

SECRET-NOFORN

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These incidents, plus a relatively minor incident involving a VC attack on ARVN patrol on September 14 some 35 kilometers south of the town of Quang Ngai are significant in that they represent the first such reports received from Central Viet-Nam of this type of violence in many months. VC activity among the Montagnards, particularly propaganda activity, intended to set the Montagnards against the GVN and its programs for economic and social development in Central Viet-Nam has been the subject of reports by CAS and our consulate at Hue. There have also been a number of reports of VC efforts to establish bases and to recruit Montagnards for guerrilla activity.

During a visit to Kontum in late January our Consul in Hue found officials rather worried about the security situation. The Chief of Kontum's northernmost district of Dak Sut said that during a three week period in January, Communists had forced or persuaded three Montagnard villages to withdraw into the mountains, out of reach of GVN administrators. This District Chief said that he and the Kontum Civil Guard Chief both think that the Communists have a major base in the Quang Nam mountains northeast of Dak Gle (the northernmost point en route 14), and predicted that communist activities in northern Kontum and southwest Quang Nam provinces would be stepped up in 1960. Our Consul was not permitted to go all the way to Dak Gle because on January 18 a Civil Guard force patrolling route 14 was fired on by a machine gun on a hilltop between Dak Gle and Dak Rotah.

A large scale sweep intended to flush out Viet Cong in the mountains of Quang Ngai Province has been underway since the end of October 1958. According to information obtained by USOM Public Safety Division, eleven companies of the Civil Guard and one battalion of ARVN and two intelligence companies were employed in the initial pacification phase. The operation was reported by mid-January to have entered a second phase, that of securing the support of the local population. The new chief of Quang Ngai Province, Nguyen van TAT, told our Consul in January that additional Civil Guard Posts are being set up in the Montagnard districts of his province and that the Self Defense Corps will be greatly expanded in the Vietnamese sections. Asked about the progress of the sweep, he was non-committal, but he admitted that the security drive "will not be over for a long time".

E. DRV Intentions

In May 1959, the Central Committee of the Lao Dong Party passed a resolution or statement stating that the struggle for reunification would have to be carried out by all "appropriate measures". British observers have taken this to mean measures other than peaceful.

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