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of command by the Presidency; assignment of commanders to be made on recommendations of the General Staff through the Department of Defense to the President as contrasted with recommendation to the President by civilian and political advisers; clarification and definition of the responsibility and authority between the province chiefs, military regional commanders and local troop commanders; and centralization of control of the various intelligence agencies.

Indications have been received that at least some of the ideas which have been expressed by GVN officials are being implemented. President Diem has told Ambassador Durbrow that Colonel Nguyen KHANH, newly designated commander of the Fifth Military Region (the southwestern area where insecurity is the worst), has been given full military powers over the security forces of the area regardless of the prerogatives of the province chiefs. Diem also said that the GVN is extending an earlier plan of appointing military officers as deputy province chiefs responsible for security, and has placed them under the control of the military regional commander.

According to a CAS report, the Assistant Secretary of State for Defense issued a directive on February 1 ordering concentration on anti-guerrilla training and tactics and enforcement of maximum security at all military posts.

Another CAS report states that President Diem, as a result of recent urgings for improvement in relations between the Government and the peasants, has ordered a slowdown in the program of building regroupment centers ("agrovilles"). Secretary of State for the Presidency TRUAN told Ambassador Durbrow on February 17, however, that this program must be continued but perhaps at a slower pace, as there is no way to provide protection to isolated farm houses other than by regrouping such peasants into larger communities. He admitted that the peasants have the normal human reaction of disliking being forced to work on the regroupment centers, but he believes that after the centers have been completed they will see the advantages offered. Diem told the Ambassador on February 22 that, while he must continue to create "agrovilles," he is not planning to push too fast until one or two pilot towns are in being so that the peasants can learn for themselves the many advantages of this sort of rural organization.

CAS also reported that the NRM recently dispatched special cadres to the provinces to obtain for the President information on cases of dissatisfaction with high-handed or dictatorial attitudes of local officials. Intelligence committees have also been formed in each province which will report to the President through the Minister of Interior. Diem told the Ambassador he had

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