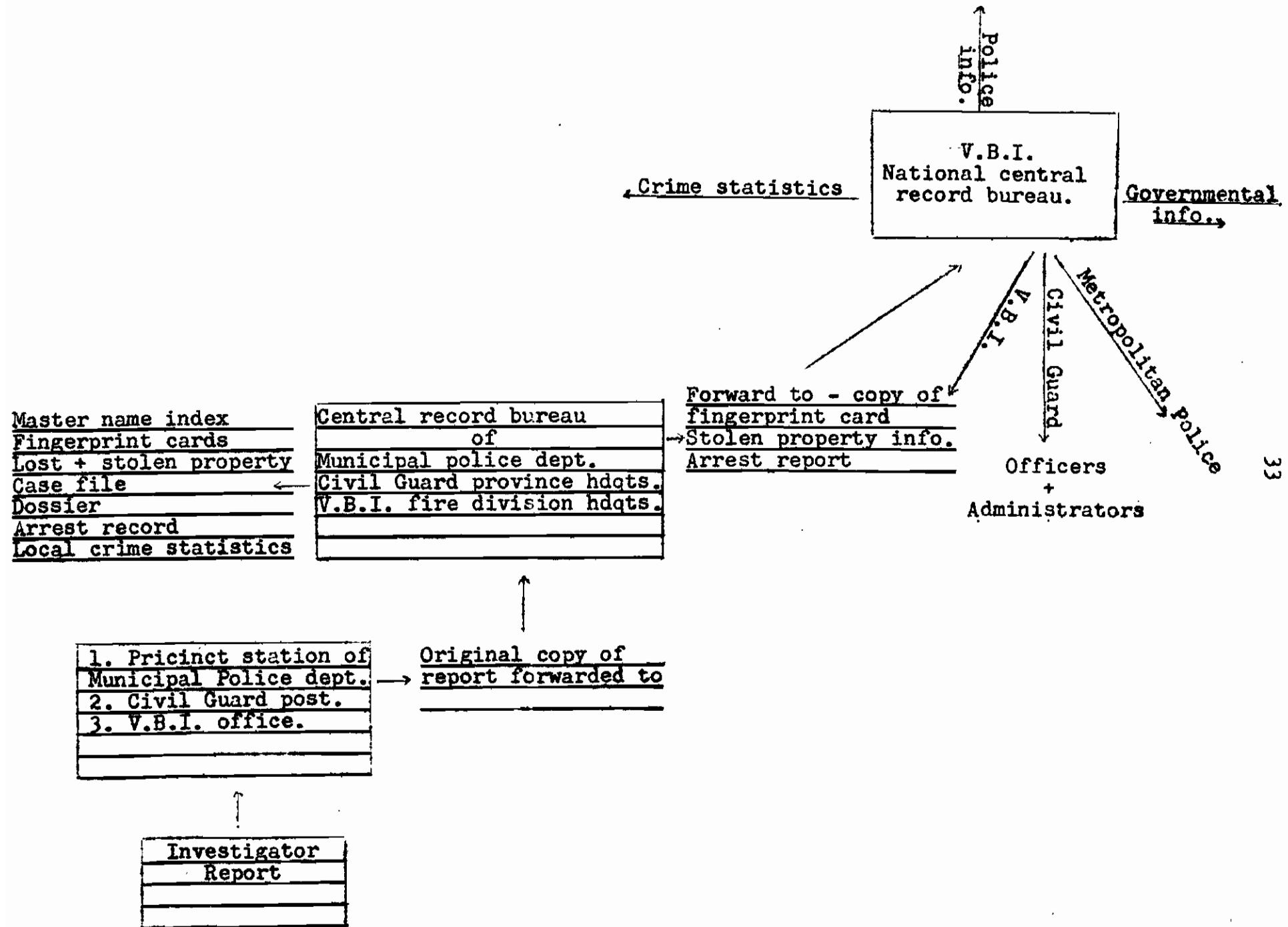
The following diagram illustrates how reports written by officers in the field eventually reach the central record bureau of a particular enforcement agency. At this point, the necessary index cards and files are prepared and the information is available to all officers working in that department. Certain important information is forwarded to the VBI National Record Bureau where it is filed and then becomes accessible to all law enforcement agencies within Viet-Nam.

Thus, a central record bureau at the local level has two responsibilities; one, to provide all information needed by officers working within its jurisdiction; and two, forward selected information to the central national bureau. The national central bureau also has two responsibilities; first, to receive and process in an orderly and efficient manner all of the records submitted by cooperating police agencies; and second, to make this information readily available to all properly

authorized agencies of government, and to provide the government with periodic reports summarizing the extent of criminal and police activity in Viet-Nam.

The principle services to be rendered by the national bureau, which can also be given by municipal bureaus on a local level, are information about:

1. Criminal records of all people arrested by the police.
2. Personal identification through fingerprint files.
3. Information about lost or stolen property.
4. Summary of changes or trends in criminal activity.
5. Statistical information needed for efficient administration of the police service.



Chapter VPHYSICAL ARRANGEMENT OF BUREAU

An efficient central record bureau must incorporate good design and layout, in addition to efficient management. Poor arrangement of physical facilities frequently disrupts a smooth working plan and may cause unnecessary delays in providing the various services demanded of the record bureau. Therefore, it is important to give some consideration to the plan of the record bureau. The ideal situation, of course, is one where the police administrator is able to assist in the design of a new building and provide for all of the desired services. Naturally, this is not always possible; however, existing buildings can be rearranged to provide serviceable quarters.

The following paragraphs contain suggestions which outline the basic ideas to be considered in the plans for a central record bureau. These can be incorporated into plans for a new bureau or renovation of an existing office. The handling of the records is divided into several broad, yet distinct, work categories. The arrangement of the office or bureau should be such that each operation can be carried out in a most efficient manner. These suggestions can also be regarded as a "flow sheet" or "diagram" tracing the path of the various records. The work areas should be arranged so that each piece of material moves from one unit to the next and is ultimately placed in the appropriate file. The basic work areas are:

A. Receiving Section.

Records, reports, correspondence, etc. are usually received by personal messenger or mail. They can be divided into two large groups; 1) routine police records, including arrest reports, fingerprint cards, case reports, etc.; and 2) official correspondence and requests for information. All reports coming to the receiving section should be quickly separated into the two groups. The routine police records should be distributed to the proper sections for immediate processing. Correspondence and requests for information must be catalogued and distributed to the proper bureau for immediate attention.

B. Routine Police Records.

Police records are distributed to several units for processing. Arrest reports and case reports must be read for purposes of classification of offense and preparation of master name index cards and description of lost or stolen property. Information for statistical purposes must be extracted, after which the reports can be filed.

Fingerprint cards must be classified, searched against existing records, action taken, if important information is disclosed, and then filed. Duplicate copies of the fingerprint card should be sent to VBI national central record bureau.

Information pertaining to individuals must be checked, appropriate index cards made, and proper information filed in the dossier.

C. Typing and Filing.

The work outlined in the preceding paragraphs indicates the need for a clerical staff. Typists can be grouped according to the nature of their work, so that the records can move from desk to desk as quickly as possible.

A second group of clerks should be responsible for filing all records. Good personnel management practices recommend that clerks be alternated between typing and filing duties, thus relieving the monotony of the work and providing for increased efficiency and better morale.

D. Answering Service.

Many requests for information are made in person at the central record bureau. These inquiries should be handled by a group of clerks familiar with the files, and trained to deal with the officers and citizenry in an efficient, accurate and courteous manner. Inquiries to be answered by mail should be handled quickly by the designated officer, and the record bureau advised of the reply.

Chapter VIFINGERPRINT DIVISION

The fingerprint division of the central record bureau is the most important unit insofar as positive personal identification is concerned. Therefore, careful attention must be given to the organization, integration within the central bureau, and administration of this unit. Fortunately, considerable progress has been made in this direction by the MSU Police Advisory Group during the period 1955-1957. The reader is referred to "A Report On the Establishment of a Modern Fingerprint Identification Section for the Republic of Viet-Nam" prepared by Mr. Corey K. Dymond, and dated April 1, 1957. Mr. Dymond was the Police Advisor responsible for the development of the Fingerprint Section of the VBI.

It is unnecessary to repeat the material contained in this report; however, a summary of the report insofar as it becomes a part of this paper is essential. The Dymond Report describes briefly 1) the present Pottecher system used at the Filippini Street office of the VBI, 2) training of technicians in the Henry system, 3) preparation of master name index cards to accompany the Henry fingerprint cards, 4) recommendations for the integration of the Pottecher and Henry files, and 5) suggestions for the establishment of a criminal records service, photographic laboratory and latent fingerprint section.

In view of the fact that the final organizational structure of the VBI has not been resolved as of this date, suggestions presented in the Dymond Report and those offered in this paper are still subject to review and modification by the Government of Viet-Nam. MSU Police Advisors assigned to the record and identification project are referred to Turner's 1956 Report on the establishment of the VBI Criminalistics Laboratory, Dymond's 1957 Report, and this present report, all of which may be helpful in the decisions which will be made in the forthcoming months.

The present VBI record, identification and laboratory operations are unwieldy and disorganized. At present, there is general agreement among the MSU Police Advisors that some reorganization of these units is desirable. The basic suggestions are:

1. The combined laboratory and fingerprint bureaus at Filippini Street be separated. The 1956 MSU Laboratory Report recommends that the laboratory unit be placed under one director, with headquarters either at Camp des Mares or in Filippini Street, after the latter has been renovated.
2. The Fingerprint Bureau at Filippini Street be transferred to Camp des Mares and this bureau gradually be absorbed and transferred into an Identification Bureau using the Henry system of classification and filing.

3. Establish a central record bureau at Camp des Mares to be known as the National Central Record Bureau.

This organization plan calls for one director within the VBI to be responsible for these three technical services. There must also be three bureau heads, each a specialist in his own field, to direct the work of the laboratory, identification bureau and record bureau. Physically, the record and identification bureaus should be located in the same building, or area, for their work responsibilities require cooperative efforts at all times. It is desirable to have the laboratory located at Camp des Mares; however, the Filippini Street laboratory, if renovated as suggested in the 1956 MSU police laboratory report, will be satisfactory.

Thus, in summary, it is recommended that plans be developed to continue the work already begun; follow closely the renovation of the Camp des Mares record building; install existing fingerprint and index card files; arrange for the transfer and integration of the Filippini Street fingerprint files to Camp des Mares, as outlined in the Dymond Report.

Chapter VIICRIME STATISTICS

An important function of a central record bureau is the collection, analysis, and publication of crime statistics. All police administrators ultimately learn that accurate records of criminal activity and crime trends within their jurisdiction are necessary if they are to direct their work with a maximum of efficiency. The various administrative uses of these records have been discussed in previous chapters. This chapter will treat the collection and distribution of the data.

Each central record bureau, whether at the local or national level, must have a statistical section. Incoming police reports should pass through this section, where pertinent data will be extracted. Initially, the data can be relatively simple. As the unit gains experience and discovers the need for additional information, arrangements can be made for further refinements. The basic data to be collected is:

1. Nature of offense.
2. Number of offenses per day, month, and year.
3. Location of offense.
4. Type of offender, i.e. male, female, nationality.
5. Value of property reported lost, stolen or destroyed.
6. Value of property recovered by police.

If conditions warrant the collection of additional data, the following items may be considered:

1. Time of occurrence of offense.
2. Modus operandi involved.
3. Additional information about offender, i.e. age, previous criminal record, family or home status.

In addition to the six basic types of information to be collected, monthly reports should reflect the number of law enforcement officers and civilians assigned to each post, amount and type of equipment (rolling stock) in use, extraordinary services performed, and any additional information that indicates the nature of police work in the community.

The above information can be assembled by the central record bureau of each of the three principle law enforcement services, VBI, important municipal police departments, and the Civil Guard. Copies of this information should be forwarded to the VBI national central record bureau for compilation into semi-annual and annual reports. The VBI national record bureau should also assume the responsibility of analyzing the data in terms of establishing average crime rates for rural areas and metropolitan centers. This type of analysis is not for the purpose of making the VBI responsible for the administration of the various police services, but rather, to provide accurate information on the local and national level which can be used by the individual police administrator. This type of information can also be used very effectively to inform the general public about crime conditions within their communities and enlist their support in controlling or improving the situation.

Chapter VIIIPERSONNEL

Staffing the record bureau of a law enforcement agency is no different than staffing the record, accounting, or general office of any large corporation or business enterprise. That is to say, the basic principles are similar in both cases. Admittedly, the police services must place strong emphasis on loyalty and integrity, but beyond this, the prerequisites of the employees are similar.

There are two concepts about employees within the police service; namely, civilian and sworn law enforcement personnel. The police in most countries of the world have traditionally used sworn law enforcement officers for practically all types of work beyond the most menial tasks of maintenance and labor. Changing economic conditions have, however, dictated a change in this policy, and today most police departments employ both civilian and enforcement personnel. As the demands on the police service increase and money allocated for salaries becomes more difficult to obtain, the police administrator has been forced to analyze his personnel force and make careful decisions about the number of civilian and enforcement personnel he can employ. This has resulted in extensive job analyses of the various police functions, with the result that civilian employees are being used in as many positions as possible, thus freeing sworn personnel for important police duty.

The record bureau is one of the units within the police service which can be staffed almost entirely with civilian personnel. Obviously, a small number of administrators within the bureau must have law enforcement status, but with proper administrative direction, this number can be reduced to a minimum.

Generally speaking, civilian record bureau personnel must have the same qualifications as office workers employed by private enterprise. This means skill in typing, filing, record keeping, and providing information to those making inquiries of the record bureau. As mentioned previously, the record bureau employees must possess a high degree of personal honesty and loyalty to the police service. Records kept in the bureau contain information which unscrupulous persons would pay money to have removed, altered, or destroyed. Thus the temptation is always present, and those employees who become guilty of such activities cause embarrassment to the police service. Also, the record bureau administrator may be asked to alter or falsify reports of crime statistics and classification of offenses in order to submit a favorable report, despite the fact that it is not in agreement with known criminal offense figures. This calls for efficient and honest administration brought about through a loyalty to good, progressive police service.

Naturally, all administrators are plagued with salary budget problems, and the police service is no exception. It is unfortunate that this report cannot include suggestions to remedy

this condition; however, this is not within the scope of this paper. It is important, therefore, to recognize that recommendations in this report are made with the idea of efficiency and economy in mind. The police administrators must recognize that it is essential to employ persons with adequate skill and training and pay salaries which are at least equal to those paid by non-governmental services. Advantage should be taken to the training courses being offered by the National Institute of Administration. The Institute conducts courses in office management practice and police administrators can direct record bureau chiefs to attend these courses, in addition to recruiting graduates of the typing courses for work in the police record bureaus.

Chapter IXEVALUATION OF PRESENT RECORDS

Recommendations for the establishment of a central record bureau for the police services must be based on an understanding of the present record systems now in use. Due to the limited amount of time available for the preparation of this report, it was not possible to conduct a thorough survey of all facets of the police records; however, some basic information was obtained which may be useful in developing further studies. This preliminary survey covered Saigon-Cholon municipal police records, and VBI records at Camp des Mares. Civil Guard records were not studied because of the current indefinite status of the Civil Guard.

It is quite inappropriate to criticize or compare the existing police records with the systems familiar to Western police officials. It is more important to study and understand the records now in use by the Viet-Nam law enforcement agencies, evaluate them in terms of efficiency and accuracy, and then offer assistance in those areas where upgrading of the records is called for. Therefore, it must be said that the present Viet-Nam police record systems are quite decentralized, with resulting inefficiency. However, certain specific forms appear to be adequate and can be utilized without major changes. Some forms or procedures may be eliminated, and a few totally new records should be installed.

The following general observations indicate overall impressions of the records, and suggest what plans may be followed for detailed work in this field.

Saigon-Cholon police records are under the direction of a secretary. Records at the police headquarters include a correspondence file, information about licensees, a mail office, personnel records, and limited case files on major crimes. Investigation and disposition of traffic cases are kept by the courts. Records of stolen property are kept at individual precinct stations. The director of police is provided with monthly reports, by precincts, which cover such items as number of guns confiscated, unlawful meetings, strikes, disturbances, menaces, homicides, kidnappings, coverts, assaults, blackmail, burglaries, robberies, narcotics violations, over-princing, arson, traffic accidents, property damage, misdemeanors, and trials. About one week is required to process a request for information, or search for particlar information. Arrest records and individual dossiers are kept at the Filippini Street office of VBI. Of the above records and files that were examined, the personnel records were most impressive.

The needs for renovation of the Saigon-Cholon police records can be summarized as follows: 1) establish a central record system which provides all of the necessary information for efficient police work; 2) install filing and searching systems which will reduce the amount of time needed for

processing routine police requests; 3) separate true criminal police records from the police services which are more civilian in nature.

The VBI records are somewhat more centralized than the Saigon-Cholon records; however, the same problems exist. Case reports from regional headquarters are sent to Saigon and copies distributed to interested bureaus. The VBI, like the Saigon-Cholon police, has no adequate record of lost, stolen and/or recovered property. The VBI must also depend upon the Filippini Street office for criminal history and arrest records. 2-3 days are required to obtain reports on arrested subjects from this office. There is no cooperation with the Civil Guard with regard to arrests and disposition of cases. The VBI is eventually notified of the disposition of Civil Guard cases by the court which handled the case.

Thus, it is apparent that the needs of the VBI record bureau are similar to those of the Saigon-Cholon police. It is interesting to note that the VBI also has installed a good personnel record system. It is also pointed out that the VBI does have the nucleus of a record and identification bureau as outlined in the Dymond Report; however, this bureau has not been integrated with the present systems in use.

Chapter XIMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM

The foregoing chapters have presented a brief resume of some of the concepts of police record bureau organization and management. Identification and analysis of the problem must be accompanied by a suggested plan for the implementation of the program. The following points are arranged in order of importance, and may serve as a guide to the police advisors assigned to this project.

1. Authorization to implement the program;

It is absolutely necessary to receive unrestricted approval from the Minister of Interior and his associates who direct the police services of Viet-Nam to embark upon a program of technical assistance in the police record area. This suggests that the responsible officials must have a clear understanding of the goals of the program and the manner in which it is to be carried out. A concise monograph outlining present conditions and the manner in which efficiency and accuracy can be improved is necessary for such a briefing.

2. Survey of existing records:

Once approval for implementation of the program has been secured, a thorough study of existing records must be made. This should be done with the idea of

utilizing present forms and procedures wherever possible.

3. A master plan for the integration of police records from the various municipal police departments, VBI and Civil Guard can be prepared, once the foregoing survey has been completed. This plan must include recommendations for physical facilities, design, preparation and distribution of forms, filing equipment, budget programs, and personnel selection and training.

4. Model Record Bureau:

It may be advantageous to set up a model record bureau, illustrating the basic principles of the central record bureau concept. The bureau could be used for training and demonstration purposes.

5. A training program for designated record bureau chiefs must be established to discuss thoroughly the principles of a central record bureau and to insure completed co-operation between the heads of the various police record bureaus.
6. Purchase orders for necessary equipment to be provided through American Aid funds must be prepared; however, it is recommended that none of this equipment be released until there is complete assurance that it will be used in a proper manner by competent personnel.
7. Training programs for record bureau employees must be instituted. This training in typing, filing, and office

management should be coordinated with the National Institute of Administration.