PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT IN VIET NAM
A STUDY OF VINH LONG PROVINCE

JASON L. FINKLE
and
TRÀN-VĂN-DẤNH

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIET NAM ADVISORY GROUP
and
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATION
SAIGON

Report No. 4
Local Administration Series

August, 1961
This map includes a reorganization and renaming of districts in May 1961. Vinh Long Province now has seven districts including Chau Thanh District in which Vinh Long City is located.
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT IN VIET NAM
A STUDY OF VINH LONG PROVINCE

Jason L. Finkle
and
Tran Van Dinh

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIET NAM ADVISORY GROUP
AND
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATION
SAIGON

August, 1961
DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the memory of Khun Van Ba,
the late Chief of Vinh Long province.
The present study was undertaken in an effort to remedy, in part, the lack of empirical data and scholarly studies on the problems and conduct of provincial government administration in Viet Nam. The project was modest in its conception; it was not intended to be a definitive study of provincial government and it was limited to only one of the 38 provinces in Viet Nam. It was hoped that by concentrating on a single province for an extended period of time, it would be possible to develop a methodology and a body of experience which would facilitate a more comprehensive study at a later date.

The methods employed by our group were intentionally kept uncomplicated. Basically, they were as follows: A group of research professors from the National Institute of Administration and the Michigan State University Advisory Group spent a period of time in Vinh Long province observing the procedures of government and administration in operation there. We divided into four small teams, each comprising one Vietnamese and one American professor. Each team selected an important administrator in provincial government on whom to focus its attention. The natural division of labor dictated that one team would concentrate on the province chief, another on a district chief, the third on a village chief, and the fourth team on the head of the smallest administrative unit in Viet Nam, the hamlet.

In carrying out their research efforts, members of the joint NIA-MSU3 team encountered one serious obstacle which should be related now since it reveals much about the problems of research as well as about
government and administration in the Republic of Viet Nam. In April, 1960, the research team made an advance trip to Vinh Long to inform provincial officials in detail of the purpose of the research project and to elicit their full cooperation. In May, the entire group spent seven full days with provincial officials. This time was devoted to observing the activities of the chiefs of province, district, village, and hamlet during every moment of their working day and sometimes into the evening. With the help of interpreters, countless interviews were conducted with other administrative officials in the province and with private individuals, ranging from those who might be considered among the power elite to the Vietnamese peasant working in his rice fields.

A third trip was made to Vinh Long province in June. By this time, a high level of rapport had been established among members of the NIA-MSUG research team and provincial officials. The province chief, the critical individual in the entire study, frankly and openly talked about the complexity of his job and the problems he faced on a day-to-day basis. One week after our latest discussion with him and his subordinates, and prior to the next visit by our group, the province chief made a routine inspection of an agroville under construction. On his return trip, within a few miles of the highway which led to the provincial capital of Vinh Long, his car encountered a road block mounted by Communist guerrillas. The province chief tried to elude the Viet Cong terrorists who had waited in ambush for him, but failed. He was killed by a single shot.

The purpose of relating the above episode is not to add a dramatic touch, but to explain why it was necessary to limit the scope of
this report to a single week in the life of some provincial officials. While we knew that a new province chief probably would introduce new techniques and procedures, we felt that this study, for which much valuable data already had been gathered, would still be relevant as a prototype of provincial administration.

No person is more instrumental in shaping provincial government character than the chief of province. While there are statutory guidelines and numerous restrictions and definitions which limit a province chief's power, there is at the same time tremendous latitude in which any chief can move to put his own stamp on the administration of his province. He may delegate much of his authority or retain all power within his own hands. He may select subordinates for their ability and competence or he may choose to rely upon those who are personally most loyal to him. To a large degree, he may even structure provincial administration to suit himself, notwithstanding the numerous precedents and established patterns already in existence. Inasmuch as he is not responsible to the people for his position, he may treat them autocratically or, if he is so inclined, he may deal with them as constituents upon whom his office depends and attempt to apply government policies in a way acceptable to them. There is room for the genius in the office of province chief and there is also room for the incompetent.

The chief of Vinh Long province, Khuu Van Ba, who was the focal point of this portion of the Vinh Long study, was exceptionally well trained for his position. Almost his entire life was spent as a public servant and he was scheduled to retire in 1961 at the age of
55. Mr. Ba was married and the father of four children. His religion was Catholic.

Mr. Ba was born in the southern part of Viet Nam and spent his entire career in that area. This is of importance as there are still strong regional ties in Viet Nam, and one of the ticklish problems faced by the government is the reluctance of Vietnamese from one region to be administered by Vietnamese from another. Mr. Ba was educated at the French-operated Chasseloup Laubat Lycee, one of the finest secondary schools in Viet Nam. He was graduated in 1925, the same year, he told us proudly, as the vice President of the Republic, Nguyen Ngoe Tho. Three years later he became a civil servant under the French. Mr. Ba's career was extremely variegated and involved diverse responsibilities. He began in Saigon as a Huyen 3rd grade, a rank he obtained in 1937 after taking a professional examination. Early in his career he served in Thu Dan Mot, now the province of Binh Duong, in a provincial government position of minor importance and later worked in administrative services in Gia Dinh province.

Eventually, under the French, he held a series of positions in the middle management level of provincial government in the southern provinces of Hon Quan (now Binh Long province), Rach Gia (now Kien Giang

---

1 At 55, civil servants in Viet Nam are entitled to pension and other benefits. To many observers this seems far too young for retirement, especially in the light of actuarial tables. On the other hand, the practice has served a useful purpose in Viet Nam in recent years by permitting the government to graciously rid itself of excess civil servants and quietly drop those who reach 55 without demonstrating any special competence. When the government desires to retain a civil servant who has passed the retirement age, it may do so by hiring him on a contract basis or even extending his employable age.
province), and Con Son (formerly the French prison island of Poulo Condor). At this stage of his career, he also worked four years in the province of Vinh Long, then returned to Rach Gia for a second period of service.

Mr. Ba's first opportunity to become a province chief came in 1953 when he was appointed chief of the province of Cap St. Jacques (now the district of Vung Tau). These were years of turmoil and political chaos in Viet Nam. The French had not completely relinquished their hold on the country and frequently employed religious and political sects to perform services on their behalf. The armed gangster sect called the Binh Xuyen was powerful in Cap St. Jacques (Vung Tau) and Mr. Ba was suspected of either being associated with it in some way or sympathetic to it. Consequently, the government felt it prudent to remove him from the most important position in the province. Mr. Ba said the government was uncertain of his affiliation and demonstrated this by appointing him deputy chief of Soc-Trang (now Ba-Xuyen province). Although this was technically a demotion, Mr. Ba was the de facto province chief because the appointed chief was a military officer whose time was fully occupied with military operations relative to the security of the area.

Mr. Ba apparently exonerated himself completely, for in January 1957, he was appointed chief of Vinh Long province. One year later he was promoted to the administrative rank of Doc Phu Su in recognition of his excellent performance in Vinh Long. After his death, just one year short of his scheduled date of retirement, Mr. Ba was awarded the Bao-quoc Huan-chuong, a medal reserved for those who contribute significantly to the protection of the country.
The first sections of this study include a discussion of the province chief in the structure of Vietnamese government. There are detailed descriptions of his legal responsibilities and a consideration of the evolving character of the job within the context of reforms that have been made in Vietnamese government in recent years. We have tried to show the province chief's relationship with the Presidency, the Regional Delegate, the Ministry of Interior, the Directorate Generals and the various technical services. These descriptions are impersonal and deal with the statutory and ex-officio bases of these relationships that exist in Vinh Long and elsewhere.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

MAP OF VINH LONG PROVINCE - Inside Cover

PREFACE 1

PART I
THE STRUCTURE OF FIELD RELATIONS IN VIET NAM 1

PART II
POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION 6

PART III
THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION 9
A. The President 10
B. The Government Delegate 12
C. The Department of Interior and Other Central Agencies 16
D. Relations with the Central Administration 20

PART IV
THE PROVINCE CHIEF AND THE TECHNICAL SERVICES 23

PART V
THE PROVINCE CHIEF AND HIS STAFF

Provincial Government Organization Chart 28
A. Deputy Chief of Province for Administration 29
B. Deputy Chief of Province for Internal Security 32
C. Provincial Government Bureaus 38
   1. Bureau of the Secretariat 39
   2. Bureau of Administrative Services 40
   3. Bureau of Correspondence 43
   4. Bureau of Political Affairs 44
   5. Bureau of Economic and Social Affairs 47
   6. Bureau of Communal Affairs 49
   7. Bureau of Military Affairs 51
   8. Bureau of Budget and Accounting 52
PART VI

THE PROVINCE CHIEF AT WORK
   A. The Province Chief as Security Commander  55
   B. The Province Chief as Engineer          64
   C. The Province Chief and Agriculture     69
   D. The Monthly Meetings                   73

APPENDIX

   A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR VILLAGE AND HAMLET
       OFFICIALS - A CASE STUDY     77
   B ORDINANCE No. 57-a                   88
   C CIRCULAR 115-a                       92
REFERENCES

Basic Documents Relating to Provincial Administration

Reorganization of Regional Administration

Ordinance No. 17, December 24, 1955
Circular No. 34/TTP/VP of December 28, 1955
Circular No. 17/TTP/VP of December 4, 1956

Administrative Decentralization on the Regional Level - 1949 to 1956

Ordinance No. 2, July 1, 1949
Ordinance No. 21, August 4, 1954 (Abolition of the region as a legal entity)
Ordinance No. 52, July 9, 1956

Transfer of Authority of Regional Delegates

Circular No. 46/PTT of April 22, 1957

Creating the Position of Deputy Province Chief for Security

Instruction No. 5MV, March 30, 1959.
PART I

THE STRUCTURE OF FIELD RELATIONS IN VIET NAM

The Republic of Viet Nam is a unitary state whose constitution provides only for the existence of a central government. It is divided, for administrative purposes, into 38 provinces which, in turn, are made up of districts, cantons, villages, and hamlets.\(^1\)

The only governmental units having the status of legal entities, other than the national government, are the 38 provinces and 2500 villages of Viet Nam.\(^2\)

The chief of Vinh Long province occupies a pivotal position in the pattern of government in Viet Nam. Like his thirty-seven fellow province chiefs, he heads an important unit of government which straddles the gulf between the central authorities in Saigon and the isolated villages, hamlets, and clusters of thatched huts which mark the countryside from Quang Tri in the north to An Kuyen in the south. Under the supervision of the province chief, subordinate administrators build roads and schools, assist in rural development projects, maintain police and security forces. In short, the province is the embodiment of government in Viet Nam and its policies have a direct impact on the

\(^1\) The only exceptions to this governmental pyramid are the municipalities of Hue, Da Nang, and Dalat, and the Prefecture of Saigon, all of which have corporate status comparable to that of a province.

\(^2\) In many districts, particularly those in central Viet Nam, the canton does not exist.
great majority of Vietnamese who reside outside the few urban centers of the country. To most Vietnamese, the quality of government in Viet Nam is measured by the successes and failures of provincial administration.

The importance of the province in present day Vietnamese government results from a pragmatic adjustment, supported by law, to Vietnam's geography, politics, and sociology. Notwithstanding the highly centralized formal structure of Vietnamese government, Viet Nam is a highly diversified country which defies excessive administration from the center. Not only are transportation and communication inadequate, but ethnic composition and cultural attitudes vary sharply among sections. The central government in Saigon, bowing to these conditions, has relied on provincial administrators to assume great responsibility in carrying out national policy at the local level.

Prior to 1956, Viet Nam was divided into four regions, each headed by a regional delegate. The province chief, instead of being directly responsible to the President, as he now is, was under the immediate supervision of the delegate for his region. In October 1956, two presidential decrees were issued abolishing this legal unit of government in Viet Nam and enhancing the powers of the province although the delegate was retained as an administrative entity with diminished power. The regions had been used by the French to promote sectional loyalty; their abolition was designed to encourage national unity. These decrees, Ordinance No. 57-A and Presidential Circular 115-A, designated the province chief as the representative of the central government in his province and spelled out in general terms his duties and authority. They
fall into six general categories:

1. The province chief is responsible for the enforcement of national laws within his province. In carrying out this duty, he has available to him the entire machinery of provincial government and has access to field services of national ministries as well as to military units stationed in or near the province. In executing national laws, the province chief has the statutory power to adapt them to local conditions. Most laws and regulations issued by central authorities recognize provincial variations and are phrased in general terms allowing some latitude for local interpretation.

2. The province chief has supervisory responsibility for the activities of all services conducting programs within his province, including those directly under provincial administration as well as local branches of national departments. This is an especially complex assignment. The province chief has direct and immediate control over the services attached to provincial headquarters; however, his authority is less direct over the field services of national departments. He is charged with responsibility for coordinating both types of activity and insuring that conflict and overlapping are avoided. He is obliged to render assistance to the field services of central government agencies and control their activities, an important point as much as they are not technically responsible to him but to their own departments. He relies upon his statutory authority to submit reports to the President and the central agencies in Saigon. He may also recommend the transfer of field service personnel not performing to his satisfaction.

---

1 See Appendix B
3. The province chief is responsible for the maintenance of order and security. This has come to be his most time-consuming job. His effectiveness as a province chief is often measured in terms of how well he commands the police and security forces within the province, all of whom are under his jurisdiction. In emergency cases, he may request troops from the commander of the military region in which his province is located. If he does this, he is obliged to report the basis for the request immediately to the Presidency.

4. The province chief is responsible for presiding over public ceremonies, which include national and local holidays, celebrations at the completion of a new community project, and visits by dignitaries of the central government.

5. The province chief is responsible for controlling the provincial budget and authorizing expenditures. He also serves as assistant authorizing officer for expenditures of national departments within the province.

6. The province chief is responsible for village administration. He is expected to select and assign members of village councils, guide and control their activities and supervise the village budget to see that funds are properly utilized. Because it is closest to the rural populace, the village is a critical unit in Vietnamese social organization. Poor administration or misuse of village funds can influence the loyalty of people in an entire locality. For these reasons, the province chief gives much attention to village administration. More immediate supervision is provided by district chiefs and canton chiefs who head subordinate levels of local government and are, in all respects, assistants
to the province chief. Vinh Long province has 81 villages.  

1 See "Local Administration in Viet Nam - The Number of Local Units" by Lloyd W. Woodruff, assisted by Nguyen Ngoc Yen, Michigan State University Advisory Group and National Institute of Administration, Saigon, November, 1960.
The National Revolutionary Movement is the dominant political party in the Republic of Viet Nam and the majority party in the National Assembly. Local branches are found in every province, district, and village throughout the country. In a nation torn apart by Communist subversion, the government relies on the NRM to carry its message to every level of Vietnamese society and to assure local compliance with government policy. From the government's standpoint, this use of the majority political party is justified on the grounds that NRM members are the staunchest supporters of the government, highly dedicated to its philosophy and purpose. The intimate relationship between government and party was both a help and hindrance to Province Chief Ba.

As a consequence of his position, he served as an advisor to the NRM in Vinh Long. He was also head of the Civil Servants League, which he considered an affiliate of the NRM. Mr. Ba was uncertain what his relationship with the party should be. For example, he said that the NRM took a keen interest in security matters but he was not sure whether he should work closely with the party in dealing with security or rely completely on official governmental machinery. He eventually concluded that it was necessary for him to work with the NRM in many of its activities or else face its opposition.

When Province Chief Ba arrived in Vinh Long, he learned through personal friends that the party in the province had complained because he had not energetically supported the local NRM and its activities.
He immediately went to Saigon to explain his actions to the president of the National Revolutionary Movement. After that, Mr. Ba's relationship with the party in Vinh Long improved and his behavior was no longer criticized.

The Civil Servants League, comprising the majority of civil servants in Vinh Long, cooperates closely with the NRM. Both organizations conduct political education programs in districts and villages and work harmoniously to generate loyalty to the government and a spirit of unity. Just before we began our study, a high ranking party official in Saigon suggested to the Civil Servants League in Vinh Long that it would be appropriate for government administrators to set an example for others by volunteering to construct a stretch of road in the province. The party official felt this would inspire local residents by demonstrating the willingness of civil servants to participate in national construction projects. Although only one kilometer of road was assigned to members of the League, the work was an addition to their regular duties as administrators and, in many cases, constituted an extremely difficult physical assignment. The construction was ultimately completed with many members of the League hiring local villagers to do the actual labor for them.

The province chief also had to contend with what he termed "interference by members of the National Assembly in provincial matters." Mr. Ba told us that deputies representing Vinh Long occasionally issued verbal instructions to him which he hesitated to follow. To protect himself, he reported these instructions to his "superiors" in Saigon to find out whether he should comply with them.
During our stay in the province, one of the Vinh Long assemblymen told Mr. Ba to convene a meeting of the NRM. He did so and at the beginning of the meeting, the deputy asked for a report on the security situation in the province. Mr. Ba demurred, saying he would answer specific questions about security but was not willing to give a general summary of the local situation. Subsequently, the group turned its attention to the main purpose of the meeting -- reorganization of the provincial executive committee of the party.

The relationship between Vietnamese provincial officials and members of the national legislative branch is a complex question and warrants further attention by students of government. If the National Assembly is to achieve maturity in the near future and play a more influential role in government, it is necessary for its members to become familiar with the problems of local administration. If provincial officials continue to view them as intruders, deputies will be denied the information necessary to their legislative function. Furthermore, National Assemblymen are elected and provincial officials are not. The future of representative government in Viet Nam is more closely tied to the destiny of the National Assembly than to provincial administration. Unless administrators in all echelons of government recognize the importance of the legislative branch and assist it in its infancy, a potentially vital institution may stagnate.
PART III

THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

No discussion of the province chief and provincial government is complete without a consideration of the role of the President of the Republic. The province chief derives his power directly from the Presidency and the only limits to his authority are those imposed by it. There are no elective bodies in the province, nor any clear statutory limitations on the province chief.

Article 3 of the Vietnamese Constitution designates the President as chief executive and specifically states that: "The President is vested with the leadership of the nation." Although Article 3 also states that there shall be separation of powers between the executive and legislative, nowhere in the Constitution is the "separation" defined or delineated. There are specific references to powers and responsibilities of the President, but references to the powers of the National Assembly are less clear and there is no mention of matters which are exclusively within the legislative domain.

The strong presidential system is a deliberate product of the Vietnamese Constitution. The province is only an administrative unit within the executive branch, created by the chief executive and operating under his jurisdiction.

The enormity of governing the activities of 38 province chiefs would challenge the resources of any executive, even if he had no other responsibilities. President Ngo Dinh Diem devotes much time to provincial affairs, yet he requires the active assistance of others and relies
on several agencies, all having limited authority in provincial matters. This pattern is by design rather than accident, enabling the President to receive information and reports from several perspectives and, at the same time, denying control of provincial administration to agencies other than the Presidency. It is only with the President's consent that any administrator or agency may issue instructions to the province chief. Consequently, the President, at least theoretically, is the recipient of vast amounts of data which enable him to issue policy directives to province chiefs based upon realistic knowledge of provincial conditions and problems. However, this also increases his executive burden immensely and makes him appear personally responsible for failures that occur in provincial government.

There are three main channels employed by the President in supervising the activities of province chiefs: (1) his own person and office; (2) the government delegates; and (3) the various executive departments and agencies, especially the Department of Interior.

A. The President

A glance at the President's monthly calendar reveals that hardly a week passes in which he doesn't make at least two inspection trips outside Saigon. Sometimes province chiefs are informed of these trips in advance and they make elaborate preparations. On other occasions, the President will arrive unannounced to examine and inspect rural development projects or investigate general conditions. During these trips, President Ngo Dinh Diem always discusses local issues with the province chiefs. Sometimes, on a trip to a provincial capital, he convenes chiefs of nearby provinces to talk with them and issue instructions
simultaneously. While the efficacy of these official trips as a means of learning about provincial problems may be questioned, there is no doubt that they fulfill the purpose of assuring province chiefs that the President is interested in activities within their purview. It may also give the rural population a sense of national identity to see the chief executive in its midst.

During our period of research in Vinh Long, we had little opportunity to observe directly the province chief's relationship with his superiors; therefore, we were compelled to rely on Mr. Ba's account of these relationships. He made it emphatically clear that he felt the presence of President Diem and estimated that in the preceding year the chief executive had been in Vinh Long approximately fifteen times.

When the President wishes to meet with province chiefs in the regions south of Saigon, he frequently selects Vinh Long as the gathering place. Generally, according to Mr. Ba, the President will use these occasions to issue instructions applicable to all provinces in the area. When the President wishes to issue specific instructions to a particular province chief, he will meet with him individually.

Province Chief Ba told us that there was an embarrassing aspect in this procedure of receiving instructions directly from the President. Inasmuch as the President is the highest ranking official in Viet Nam, no province chief is obliged to report or repeat presidential instructions to others. However, the province chief is, at the same time, responsible to other officials in the central government. There had been occasions, Mr. Ba pointed out, when the President gave directly to him detailed explanations on instructions issued by the Department of Interior, the regional delegate, or other high ranking officials.
Mr. Ba’s reaction to these situations was to inform his superiors immediately of his discussions with the President in an effort to lessen the chance of serious administrative conflict.

The province chief said that he tried to anticipate presidential policy by closely following the President’s public statements and writings. He cited the following example: In 1957, during the Tet holiday, the President made a public statement dealing with rural development in Viet Nam. Mr. Ba inferred from the statement that the President would soon initiate a broad program in this field and the province chief began to study and plan what could be done in Vinh Long province. A year later the President announced his rural development program.

Mr. Ba felt that he was better prepared for it because of his conscientious attempts to anticipate the directions in which the President would move.

B. The Government Delegate

Prior to October 24, 1956, the government delegate governed one of the four regions of Viet Nam, each comprising a number of provinces. He was the direct superior of the province chief, responsible for the services, security, and all affairs within his region. The abolition of the region as a legal unit of government had the effect of elevating the province chief in the hierarchy of field administration. However, it also left a serious vacuum in the administrative network of local government. Consequently, Ordinance 57-A, while abolishing the regions as legal entities, provided for the appointment of government delegates to serve as administrative agents of the President to help him execute his responsibilities concerning the provinces.
Government delegates are appointed by presidential decree and are responsible for a number of provinces. They represent the central government -- more particularly the President -- and are expected to make periodic reports, including recommendations, to him. They may also make recommendations on the coordination of provincial services and may oppose promotions for province chiefs. The government delegate carries out inspections, assists the President in his administrative responsibilities, and, upon presidential order, undertakes special investigations or missions. More specifically:

1. The government delegate, as inspector, has the duty of insuring the smooth operation of all public offices in the province. He may also deal with the departments of the central government. The delegate is required to attend a monthly meeting bringing together administrative agencies of the Presidency as well as the administrative and financial inspectors attached to the Presidency. He further supplements his knowledge of provincial affairs by reading reports from the province chiefs in his region.

2. As assistant to the chief executive, the delegate assures the faithful implementation of regulations, instructions, and programs of the central government. To enable the delegate to fulfill this broad function, the President may empower him to issue instructions directly to province chiefs.

3. In addition to these duties, the President may assign the delegate to special missions in the latter's region.

Ordinarily, a delegate is not empowered to issue orders directly to a province chief without special authorization from the President. An exception is an "emergency" condition, during which a delegate may
issue certain instructions to province chiefs if he reports his action
immediately to the President. According to Article 21 of Ordinance
57-A, the prior consent of the President is required before the govern-
ment delegate may meet with province chiefs to exchange ideas. Sim-
ilarly, presidential authorization is required for the delegate to meet
with police, security, and other administrative authorities in his re-
gion for the purpose of studying security problems. Only in "emergency"
cases is this restriction waived.

The stringent controls on the government delegate reflect the Pres-
ident's desire to prevent the re-emergence of regional challenges to his
authority. While our investigation into provincial government does not
reveal to what extent the delegate is inhibited by Circular 115-A, there
are strong indications that informal arrangements have evolved which
partially circumvent this decree. The delegate is not expected to
make frequent visits to the provinces, but he should give him sufficient latitude to carry out his duties unencumbered by
 Formal procedures. It is understood the delegate has neither the authority nor the

The government delegate for the southwest region has his headquar-
ters in Can Tho, 32 kilometers southwest of Vinh Long city. At the time
of our study, he was inspecting Vinh Long province two, three, or even
four times a week. The delegate, according to the province chief, might
look into the whole range of provincial affairs although he had given
particular emphasis to security matters and taken the keenest interest
in them.

Province Chief Ba described the delegate as a "coordinator" between
the province chief and the Ministry of Interior, the Presidency, the
Ministry of Army Administration and various officials in Saigon. He admitted

1 According to Arreté No. 98 Q.P. of April 13, 1961, the Military Regions
were dissolved and Tactical Zones established. Vinh Long, formerly
in the Fifth Military Region, now is under the 3rd Tactical Zone.
that the delegate issued instructions but said that they usually were from the President or the Secretary of Interior. At the same time, the delegate reported the activities of Vinh Long Province to the Presidency and, in the name of the President, urged the province chief to act. Mr. Ba said the delegate often prodded, urged, and pushed him to advance certain programs which the delegate felt were not moving satisfactorily. There were times when Mr. Ba did not know whether this pressure originated with the delegate or came from the President.

The moderate problems that Province Chief Ba had with the delegate were offset by the advantages gained. Because the delegate was well informed about security in the province, he was in an excellent position to act as intermediary between the province chief and the commander of the Fifth Military Region, a service of great importance. The military commander is ultimately responsible for military and security affairs within his region and military affairs have been given the highest priority in Viet Nam. Without the delegate as intermediary, civil affairs could be relegated to a distinctly secondary position and the influence of the military commander could pervade all the provinces of his region. Mr. Ba did not say that this was the case, although he acknowledged it as a possibility.

The kind of assistance which the delegate is sometimes able to render is illustrated by the following situation which we observed in Vinh Long. The deputy chief of province reported to the chief on the construction of a new stadium being built in the provincial capital. The deputy said that progress was satisfactory except that he needed more vehicles to carry earth. He pointed out that this was urgent if the stadium was to be finished before the rainy season set in. The
province chief then called the regional delegate in Can Tho to ask him to obtain military trucks from the Fifth Military Region. The delegate agreed to make the request of the Region commander.

The delegate is also asked to intervene in other matters, especially those involving departments in Saigon. Mr. Ba said he contacted the delegate when appropriations were not sufficient, when personnel needs arose, or when the province required other types of support. He felt that the support of the delegate made his case stronger as the delegate, in the eyes of Saigon, possessed higher status and therefore had a more equitable relationship with the departments in the capital. In addition, the small number of men holding the cadre rank of doc phu su—which both the delegate of the Southwest region and Province Chief Ba did—have a fraternal spirit or, in Mr. Ba’s words, an esprit de corps. Mr. Ba said that his relationship with the delegate was further aided by the fact that the delegate had a slightly lower grade than he did within the same cadre rank. This, plus the fact that the province chief was older than the delegate, a point of some importance in Viet Nam, gave Mr. Ba an advantage and he felt that these factors were of more than little importance in his ability to elicit the assistance or intervention of the delegate.

C. The Department of Interior and Other Central Agencies

Almost all executive agencies have programs under their supervision which reach into the provinces; consequently, it is essential that these ministries have some means of maintaining direct contact with the province chief. Although the province chief is responsible for the various technical services in his province, questions frequently arise which
require him to confer with the central office of a service.

Presidential Decree 115-A stipulates that the province chief is to be consulted and allowed to make suggestions on the planning or carrying out of projects in, or related to, his province. He may communicate with executive agencies through official reports or correspondence, making certain that a copy of each report is sent to the regional delegate's office. When necessary, the province chief may contact departmental officials on a direct basis; however, "for important affairs, he must receive directives first from the Presidency." (115-A)

In some cases, province chiefs may receive directives from various departments, but these must be signed by the Secretary of State with copies sent to the Presidency and the regional delegate's office (115-A).

It is apparent that the lines of authority established by the President are designed to prevent an executive department from exercising too much control over provincial administration. The President reserves the responsibility for supervising provincial administration and he has circumscribed the powers of executive department officials to the extent that they have little opportunity to interfere with any direct command.

For administrative purposes, province chiefs are members of the Department of Interior. Even military officers serving as province chiefs are considered Interior employees as are other personnel at provincial headquarters. Consequently, this Department is involved in provincial affairs to a greater extent than other ministries and provincial officials look to it for guidance. Even this modest statement must be qualified by two facts: (1) Interior plays an active role only to the extent that the President permits; and (2) research elsewhere in the country indicates that the Department of Interior plays a greater
role in the provinces south of Saigon than those in central Viet Nam.

Appointed by the President and subject to all directives emanating from him, the province chief still views himself as an important public servant within the Department of Interior. The reasons for his identification with the Department are not hard to discern. Aside from the fact that it has a great degree of legal authority over him, the province chief finds the Department a convenient "buffer" between him and the Presidency. By keeping the Department constantly informed and looking to it for detailed directives, the province chief aligns himself with the one organization which is mainly concerned with provincial affairs. Without the Department, the province chief would stand alone in dealings with the Presidency. From the perspective of a single province chief, the Presidency is an awesome institution dedicated to initiating vast programs. Interior, seen from the same perspective, puts these programs into an order of priorities and gives the province chief guidance on the extent and rapidity of implementation.

Province Chief Ba informed us that there was an extremely active two-way correspondence between Interior and himself. Not only did he keep the Department fully and currently informed of all of his activities and problems, but he received about twenty items of correspondence from it daily, many of which contained personal instructions. Mr. Ba frequently met, formally and informally, with personnel from the Department of Interior. He told us that whenever he went to Saigon (where his children attend school), he visited the Department. Sometimes he confined himself to discussions with various bureau chiefs and occasionally he conferred with the Secretary.
Once a month Mr. Ba and other province chiefs in the area met with the Secretary of Interior on a more formal basis. These meetings were not rigidly set in advance as to time or location, sometimes being held in the Department in Saigon and sometimes in one of the southwest region provincial capitals. There are 12 provinces in the southwest and an informal system of rotating meetings among them is in effect. Mr. Ba never met with all of the 38 province chiefs in Viet Nam.

The meetings provide an important opportunity for province chiefs to discuss with the Secretary of Interior general problems and needs that are often common to all provinces of a particular region. The Secretary often uses these meetings to issue instructions to province chiefs and, on occasion, makes decisions about matters that have arisen during the discussion. When he does make such a decision affecting a province, he follows it up with written orders.

The Department of Interior is better informed than other agencies about the complexity of provincial government. In spite of this and Mr. Ba's close contact with it, he attributed to the Department of Interior many of the bureaucratic syndromes that he felt were present in all agencies in the capital. He said that the Department in Saigon had a great many employees who were well organized and had much time to conceive of programs and immerse themselves in the details of them. He complained that they issued far too many instructions to him, most of them in writing, and that he did not have sufficient personnel in his province to do justice to these instructions. Mr. Ba's implication was clear: he maintained that provincial government in Vinh Long was over burdened by paper work and required to carry out a multitude of instructions which had originated with people in Saigon who were not
sufficiently sympathetic to the limited resources in Vinh Long.

We asked the province chief how this situation could arise if he had such frequent contact with the Department of Interior. Mr. Ba acknowledged that there were abundant avenues of communication but that he mainly reported to the Department and communicated with it on details of programs that had already been decided upon. He asserted that he did not feel the Department consulted him sufficiently when making important decisions relative to his province. He explained that he felt that the basic decisions were made by the Presidency and not the Department; therefore, it would be of little use for the Department to attempt to bring him into this decision-making process. The Presidency did not confer with him about these decisions and there was little opportunity to affect their substance before they were concluded and sent to Interior. The job of the Secretary of Interior, as Mr. Ba saw it, was to fill in the details of fundamental presidential decisions. There was no opportunity for the Secretary to bring the province chiefs in because the Secretary was not a participant -- or only a peripheral participant -- in the decision-making process. Whereas Mr. Ba may have influenced actions taken by Interior, he had not been given a sense of participation in the formulation of big programs at the provincial level which would have enabled him to share in their modification or express his opinion of them.

D. Relations With The Central Administration

The province chief, his subordinates, and local officials in other provinces in Viet Nam have consistently maintained that there is a need
for a reappraisal and reorganization of central-local government relations. This is a common attitude among local government officials throughout the world. They tend to feel that the problems of a particular community are not properly appreciated by higher level administrators in the central government. Beyond this inherent sentiment though, there was a factual basis to the argument of the province chief of Vinh Long. Through observation and interviews, we learned that many of his administrative difficulties resulted as much from deficiencies in central-local relations as from the substance of the problems themselves. Mr. Ba felt that provincial administration was overburdened by paper work and instructions emanating from Saigon; he felt too many programs were conceived by departments of the central government without consideration of the ability of the province to absorb these programs. He stated that central agencies failed to establish reasonable priorities in the programs they wanted him to implement; that the central government initiated too many "crash programs" which had to be completed in an unreasonable short period of time. His gravest complaint was that central government agencies failed to consult provincial officials on a continuing, regular basis so that the latter could affect policy before, and not after, decisions were made.

The province chief related that there had been occasions when he had received three different sets of instructions from three different agencies on the same subject. In the month prior to our visit, he said, divergent instructions had been conveyed to him by the regional delegate and the Department of Interior concerning a training program to be instituted in Vinh Long. (See Appendix I) Although the province chief was under no obligation to reveal instructions he received from the
President, he felt it was necessary to report them to those concerned in order to avoid embarrassment.

Mr. Ba insisted that sounder policies could be developed if they were formulated in close cooperation with province chiefs. He readily admitted that central direction was necessary to maintain common standards and encourage uniform development. He said that maintenance of these standards was entirely consistent with the participation of province chiefs in decision-making councils, a practice which would contribute to the level of information of Saigon administrators and also permit them to take into account unique conditions in various regions and provinces. As an example, Mr. Ba cited the recent instructions he had received from the Directorate General of Youth asking him to recruit young men from Vinh Long to contribute their labor to the construction of agrovilles in neighboring Kien Hoa province. "These are dangerous instructions," Mr. Ba said. "A recruitment of voluntary labor is a very sensitive issue which can explode to our detriment if we send young men from Vinh Long to another province." He was firmly committed to the idea that carrying out these orders would be detrimental to the morale of youth in his province. When asked if he would protest or make his objections known to his superiors, Mr. Ba answered affirmatively, but added that he believed the Directorate General of Youth in Saigon would feel that he, as province chief, did not fully appreciate the larger aspects of Viet Nam's problems.

Mr. Ba added that he was not certain that even the Secretary of Interior had a great voice in the creation of policy. He felt that decision making was so highly centralized that secretaries of state could not shape new policy but only make minor modifications in that which already existed.
PART IV

THE PROVINCE CHIEF AND THE TECHNICAL SERVICES

The relationship between the province chiefs in Viet Nam and technical representatives of the various departments of state in Saigon is an area where further investigation is needed with a view to possible reorganization. Discussions with numerous field representatives of the Saigon ministries indicate that many of them feel they are better qualified to perform and understand the operations of their respective services than are the province chiefs. They said that province chiefs have frequently issued substantive instructions to field representatives rather than confining themselves to overall coordination and assistance. Although these remarks did not necessarily pertain to Vinh Long and Province Chief Ba, several field representatives made the general complaint that their entire programs were handicapped by actions of province chiefs who did not appreciate the technical problems involved in the work of the Department of Health, the Department of Public Works and others.

In defense of the province chiefs, it must be said that no provincial administrator can be expected to have a firm grasp of the technicalities of projects under way in his province. Actually, the province chief is not supposed to involve himself in the detailed activities of central government departments. His responsibility is limited to broad surveillance, assistance, coordination, and the kind of cooperation that will facilitate the work of the technical services. However, it is easy to see how, in practice, a province chief can overstep these vague limits on his authority and directly intervene in the provincial
activities of a technical service. This is especially true when a province chief feels, as did Mr. Ba, that the quality of work of some representatives of central government departments is questionable. Although machinery exists to deal with such problems through the regional government delegate, or even through the central departments in Saigon, the procedures appear to a province chief to be time consuming and often difficult. Consequently, rather than bring the issue to a higher level, a province chief often will respond to this situation by assuming greater control over the activities of the technical services in his province.

Mr. Ba said that he had more contact with representatives of the Department of Public Works than those of any other technical service. The difficulties he had with Public Works illustrate those that existed on occasion in his relationship with other departments. The province chief explained that construction and maintenance of inter-provincial highways is the responsibility of the Public Works Department and is paid for out of its budget. However, minor roads (intra-provincial roads) are the province chief's responsibility. When Mr. Ba wanted a road built within Vinh Long, he would submit his recommendation to the Public Works Department and its technicians would design the project. Costs were paid out of the provincial budget. Province Chief Ba complained about the difficulties resulting from the fact that two different budgets were involved in the procedure of contracting and maintaining roads and bridges in the province.

On another occasion we observed the province chief discussing road and bridge construction with a Department engineer. Mr. Ba spoke with expert knowledge and made specific recommendations to the engineer.
recommendations based on recent inspection trips within the province. In addition to several technical suggestions, Mr. Ba issued certain administrative instructions which revealed the sort of problems and conflicts existing within and between government organizations. He made it clear that he would be the one to make the final decision on the priority of virgin road construction in each of the six districts of Vinh Long. He told the engineer that unless he, the province chief, made this decision, each district chief would attempt to induce the technical service to construct bridges and roads in his particular district. Mr. Ba also felt he was better qualified than the engineer to decide priority in road building because he was familiar with all of the districts and roads in the province.
PART V

THE PROVINCE CHIEF AND HIS STAFF

Government, even in highly developed states, rarely follows in practice the precise word and letter of its written constitution, statutes, and codes. In a newly independent and underdeveloped country such as Viet Nam, the disparity is more apparent than usual. Deviation from formal procedures exists at all levels of Vietnamese government. In Vinh Long province we found that the neat lines of administrative structure and authority were evident mainly on wall charts; in practice, the province chief employed his staff and subordinates to "put out fires." The distinction between line and staff agencies became blurred as the province chief assigned administrators to whatever tasks he felt they could perform, often ignoring the fact that such moves created new administrative problems.

It is not difficult to discern the reasons which impelled Mr. Ba to act in this way. He preferred administrative conflict and confusion to endangering the achievement of policy goals. He did not have an adequate number of qualified personnel and many civil servants were occupying positions demanding abilities which they did not possess. In Mr. Ba's own words, "It is easier to reassign tasks informally than reform the entire civil service system or wait for qualified administrators to be sent to Vinh Long." Much of the administrative difficulty one might have expected as a result of these procedures was smoothed over by the quality of Mr. Ba's leadership. He knew his job well and he displayed intimate familiarity with the administrative and substantive problems of most officials. Moreover, almost all provincial officials told us that
they were free to speak with him on an informal basis about their work and that he would listen to their suggestions. The willingness of the province chief to consult his subordinates prior to a decision exacted from them a loyalty to the decision, even when they were not in full accord with it.

Formal organizational structure placed three administrative networks under the province chief. First, he was completely responsible for local government and all officials employed by the province and by the districts, cantons, villages, and hamlets in it. Second, he was accountable for security in the province and was, in effect, commanding officer of the various military, police, and village organizations engaged in security activities. Third, he had limited responsibility for all technical service programs and personnel in Vinh Long, insuring that when the field office of a central government department undertook a project, it was supported with all the provincial administrative resources available.

The exact number of deputy chiefs and bureaus varies from province to province, but the functions, lines of authority, and problems encountered in Vinh Long are common to most provinces, especially those in the Mekong Delta. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to an examination of the work performed by the two deputies for administration and security; the four official bureaus: (1) economic and social affairs, (2) budget and accounting, (3) general administration, and (4) the secretariat; and the four unofficial bureaus: (1) correspondence, (2) political affairs, (3) communal affairs, and (4) military affairs.
NOTE: Some time after the MIA/ASIS study, Vinh Long province was reorganized into seven districts in addition to the urban district of Vinh Long city. See map on inside cover.

Republic of Viet-Nam
A. Deputy Chief of Province for Administration

Except in matters pertaining to security, the right hand of the province chief is his deputy for administration. The nature of this position depends entirely upon the province chief. Mr. Ba chose to use his deputy extensively, both for important matters and for relieving himself of the tremendous amount of paper work which seems characteristic of all levels of Vietnamese administration.

The deputy for administration occupied an office adjoining that of the province chief. A typist was occasionally at work there. The most impressive aspect of the office was the number of folders containing papers which the deputy had to examine and sign. The man spoke fluent French and some English and had been trained at the National Institute of Administration during its early years of operation.

The deputy seemed to appreciate the fact that the tedious and routine tasks he performed enabled the province chief to devote himself to more critical issues. Despite the burdensome, and often boring nature of his work, he gave the impression that he was exceptionally conscientious and dedicated to his job. During the many hours we spent in the deputy's presence throughout the week in Vinh Long, he never ceased signing papers. He estimated that he read and signed somewhere between 500 and 1000 documents, letters, and reports each day.

Every 20 or 30 minutes a messenger would enter the office, hand the deputy a file of papers to be signed, pick up a completed file and take it elsewhere in the labyrinth of provincial paperwork.

It was impossible, and it would be presumptuous for a team of research observers, to attempt to read the material the deputy was pursuing and signing. Therefore, we adopted the technique of periodically
asking him to tell us the precise nature of the document he had before him. In this way, we obtained a fair sample of the types of issues and documents that required the deputy's attention and signature. Several of these spot checks produced examples which illustrate the kind of paper work involved in provincial government, as well as the types of activities in which the government has a hand.

During one morning visit, when asked about a document before him, the deputy answered that it was an application for the transfer of a tomb from one location to another. This application had first arrived in the Bureau of Correspondence which referred it to the deputy chief for administration. The deputy reviewed the application, then sent it to a doctor in the Health Service. When asked what would happen, the deputy replied that the doctor would review the request from the standpoint of health and send it back to him. If the doctor approved the transfer, the deputy would return it to the Correspondence Bureau which would, in turn, forward the approval to the individual concerned. The deputy indicated that the applicant would have his final response in about three days.

During another morning visit, the deputy was studying an order from the Department of Interior. It related to the establishment of training courses in the provinces of the Southwestern region designed for future village council members and hamlet chiefs. The deputy said the training course had been previously discussed, that the Department of Interior had adopted the idea and now had issued the detailed instructions. He said that it eventually would involve a great deal of work for him and had a high priority in provincial headquarters. On several other occasions we found him reading material relative to this training
course. (The course will be discussed at greater length in a case study which is attached to this report as Appendix A.)

One afternoon, the deputy was reviewing the contents of a thick folder containing applications from teachers who desired to leave the province for their summer vacations. For example, one teacher requested permission to go to Nha Trang to visit his family between April 4 and June 1. Generally, the deputy said, these applications are approved. An exception, he explained, would be a teacher who had not behaved "correctly" and, as a disciplinary measure, is refused permission to leave the province on vacation. We learned from other sources in the province that this type of permit is not confined to teachers. When any citizen or government official in Vinh Long wishes to leave the province on an extended trip or to move from the province permanently, he must apply to provincial headquarters for a permit. Further, if a villager desires to leave his village for more than one or two days, he must receive permission from the village council.

Despite the enormous amount of paper work handled by the deputy, it would be erroneous to assume that his job was confined to this tedious task. In many respects, it would not be inaccurate to define him as the province chief's alter ego. No man in the entire province had as much access to the chief as this deputy. Further, our observations indicated that the deputy's relationship with the province chief was extremely informal, friendly, and cooperative. Whenever he desired to discuss any issue with the chief, he was free to do so. For example, one morning we noted that the deputy saw the chief five times before 11:00 a.m. This was not always the case because the latter spent a great deal of his time traveling throughout the province on inspection trips.
Among the reports delivered to the province chief by the deputy on a Monday morning was one containing a summary of events which occurred in the province on the previous day. It may be difficult to appreciate the reason for reporting matters of this sort to the province chief, but it must be remembered that Vinh Long, in the heart of the delta, was and is under intense pressure from the Viet Cong. The reports also reflected the province chief's concern for all levels of activity within his jurisdiction. The deputy also informed the chief of the progress in construction of a sports stadium, the site of which the deputy had visited earlier in the day.

B. Deputy Chief of Province for Internal Security

The position of deputy for internal security was created by presidential order on March 30, 1959. Although all provinces in Viet Nam do not yet have a deputy chief for security affairs, the legal basis for the position exists and indications are that it will be filled according to the needs in each province. It is likely that where the province chief is a military officer, the deputy for security will merely act as a military adjutant to the chief. However, in provinces such as Vinh Long, one of the few provinces in the south that had a civilian chief as late as June, 1960, it is more likely that the deputy will assume all of the security functions, but work in close collaboration with the province chief.

Despite the importance of security throughout Viet Nam, the presidential order makes clear, in the very first paragraph, that the

---

1 No. 3/NV of March 30, 1959.
military man occupying the position of deputy for internal security is not to usurp the functions of the province chief. He is merely to be the chief's subordinate, albeit a subordinate with extensive powers in the area of security. Presidential order No. 3/NV reads in full:

INSTRUCTIONS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC of VIET NAM

In provinces where the security situation requires, there will be a deputy chief of province for internal security affairs to assist the chief of province in the field of security matters.

The deputy chief of province for internal security affairs will carry out his duties according to the instructions of the province chief and under the responsibility of the province chief.

I. Responsibilities of the deputy chief of province for security

A. With regard to political matters:
The deputy chief of province for internal security affairs has to follow up and study the political situation in order to suggest possible means to the province chief. He has to conduct the political education program in the province, and is responsible for matters within the political field, except the matters the province chief would like to reserve for himself.

B. With regard to security matters:
The deputy chief of province for internal security affairs has to elaborate the pacification plan and program within the security limit, to concentrate reports and develop information. He has at his disposal the use of police, sureté, civil guard, and the village self-defense forces.

C. With regard to military matters:
He is in charge of the preparation and the command of police operations within the province. As commander of the military agency, the deputy chief of province for internal security affairs is responsible to the military district chief for military matters relative to the military agency.

D. With regard to special functions:
The deputy chief of province for internal security affairs may receive orders and delegation from the
chief of province to assume some special missions. He has to receive advice from the province chief with respect to administrative affairs.

II. Relationship between the deputy chief of province and the military district:
He is authorized to have contact with the military district to coordinate operations, to work out the plan and the program of pacification. He has to report to the province chief the instructions he receives from the military chief and the province chief will discuss these instructions again with the military district chief.

Signed by the President

The instructions issued by the President were not designed to downgrade the province chief; rather, they were clearly intended to provide him with an able subordinate to help him deal with the most critical problem in Viet Nam -- security. Aside from his specified responsibility for military matters, the deputy chief for security is subordinate to, and under the direction of, the province chief.

Under ideal circumstances, the deputy chief for security fills a void in the structure of Vietnamese government. Generally, it has been contended that the various defense, police, and security agencies, especially those in the provinces, lack coordination and the efficiency that accompanies it. It has been pointed out that the military, the police, the sureté, the civil guard, and the village self-defense forces overlap in their functions and, at the same time, leave important problems unattended to because of this lack of overall coordination. The appointment of a deputy chief for internal security may remedy this serious administrative deficiency. Certainly the President’s instructions seemed designed to do so, especially the provision that says the
military officer who serves as security deputy chief must coordinate his activities with the military district in which the province is located.

One may question the advisability of delegating to the deputy for security the responsibility for a "political education program in the province." The assignment of this function to the deputy signifies a failure to distinguish between military matters and political education. There is no assurance that a capable military man, who might be the most suitable appointee as deputy, will also have the political sophistication and awareness of psychological techniques to conduct "political education." However, in the President's instructions there appears to be an escape clause: by stating that the province chief may reserve to himself those matters in the political field that he chooses, the President allows for the fact that the province chief may wish to utilize his deputy solely in the area of military security and not in political affairs. Similarly, under Paragraph B, the instructions say the deputy is to be advised by the province chief as to his functions in the area of administrative affairs.

There was good evidence that the arrangement in Vinh Long between the province chief and his deputy for security had worked out well. Although the new deputy had served in Vinh Long for only 1 1/2 months prior to this study, he and the province chief had established a congenial relationship, but one in which the chief was unquestionably in control of provincial affairs. The deputy had willingly accepted a secondary role and all indications were that his activities were coordinated with those of the province chief in such a way that he looked to the chief for instructions. The only evidence of dissatisfaction
came from the head of the political bureau who subtly let it be known that he did not favor an arrangement in which he no longer reported directly to the province chief but was placed immediately under the new deputy. In fact, he said that he had continued to report directly to the province chief. This, however, seems to be a normal reaction in any situation where a new individual is placed between the head of an administrative organization and a high ranking subordinate.

The deputy for security had been in the army for eight years, the last four as a major. A graduate of the Dalat Military Academy, he served in the Infantry during the Indochina war and prior to his appointment as security deputy, he was an inspector for the 5th Military Region. He said that before the creation of the new deputy position in Vinh Long, security matters were primarily the responsibility of the chief of the Military Affairs Bureau and the Civil Guard (Tao An). The new position necessitated a reorganization of provincial headquarters to allow the deputy to manage all security problems within the province. The major said that in some provinces, deputy chiefs had been appointed and at work for as long as a year.

Another effect of the reorganization of security affairs within the province was to make the commander of the civil guard responsible to the deputy chief for security. Under this arrangement, the deputy was actually in charge of security, tactics, and operations of the civil guard. The commander became, in effect, the deputy chief's administrative officer for civil guard matters. Thus, the deputy chief for security had under his supervision the military bureau in the provincial headquarters, the military organization in the province, the Sureté, the police, and the village self-defense corps. One civil guard company is
assigned to each of the six districts in the province.

In addition to closely coordinating security affairs in the province, the deputy chief also acted as a liaison officer with other agencies in the Vietnamese government, reporting to them and serving as an important source of information. (As provided in the President's instructions, the deputy reported directly to the chief of the 5th Military Region, which includes Vinh Long province.) To do this, the deputy chief prepared a detailed report on security matters in the province and sent copies to the chief of the 5th Military Region and the Department of Interior. The latter forwarded one copy to the Presidency.

These reports were also used by the deputy chief to keep his own subordinates in the province informed. For example, he reported relevant contents to the head of the Bureau of Political Affairs, keeping that agency informed of problems as he viewed them and steps he had taken to meet them.

The Department of Interior is responsible for the civil guard as well as for the self-defense corps and the deputy chief reported the activities of these two distinct units to appropriate sections within the Department.

At the time of this study, the reports were actually written by the deputy chief's assistant and reviewed by the deputy. He then submitted them to the chief of province for signature. However, when the chief was not available, the deputy signed and sent them out himself.

There are many possible areas, according to my own observation, where conflict could exist between the chief and his security deputy. For example, it is not at all uncommon for military officers to be district chiefs. The deputy for security, also an officer, might be