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(3) Domestically, also, the ethnic minorities which reside in South Vietnam Highland areas, particularly along the Lao border, have been the object of too little concern, and virtually no effective penetration on the part of the GVN. CIA is now supporting a project, in coordination with the Second Corps Commander, the Presidential Liaison Service, and the Secretariat for Social Action among the Montagnards, designed to place trained district leaders within each of the montagnard districts in the high plateaus and to utilize district leaders to rally the montagnards to protect their home areas against Viet Cong incursion. This program supports salaries to district organizers and small contributions of rice, salt, and medicines. Once this program becomes more developed and the attitude of the Montagnards can be better determined, arming of small self-defense units within the Montagnards is also contemplated. Also among the Montagnards and in conjunction with the Vietnamese military, CIA has located a group of approximately 1,000 Djarai, who formerly served as scouts for the French Army and who have been partially trained and organized by the G-3 of the 23rd Division. These individuals need additional training and have repeatedly asked for weapons to establish themselves as roving patrols among the Montagnard districts. To date, it has not been possible to supply these arms and training from MAP sources, and CIA is

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therefore preparing to furnish this support, once satisfactory coordination with the necessary GVN elements has been effected. CIA also has a developmental project among the Montagnard in the Ban Me Thuot area concentrating on developing the resistance potential of these montagnards to Viet Cong penetration of their areas.

In South Laos, CIA has initiated, in conjunction with the Presidential Liaison Service, a program of clandestine infiltrations; the object of these infiltrations is to locate trails and stop-over stations utilized by Viet Cong transiting South Laos into Vietnam. A second object is to mount offensive strikes against these trails and stations, where feasible. CIA has now trained sixteen 14-man agent teams and two company-sized assault units; approximately half of these have been committed to South Laos during the past two months. These initial efforts have indicated the validity of the approach. However, both the number of teams and the assault force available is now too small to accomplish other than minor harassment of large numbers of VC believed to be in the target area.

A covert program of infiltration of North Vietnam to collect enemy order of battle and to probe North Vietnamese resistance potential has existed under CIA auspices for some time. Up until very recently, these infiltrations have been conducted overland or by fishing junk into the coastal areas of the North. Recently, three agent teams of four men each, have been airdropped in North Vietnam and all are in

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radio communication. One of these, however, is known to be doubled. It is expected that the teams that are still free of enemy control can begin programs of observation and contact with the local populace in the immediate future. All of the agents who have been airdropped are natives of the district into which they have been dropped and have relatives in these areas. Very tight police, security, food rationing, and movement controls, will however probably limit the effectiveness of this activity. Some additional operations against North Vietnam, including selective sabotage and additional leaflet drops, are in the planning stage in order to force the North Vietnamese to devote a greater part of their effort to internal security and to stimulate resistance in the North.

CONCLUSION

The overall command of clandestine operations within the Vietnamese Government is inadequate to ensure proper emphasis and allocation of personnel to the tasks at hand. CIA has proposed the establishment of a Vietnamese Clandestine Action Service. This proposal has been received with enthusiasm by Nguyen Dinh Tam, Secretary of State at the Presidency, and Deputy Minister of Defense. The concept of the service divides activities between intelligence collection and paramilitary action, and provides for the appropriate training of approximately 3,000 men for these activities. This plan

could be accelerated by the assignment of additional American trainers and of already trained Vietnamese Army personnel who could be utilized in the relatively near future for critical harassment operations against the Viet Cong in South Laos, in the High Plateau, in the Mekong Delta, and for missions in North Vietnam. This has not figured in current planning as it would divert strength from the Vietnamese Army for these clandestine operations.

The most important covert operational effort now needed is the observation and harassment of Viet Cong transiting South Laos into Vietnam. Operations presently directed against this target, while qualitatively well conceived are quantitatively too small in numbers of personnel and striking force available to accomplish more than a small part of the job to be done. Operations against North Vietnam are also still small quantitatively, and their expansion can only be obtained by extensive and costly efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- (1) Representations be made to the Vietnamese government:
 - a. To adopt the plan for establishment of the Clandestine Action Service as proposed by CIA.
 - b. To consider accelerating the creation of the Clandestine Action Service by assigning to it 10 companies of trained troops (Rangers, Marines, or Airborne).

- (2) The following be assigned to MAAG for specific utilization in the training of the Clandestine Action Service:
- a. Two U. S. Army Special Forces mobile training teams,
 - b. Ten U. S. Army Special Forces medical corpsmen.
- (3) For support of the Clandestine Action Service, 2 H-34 helicopters and C-123 or 2 Caribou Stal aircraft, together with spare parts, maintenance personnel and crews be made available to the GVN.
- (4) Policy clearance be granted for the continuation of CIA operations aimed at harassment of VC lines of communications in South Laos whatever the outcome of the Geneva Conference on Laos or the current negotiations over a Souvanna Phouma government.