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The basic factor which has been lacking is a felling of rapport between the government and the population. The people have not identified themselves with the government. There has been a general lack of "a sense of mission" in the building of the country among both the local population and local authorities. In the past at least Diem has contributed to this attitude by his constant admonition to the villagers he talks to on his trips throughout the country that they must work harder, do more for themselves, and not complain. He has made little effort to praise them for what they have accomplished or explain the reasons for the demands he places on the population. He has none of the demagogue in him, but is rather still the mandarin. Now that he realizes the feelings of the people, it is to be hoped that he will show more solicitude for their needs and feelings, but this will not be easy for him to do.

Possibly another factor adversely affecting the current attitude of the peasants toward the Government is the decline over recent months in the price of paddy. Since the population in the Southwestern delta is particularly dependent on paddy for its income, it would be a normal political reaction for this development to increase dissatisfaction with the government.

GVN Reactions to Current Internal Security Situation

President Diem, who had earlier taken the position in conversations with Ambassador Durbrow that the GVN's security operations had broken up many VC camps and forced them to regroup into larger forces, has modified his assessment considerably after the Tay Ninh attack and other recent manifestations of expanded VC activities. Previously indicating that VC reinforcements had come from Cambodia, Diem in his latest conversation with the Ambassador on February 12 stated the VC had been reenforced by well-trained forces from North Vietnam. In his view the recent step-up in VC activities is basically a somewhat desperate attempt to disrupt the progress of South Vietnam. He does not appear to be deeply alarmed, but, on the contrary, feels that with measures he has in mind the situation should greatly improve in a few months. He believes the security forces need more anti-guerrilla training, but also thinks more security forces are needed in order to provide better protection for the entire population. He has called for volunteers from military reservists who had long guerrilla experience during the Indochina War as well as from ARVN and the Civil Guard, and has indicated that over 1000 have already volunteered.

Diem also now shows awareness of many of the political factors which have contributed to the deterioration in internal security. By the end of February in conversations with the Ambassador and

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