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torture--11

april 21, 1965

SAIGON--Every day the "Fishnet Report," classified as confidential, is swooped up from the provinces and villages of Vietnam and collected typed and filed at the American military command here.

The reports list the ugliest, most brutal part of this day-in, day-out war in which Vietnamese kill Vietnamese.

Extracts from the report for one day in one province, the northern province of Thua Thien, containing the old imperial capital of Hue, reads as follows:

An unknown number of Viet Cong infiltrated a New Life Hamlet and murdered two civilians.

An unknown number of Viet Cong entered a hamlet and assassinated one fourteen-year-old youth.

An unknown number of Viet Cong entered Ke Sung hamlet and Thanh Duong hamlet, murdering two residents and seriously wounding another.



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One Viet Cong squad entered Tho Son hamlet and kidnapped one resident.

In the neighboring province of Quang Tri, the report indicated VIET Cong ENTERED three Thanh Luong hamlet and kidnapped two youths. In ~~an~~ <sup>the</sup> adjoining mountain province of Pleiku, the report said that an unknown number of Viet Cong detonated a mine against a civilian bus, killing one civilian and wounding three others.

"This is the story of total, bloody mayhem which daily takes place in the Vietnamese villages," one ~~von~~ concerned American official explained. "It's been going on for years."

At a ~~Western~~ cocktail party last month, one European counter-guerrilla expert grabbed a stiff shot of scotch off a passing tray of a passing waiter and ~~explained~~ explained, "I've just read the goriest report ever--from Binh Dinh province (250 miles north of Saigon where ~~Viet~~ Communist units born in North Viet Nam have recently infiltrated).

"The Viet Cong sneaked into the government hamlet, grabbed the village chief and his family," the ~~Westerner~~ ~~ex~~ continued. ~~The~~ "They forced the village chief to watch as they cut off the legs of his wailing five children, then bayoneted out the abdomen of his screaming wife--and then they ~~ex~~ emasculated him, leaving them all to die as slow <sup>ly</sup> as possible.



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"The Viet Cong are very, very selective with this terror-torture technique," he continued. "They do it for deliberate political purposes--that story will spread like wildfire through Binh Dinh province--and every government village chief knows if he takes an active stand aga inst the Communists the same thing will happen to him and his family. They've done this for years <sup>to thousands of Vietnamese</sup> in ~~all~~ the ~~Vietnamese~~ villages--and this is why the government can't have any good administrators and cadre ~~inadequate~~ at the lowest level."

The Western diplomat gulped his iced scotch and turned away to talk of other things.

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The effect of this ~~terror-torture technique~~ tactic is to destroy the most anti-Communist elements in the villages and hamlets--and to neutralize others who hear about the reports.

In dealing with government prisoners of war, the Viet Cong have two tactics--one is treat the government troopers ~~well~~ well, indoctrinate ~~them~~ <sup>them</sup> and send ~~him~~ <sup>them</sup> back to ~~his~~ <sup>their</sup> unit in the hopes of getting his ~~his~~ <sup>their</sup> cooperation in the future--and the second is to destroy him. Some reports from Vietnamese field officers indicate that one Vietnamese company commander was captured by the Viet Cong when his company was almost totally wiped out. <sup>And</sup> ~~The company commander~~ <sup>And</sup> was burned alive at the stake. In ~~another~~ <sup>And</sup> another confirmed case, ~~was~~ a Vietnamese government militiaman was captured, the calf of his leg was cut off and eaten in front of him.

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Vietnamese government troops, while seldom using ~~the~~ deliberate torture or terror on unsuspecting Vietnamese civilians, are also known to use almost "Congo--like barbarism" against Viet Cong prisoners and suspects—as one Vietnamese army captain explained. Generally, government troops ~~search~~ attempt to ~~to~~ obtain quickly intelligence information from Viet Cong ~~prisoners~~ <sup>2</sup> prisoners in the heat of battle. The fast securing of this combat intelligence is, in their view, considered important to ~~to~~ find and destroy ~~organized~~ Viet Cong units <sup>during the</sup> ~~in the heat of~~ battle—and to save the lives of their own troops from falling into Viet Cong entrapments and ambushes. Under pressure from American advisors—and intelligence officers—the Vietnamese armed forces has been urged to be more lenient ~~of~~ with Viet Cong prisoners—and to keep them alive as future means of intelligence <sup>Foot</sup> ~~against~~ the Viet Cong.

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Nevertheless, even Vietnamese army officers conceded that torture and terror is ~~imp~~ employed against Viet Cong priso prisoners. In one known case, two Viet Cong prisoners were being interrogated on an airplane flying towards ~~Seign~~ <sup>airplane</sup> Saigon. The first prisoner refused to answer question. He was thrown out the door—at ~~1~~ 3,000 feet. The second prisoner immediately answered all the ~~questione~~ <sup>questions</sup> put ~~before~~ <sup>asked</sup> him. He, too, was thrown out the door.

<sup>ONE</sup> The most infamous methods of ~~tortu~~ <sup>is</sup> torture ~~and are hand crank~~ ~~generations~~ are partial ~~electo~~ <sup>electro</sup> electrocution—or "frying" as one American advisor explained to this correspondent. Two wires were ~~attat~~ <sup>2</sup> attached to the ~~thungs~~ <sup>2</sup> thumbs of a Viet Cong prisoner, at the other end of the strings was a field generator, which ~~x~~ this correspondent ~~saw~~ <sup>has</sup> saw a Vietnamese private cranking, ~~na~~ <sup>thus producing</sup> ~~creating~~ <sup>a N.</sup> ~~electrical~~ <sup>current</sup> which partially ~~electrocuted~~ <sup>electrocuted</sup> the prisoner. Vietnamese officers report that sometimes the wires through which the current pass are attached to the male genital organs or the breasts of a Viet Cong woman prisoner. The "water-torture" method is also used, which is painful, but seldom death-producing. Generally, one person forces the prisoner to gulp water, while another applies pressure on <sup>his</sup> ~~the~~ stomach forcing the water to be ejected, thus creating a feeling similar to that of drowning.



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Other techniques--usually designed to force on-looking prisoners to talk--involve cutting off parts of ~~the~~ <sup>2</sup> one prisoner's body--

his fingers, ears, fingernails, or sexual organs. Sometimes a string of ears decorates the wall of a government military installation; one American ~~installatio~~ installation has a Viet Cong ear preserved in ~~alcohol~~ <sup>alcohol</sup>. Since the war within South Viet Nam has not been legally

declared a war, the ~~former~~ international rules internationally-accepted rules for treatment of prisoners have ~~never~~ <sup>NOT</sup> been <sup>ACCEPTED OR</sup> applied here.

~~Earlier~~ Earlier this month, American officials in Saigon and Washington vigorously protested the atrocious killing of a ~~a~~ <sup>an</sup> American civilian employee working for the United States Agency for International Development. Officially, this is one of the first atrocious killings of Americans in Viet Nam. However, low-ranking American advisors in the provinces have reported that American military prisoners have <sup>Also</sup> been a trociously killed. One of these involved four American advisors captured by the Viet Cong when their district headq uarters in Phuoc Long province, northeast of Saigon, was over-run, <sup>LAST DECEMBER.</sup>

"Their bodies had been tortured and hacked to bits," one American advisor explained. "And then they were shot in the back of the head. It made me sick to hear about it."