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June 5, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: John H. Holdridge

SUBJECT: The Role of Communist Security Forces in South Vietnam

Thomas Karamessines, Deputy Director for Plans at CIA, has sent you a memorandum which discusses the role of Communist security forces in South Vietnam as an indicator of general enemy intentions (Tab A). Attached to the memo is a large package of pertinent documents, studies, and references.

The memo and enclosures include some indications that the Communists are preparing their public security elements - which thus far have been used mostly in direct support of the war effort - for various contingencies, including a cease-fire and a coalition government with or without Communist participation. Available evidence is fragmentary, however, and the memo states that further intelligence on the subject is needed, especially if impending changes in the role of the security forces are to be used as an indicator of general Communist intentions.

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Comment. The security forces are one of the most difficult intelligence targets in the entire Communist apparatus. Consequently, the chances are that we will not be able to gain the insight necessary to detect and interpret clearly definable changes in the functions of security forces in advance of other kinds of evidence of Communist intentions. Nevertheless, the information on security forces uncovered thus far does tend to confirm the fact that the Communists are preparing their overall apparatus in the South for various contingencies. Moreover, Mr. Karamessines' package contains some useful background information and serves as a status report on intelligence efforts in this area.

DIA review completed

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

21 MAY 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

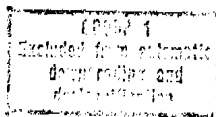
SUBJECT: The Role of the Communist Vietnamese
State Security Apparatus as a Possible
Indicator of Enemy Planning and Intentions

1. Since early 1969, a pattern of activity has developed in Indochina which appears to point up the role that the communist State Security apparatus may assume following either a cease-fire, a collapse of the Paris Peace Talks, or a complete withdrawal of American troops from Southeast Asia. From this pattern of activity we infer that the North Vietnamese communists have for some time been preparing their Public Security forces in South Viet-Nam for a major role in the subjugation of that country. Information from captured enemy personnel, captured documents, and other sources, gives support to this inference and indicates that such preparations began in the period just after the Tonkin Gulf incident.

2. The southern arm of the communist State Security apparatus is an organic part of the North Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security or Bo Cong-An. Its mission is to protect the Communist Party and its agencies in the South from penetration by Allied intelligence organizations, to control the populace within communist-held territory, and to prepare to exercise all public safety and secret police functions in territory not yet won by the communist regime. In support of its mission, the security apparatus directs an aggressive counterintelligence program primarily against the entire Allied intelligence and security structure in South Viet-Nam.

3. The present as well as projected role of the communist State Security Service differs hardly at all from

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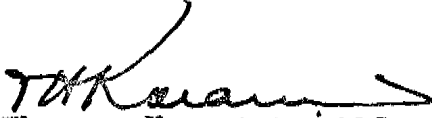


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the role one would expect a security service to assume in any communist dominated country, and will create a strong feeling of deja vu in the minds of persons familiar with the history of East Europe from 1945 to 1949. In each case, the Soviet Union had an established security apparatus already in operation in each country ready to step into the void left by the collapse of the established government. The communist takeover in South Viet-Nam is programmed to follow a similar pattern.

4. A dissemination containing the results of our research has been made available to the Intelligence Community. In light of the timeliness of the information concerning the role of the communist security apparatus, we have attached a copy for your information. (January 1970) Included with it is a package containing copies of the pertinent documents upon which it is based.

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Thomas Karamessines
Deputy Director for Plans

Attachments

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