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inability, or lack of desire, to recognize the following factors:
(1) It is actively engaged in an internal war and, therefore, must take the measures which this situation entails. (2) There is a great need for a strong central military command with wide powers for the conduct of internal security operations in the unpacified areas. (3) There is a need for a capable, well-equipped, well-trained, centrally-controlled Civil Guard to take over from the Military in pacified areas.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the apparent lack of success in the GVN attempts to reduce the internal threat of the VC until now has stemmed from the lack of unity of command in a single operational commander who has the means and the authority to utilize all of the potential in the area of operations without regard to province or regional boundaries and without regard to the existing political subdivision of the area. Unity of command is the most important basic principle of administration lacking here. The Province Chief structure has caused a breakdown of coordination and a fragmentation of command structure which has blocked an effective attack on the internal security problem.

The fact that the GVN, though striving to bring its military organization to a high state of training, is constantly plagued by the diversion of an average of 25 battalions to an internal security mission is indicative that a serious internal threat exists. The resulting piecemeal commitment of the armed forces has obviously been generally unsatisfactory because of the lack of a strong central command which could effectively coordinate and control all security functions in the area of operations. (See subsequent "GVN Reactions" section re recent action taken to centralize command in the Fifth Military Region).

Political Factors Affecting the Internal Security Situation

It is highly unlikely that any final solution can be found to the internal security situation in South Vietnam if the GVN does not enjoy the support and cooperation of the rural population. At the present time indications are that the rural population is generally apathetic towards the Diem Government and there are signs of considerable dissatisfaction and silent opposition. In part this attitude appears to result from widespread fear of the Viet Cong and a belief that the GVN is relatively helpless to protect the rural population from Viet Cong depredations. Unfortunately the longer serious insecurity continues to exist in the countryside despite GVN efforts to control it, the more serious is the effect on the GVN's prestige. Another effect is a growing belief among the peasants that the Viet Cong will always be here as long as North Vietnam remains under Communist control and that they must adjust to live with them. (A realization of the long-range nature of the problem among officials responsible for

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