Chapter IX

EVALUATION OF PRESENT RECORDS.

Recommendations for the establishment of a central record bureau for the police services must be based on an understanding of the present record systems now in use. Due to the limited amount of time available for the preparation of this report, it was not possible to conduct a thorough survey of all facets of the police records; however, some basic information was obtained which may be useful in developing further studies. This preliminary survey covered Saigon-Cholon municipal police records, and VBI records at Camp des Mares. Civil Guard records were not studied because of the current indefinite status of the Civil Guard.

It is quite inappropriate to criticize or compare the existing police records with the systems familiar to Western police officials. It is more important to study and understand the records now in use by the Viet-Nam law enforcement agencies, evaluate them in terms of efficiency and accuracy, and then offer assistance in those areas where upgrading of the records is called for. Therefore, it must be said that the present Viet-Nam police record systems are quite decentralized, with resulting inefficiency. However, certain specific forms appear to be adequate and can be utilized without major changes. Some forms or procedures may be eliminated, and a few totally new records should be installed.
The following general observations indicate overall impressions of the records, and suggest what plans may be followed for detailed work in this field.

Saigon-Cholon police records are under the direction of a secretary. Records at the police headquarters include a correspondence file, information about licensees, a mail office, personnel records, and limited case files on major crimes. Investigation and disposition of traffic cases are kept by the courts. Records of stolen property are kept at individual precinct stations. The director of police is provided with monthly reports, by precincts, which cover such items as number of guns confiscated, unlawful meetings, strikes, disturbances, menaces, homicides, kidnappings, coverts, assaults, blackmail, burglaries, robberies, narcotics violations, over-pricing, arson, traffic accidents, property damage, misdemeanors, and trials. About one week is required to process a request for information, or search for particular information. Arrest records and individual dossiers are kept at the Filippini Street office of VBI. Of the above records and files that were examined, the personnel records were most impressive.

The needs for renovation of the Saigon-Cholon police records can be summarized as follows: 1) establish a central record system which provides all of the necessary information for efficient police work; 2) install filing and searching systems which will reduce the amount of time needed for
processing routine police requests; 3) separate true criminal police records from the police services which are more civilian in nature.

The VBI records are somewhat more centralized than the Saigon-Cholon records; however, the same problems exist. Case reports from regional headquarters are sent to Saigon and copies distributed to interested bureaus. The VBI, like the Saigon-Cholon police, has no adequate record of lost, stolen and/or recovered property. The VBI must also depend upon the Filippini Street office for criminal history and arrest records. 2-3 days are required to obtain reports on arrested subjects from this office. There is no cooperation with the Civil Guard with regard to arrests and disposition of cases. The VBI is eventually notified of the disposition of Civil Guard cases by the court which handled the case.

Thus, it is apparent that the needs of the VBI record bureau are similar to those of the Saigon-Cholon police. It is interesting to note that the VBI also has installed a good personnel record system. It is also pointed out that the VBI does have the nucleus of a record and identification bureau as outlined in the Dymond Report; however, this bureau has not been integrated with the present systems in use.
Chapter X

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM

The foregoing chapters have presented a brief resume of some of the concepts of police record bureau organization and management. Identification and analysis of the problem must be accompanied by a suggested plan for the implementation of the program. The following points are arranged in order of importance, and may serve as a guide to the police advisors assigned to this project.

1. Authorization to implement the program;

   It is absolutely necessary to receive unrestricted approval from the Minister of Interior and his associates who direct the police services of Viet-Nam to embark upon a program of technical assistance in the police record area. This suggests that the responsible officials must have a clear understanding of the goals of the program and the manner in which it is to be carried out. A concise monograph outlining present conditions and the manner in which efficiency and accuracy can be improved is necessary for such a briefing.

2. Survey of existing records:

   Once approval for implementation of the program has been secured, a thorough study of existing records must be made. This should be done with the idea of
utilizing present forms and procedures wherever possible.

3. A master plan for the integration of police records from the various municipal police departments, VBI and Civil Guard can be prepared, once the foregoing survey has been completed. This plan must include recommendations for physical facilities, design, preparation and distribution of forms, filing equipment, budget programs, and personnel selection and training.

4. Model Record Bureau:

   It may be advantageous to set up a model record bureau, illustrating the basic principles of the central record bureau concept. The bureau could be used for training and demonstration purposes.

5. A training program for designated record bureau chiefs must be established to discuss thoroughly the principles of a central record bureau and to insure completed cooperation between the heads of the various police record bureaus.

6. Purchase orders for necessary equipment to be provided through American Aid funds must be prepared; however, it is recommended that none of this equipment be released until there is complete assurance that it will be used in a proper manner by competent personnel.

7. Training programs for record bureau employees must be instituted. This training in typing, filing, and office
management should be coordinated with the National Institute of Administration.