

beverly deepe
101 cong ly
saigon

page 1--subversion

Saigon--In a small hamlet not far from the 17th parallel bordering North Viet Nam, a Catholic village priest complained to Western visitor, ^A year ago "We used to denounce every Communist tax collector that came near our village. Now we have to talk to their secret agents in our hamlet."

The frustrated priest recalled a recent argument he had had with the civilian secret agent about ~~distribution of land~~ a government directive ordering village-owned land to be distributed among tenant farmers. The ~~Communist agent~~ priest accused the Communist agent of sabotaging the plan to make the government ~~more~~ ineffective.

In another example in the quiet northern province of Quang Tri, peasants were told to elect hamlet councils in the 400 strategic hamlets the government established. American policymakers presumed this would provide "democracy" at the grass roots level and entice the villagers to support the ~~new~~ government. But in 100 of the 400 hamlets, VietCong agents were elected to hamlet chiefs, according to provincial authorities.

~~Throughout Vietnam's 2000-plus villages (which are clusters of hamlets);~~

Communist party-liners have up to 15 agents in each of Vietnam's 2000-plus villages (which are clusters of hamlets); have up to 40 in each of the country's 250 districts and up to 400 in the ~~major~~ 43 provincial capitals.

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mostly operating in their native areas
These party- Communist party agents are distinct x from

other left-wing sympathizers making up the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, and from the armed ~~Viet~~ pro-Communist guerrillas which terrorize, propagandize and attack government positions. (Source of figures is a prisoner's report told to CIA man).

"Political subversion is a key element in any ~~Communist~~ Communist insurgency apparatus," a high-ranking American officer explained. (Informatively chief of staff General Stilwell). "The directing star is gaining control of the people that on our side--or replacing them.

"In Communist Party tactics, if they have no cell in a hamlet today, they'll get one their tomorrow--or else try to."

More than 200 secret cells operate in the small, ~~an~~ ~~prop~~ prosperous Gia Dinh province, containing the suburbs of Saigon, according to provincial officials. An unknown number presumably operate in the city of Saigon, where almost every businessman--from small shopkeepers to factory owners--regularly pay taxes to "go-betweens" working for the Viet Cong. No commercial group is left untouched--including Vietnamese generals who pay taxes for their rice-land or rubber plantations held in the provinces. French ~~pla~~ French-owned plantation owners are regular contributors; and indirectly every American installation built in the provinces has ~~it~~ been constructed by indirectly paying taxes to the Viet Cong. Vietnamese construction firms doing American contract work pay the taxes--to make sure the building is not blown up before its completed--or to get wood from Communist-held mountain areas--and the taxes become an additional cost to be paid by the U. S. government.

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Viet Cong
Construction Work

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The Vietnamese workers for American-owned firms regularly pay taxes to the Viet Cong, (notably Esso trucks which drive through Communist-held areas to supply fuel for American jeeps and helicopters in the provinces).

Other businessmen, who are not Viet Cong sympathizers, happily assist the Viet Cong in black-marketeering or smuggling, such as drug store clerks who sell them unlimited quantities of drugs and medicines. Many of the Viet Cong supplies are brought to Viet Nam by Chinese businessmen living in Cambodia. ~~In 1962, for example,~~ In the past three years, for example, the tonnage of chloride potassium (please check this spelling) used in manufacturing matches increased 100 per cent, but Cambodian match production increased only one percent. The remainder was shipped via Chinese businessmen into Viet Nam ~~where~~ where the Viet Cong ~~used~~ used it to produce gunpowder and munitions and mines. In another important area is the black-marketeering of South Vietnamese piastres; in 1963, Hanoi agents in Hong Kong bought up 20,000,000 piastres (\$300,000) a month and then smuggled them into South Vietnam again to pay their local bills.

"In a guerrilla situation, it is only normal that everyone pays taxes to the Viet Cong," a high-ranking Vietnamese officer explained. "Those that don't get their shops blown up."

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It has long been assumed that the Viet Cong held portions of the countryside, while the government held the urban centers. But now Vietnamese officers concede, "the Viet Cong are in the towns too, but we just don't see them. They're invisible there."

The pro-Communist agents have succeeded--the know no one knows to what extent--in their usual tactics of infiltrating into the ~~fabric~~ entire fabric of the non-Communist society--in the population, the government and the army. Sometimes they recruit sympathizers ~~among~~ of those already in a key position.

Within the ranks of the population, pro-Communist sympathizers are known to operate in the schools and universities, the trade unions, newspapers, commercial enterprises, cultural groups, writers associations. Only two months ago Communist propaganda leaflets were found scattered around the campus of the University of Hue, four 400 miles north of Saigon, and a Communist Patriotic organization was found in the ~~institution~~ Hue high school. Student Students at the University of Saigon explain that they know some of their classmates are Viet Cong sympathizers; a few university students will spend their summer vacation in the Communist strongholds, such as D-Zone north of Saigon.

Of the 14,000 taxi ~~drivers~~ drivers in Saigon alone, half are known to be Viet Cong agents; half are government agents; some maybe double agents; some might be triple agents, also working for a foreign government. ~~Recently~~ Several weeks ago, the Viet Cong agents diligently spread anti-American ~~rumors~~ lies; shortly after an American private shot a terrorist who threw a grenade under his truck, the Viet Cong agents omitted the fact a grenade had been ~~found~~ and accused the American of killing the Vietnamese bicyclist in cold blood.

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During the current religious tensions, both the Catholics and Buddhists accuse each other of being infiltrated by Viet Cong agents; Catholics even admit that their demonstrations have been suggested by persons working for the Viet Cong. Security agents indicate one Buddhist priest smuggle Viet Cong plasticine ~~instruments~~ is smuggled into Saigon by one known Buddhist priest, and by government ~~military~~ sergeants and privates whose jeeps are not searched at specified checkpoints.

In the government ministries, ministries, low-ranking jobs such as secretaries and section chiefs are known to be working with Viet Cong; in the military, captains and lieutenants and sergeants, even those working in corps headquarters, are ~~known~~ pro-Communist agents. In 195 1962, a Vietnamese lieutenant studying in the United States sent to Viet Cong agents in Paris the complete code for secret military transmissions. He was arrested upon his return to Viet Nam.

Obviously, the American military have not been ignored by the secret agents. The barber used by American GI's in one district town was discovered to be a Viet Cong agent. A perk little secretary working in the American military command in Saigon was arrested for carrying a ~~small~~ poisonous hypodermic needle concealed in a pack of ~~cheap~~ cigarettes with instructions to kill an American officer; a scale drawing ~~of a~~ bed by bed and radio including each radio and bed--in an American installation in the ~~provinc~~ provincial capital only 60 miles south of Saigon was found on a Viet Cong prisoner.

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A favorite subversive weapon of the Communists is women— many of the bargirls, taxi dancers and prostitutes in Saigon and the provincial capitals have been picked up by the government police. Some work for both the government and the Viet Cong; ~~one of the best restaurants in Saigon~~ one of the best restaurants in Saigon night clubs (with a brothel upstairs) is considered part of the French espionage network. The Viet Cong also operate a training school in D-Zone, north of Saigon, teaching peasant girls to speak English and to be the best of maids and cooks. They are then placed to work in American homes.

Many of the fore fortunetellers, palmists, horoscope-readers are known to work for both the government and the Viet Cong. This is an important source of information-gathering, plus a means to influence government officials and military officers. Many a Vietnamese officer refuses to go on operations or patrols on the "bad days" mentioned by his fortuneteller. Almost every ~~general~~ Vietnamese general sends his wife or captains to have his horoscope read, which dictates his actions. ~~in~~ Two weeks ago, a province chief refused to ~~assign his deputy~~ allow his newly-appointed deputy to begin work on Tuesday, which was a "horrendously bad day," he explained. The deputy began work on Wednesday, "a lucky day."