

PACIFIC COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

CINCPAC File
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Ser 0050
11 FEB 1956

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From: Commander in Chief Pacific
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Release of Intelligence; request for

Ref: (a) Report of the ANZUS Military Representatives, Melbourne,
January 1956

Encl: (1) Indigenous Dissident Forces, Appendix to ANZUS Position Paper

1. The reference established a requirement for the United States to prepare a position paper for presentation at the next ANZUS Military Representatives Meeting, Pearl Harbor, March 1956.
2. Enclosure (1) has been prepared as an appendix to the United States Position Paper, as such it will be released to the ANZUS Nations.
3. It is anticipated that there will be a requirement for release of this same intelligence to the SEATO Nations in the near future.
4. It is requested that CINCPAC be authorized to release enclosure (1). If simultaneous release authority to ANZUS and SEATO Nations can not be obtained it is requested that the release to ANZUS Nations be given first priority. ANZUS release authority is requested as soon as possible but not later than 19 March 1956.

J. B. Frankel
J. B. FRANKEL
Assistant Chief of Staff
for Intelligence

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NAVY DEPARTMENT
OPNAV CENTRAL MAIL ROOM
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2. Federation of Malaya and Colony of Singapore

The Malayan Communists have been able to maintain an armed force of about 3,500 to 5,000 in the field although considerably reduced in effectiveness of their guerrilla and terrorist activity by British and Commonwealth military

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SECRETINDIGENOUS DISSIDENT FORCES1. Philippines

The People's Liberation Army (HMP-HUKS) is the military arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CCP), a generally indigenous Communist effort. Prior to 1955, there was no cooperation between the CCP and the Chinese Communist Party of the Philippines (CCPP), a party generally organized by local Chinese and closely coordinated with the Chinese Communists. Lately however, increasing indications point to these two Communist parties making efforts to cooperate and evolve a jointly applicable modus operandi against the considerable strength of the government's anti-Communist campaign. The Huk situation has been considered fairly well-in-hand with only die-hards remaining active, limiting the territorial extent of their military operations to northeastern Luzon and the vicinity of Manila. Their primary efforts at this time appear to be in the political field where they have been active, aside from occasional small raids and ambushes. Recent reports indicate that the HUKS are becoming more closely aligned with the CCPP and may be able to obtain some badly needed logistical assistance, particularly of a military nature, through them. At present the estimated strength of the HUKS is 1,245. These reduced forces at present retain only a capability for staging isolated raids in remote places, but they no longer possess their former capability of widespread, simultaneous dissident activity. HUK strength has now reached its lowest level since the granting of Philippine independence and the November 1955 elections saw very little HUK activity despite the belief that they might seriously impair the conduct of the elections by harassing voters and polling places. The current Communist strategy in the Philippines appears to be one of subversion against the government rather than active military dissidence against the Philippine government and its armed forces. It is not known at present whether or not the particularly adverse logistical situation of the HUKS is an important factor contributing to their present relatively low strength, although Philippine military and government administrative activity is obviously the primary factor.

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operations. Recruitment for the so-called Malayan Races Liberation Army is seemingly limited by an apparent shortage of arms and military supplies rather than difficulty in finding volunteers. At this time, the Malayan Communist Party military effort is largely concentrated on maintaining a hard-core force awaiting a turn of events in Southeast Asia more favorable to them when they will again resume more aggressive operations of a military character. The greater part of the terrorist force now consists of men who have been in the jungle for several years, seasoned in jungle life and warfare, long subjected to Communist indoctrination and determined to see the thing through. Most of the weaklings and waverers have already been eliminated. Despite their apparent need to conserve arms and ammunition and other logistical requirements, there is no sign of any general cracking of the morale. They are still able in certain states, notable Johore, Perak and Legri Sembilan to take aggressive action, and they do so whenever they see an exposed target. Concentrating in jungle areas, their complete destruction will be a long process. Recent reports indicate that the Communists lately may be putting more emphasis on subversive rather than military terrorist operations although the threat of the latter was frequently used as a means of obtaining much needed revenue for support of the military force and other party activities from local sources. An amnesty offer requiring demobilization of the military force was recently not accepted.

3. Indonesia

The Communist Party of about 200,000 in Indonesia is a long established political party which developed within the context of Indonesian nationalism. Their policy of generally avoiding serious political criticism of the government and participating in it has enabled them to achieve the freedom to organize without government interference. The Indonesian Veterans Association (PERBEPSI) is a generally conceded to be under Communist domination and it has been reported that possibly as many as 10,000 have been covertly armed. The Indonesian Trade Union Federation is one of the major Communist political satellites. Both these organizations are probably so controlled and organized by the Communists so as to provide a nucleus and cadres for a Communist dissident military force if considered necessary by the Indonesian Communists.

The Darul Islam, a Moslem group, is the primary active dissident military force. There are a total of about 10,000, of which 5,000 are armed on the

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island of Java. While of military importance in some local areas, they do not constitute a national threat, and can be controlled on a national scale by the Indonesian armed forces.

There are also an estimated 1500 Ambonese insurgents in the Moluccas Group. These insurgents, mostly Christians, were formerly part of the Royal Netherland Indonesian Army which had been dissolved in July 1950. For about one year this group has been relatively inactive.

4. Burma

Numerically, there exists a comparatively considerable number of dissident or insurgent elements and organizations in Burma. They range from Burmese Communists to indigenous groups desiring autonomy to ex-KMT Chinese irregular forces utilizing force of arms in an attempt to enforce their desire to remain in the eastern Shan States.

Burmese Dissident Groups

<u>Group</u>	<u>Military Strength</u>	<u>Location</u>
Karens (KNDO)	3000 to 5000	South and Southeast Burma
ex-KMT	2500 to 3500	Eastern Shan States
Peoples Communist Party (PCP-PVO)	1000 to 1500	Central and West Burma
Burma Communist Party (BCP)	3000 to 4000	Central Burma
Communist Party of Burma (CPB)	1000 to 1500	Southwest Burma
Mujahids	200	Burma-East Pakistan border
Pa-o's	400	South Shan States
Naga Hill Tribes	400 to 500	Naga Hills on Burma-Assam border
Taungthus	200 to 300	South Shan States

"In general with the exception of the Burma Communist Party, the ex-KMT forces and possibly the Karens, the military forces of these elements are of low effectiveness and generally engage in bandit or minor guerrilla activity. The BCP and ex-KMT maintain comparatively well organized, effective military forces. The Karens present organized military strength has decreased considerably but the Karens as a group retain a considerable military potential. Generally however, all three of these exceptions are usually faced with a near-critical logistical situation. They do, however, represent forces which require continued Burmese armed forces military operations against their military, guerrilla-type and bandit activities in an attempt to re-assert Burmese government control over the areas these elements now occupy." Except for these three forces, the requirement is

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primarily for police action, however the Burmese government recently integrated its Territorial Force into the Army and now has no police other than in metropolitan areas. This requires utilization of the Army for police type operations which considerably reduces the effectiveness of the Army and does not provide for the continuity of effort required for effective police actions. The military effectiveness of the dissident groups is slowly but steadily decreasing due primarily to logistical, but also political, personnel and economic considerations and probably by 1957-58 will reduce the military capabilities of all groups to guerrilla and bandit activity if the present overall situation continues without material change. To date there has not been an appreciable amount of cooperation and coordination between these elements due no doubt to their divergent origins and purposes. Even the so-called "Tripartite" Alliance of the BCP, CPB, PCP-PVO has not succeeded in establishing centralized control of Communist insurgent activities in Burma. The BCP remains the dominant Communist underground force of the three splinter Communist insurgent groups.

5. Thailand

There are not any significant dissident elements or dissident military forces in Thailand at this time.

6. Cambodia

The indigenous dissident military forces in Cambodia at this time do not pose a serious threat to the overall security of the country. Due to the size and condition of these forces, they are not believed to constitute a potential threat in the future unless substantially reinforced, particularly in logistics, which seems improbable at this time. The relatively small Communist Party in Cambodia is not known, nor believed, to have a military organization. The existing indigenous military dissident forces are of a political or bandit nature. Son Ngoc Thanh, former leader of the Khmer-Issarak, is reported to have about 500 men in the vicinity of Samrong near the Thailand border. "Recent reports indicate that as a result of a Cambodian Army attack which destroyed his headquarters, Thanh, his staff, and half of his military force have dispersed into Thailand. However, due to his influence, Thanh always retains a potential for new political and minor military activity in Cambodia." A-Siep has approximately 200 men in the vicinity of Kompong Chhnang Province and Kompong Speu Province. The Viet Minh are not known to have an active subversive

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organization in Cambodia at this time although Viet Minh cadres and personnel are reported active in the country on a small scale and it is estimated that as high as 4500 partially armed former Cambodian Viet Minh were not formally demobilized after the Geneva Armistice.

Reports indicate that the dissident forces in Cambodia are operating at a considerably lowered effectiveness primarily due to the strategy of the operations conducted against them by joint military and security forces. This strategy includes driving the dissident forces out of the area they normally occupy and then maintaining a security force in the area in order to preclude their infiltration back into the cleared area. This has had the very desirable effect of cutting them off from their normal sources of supply and sympathizers with the result that most of these forces are now faced with a critical logistical situation and forced to operate in very small bands. Their capabilities at this time are reduced to banditry and very small scale guerrilla operations within the capability of control by Cambodian forces.

7. Laos

Pathet Lao forces presently occupy and control large portions of the Laotian provinces of Sam Neua and Phong Saly, presently conducting intermittent skirmishes and attacks against Laotian army garrisons and lines of communications in order to limit or preclude Laotian government control and influence in these provinces. The possibility always exists of large scale attacks or counter-attacks by either side. Pathet Lao military forces include about twelve light infantry battalions (T/O 400), two heavy battalions (T/O 1000), and various guerrilla, commando and service units. Their total armed strength is about 6000, of whom up to 1000 may be Viet Minh military units, advisory, command and staff personnel. Due to the ruthless tactics of the Pathet Lao and Viet Minh in enforcing administrative control over the civilian population in these two provinces, they do not have its uncoerced support and the morale within the military force largely composed of locally conscripted personnel is not good. However, the presence of Viet Minh training command and staff advisors and specialists and the receipt of considerable Viet Minh logistical assistance, upon which they are dependent, plus the possibility of direct military support by Viet Minh troops renders their military effectiveness within Sam Neua and Phong Saly provinces generally comparable to that of the Laotian military forces.

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It is considered that the Pathet Lao, until faced with strong Laotian Army conventional operations and concurrent Laotian guerrilla activity behind Pathet Lao lines, will be able to maintain control of the area they now hold. At this time, by massing their forces in a determined effort, it is considered that they could probably drive the Laotian forces presently located in the vicinity of Sam Neua and Phong Saly provinces out of these provinces but could not progress much further nor retain control of these areas against an all out counterattack by a large reinforced Laotian force without direct Viet Minh armed assistance. The Pathet Lao defensive capability at this time is not considered sufficiently strong to preclude the Laotian Army from taking and holding the key points such as Sam Neua town if the Laotian forces were to make a series of all out, coordinated, well executed attacks with all logistical problems properly provided for. However, the decisive factor in any consideration of Pathet Lao offensive or defensive capabilities is the intention of the Viet Minh in respect to direct armed intervention in reinforcing the Pathet Lao. "The Viet Minh currently have five regiments and unconfirmed reports indicate portions of one division along the northern Laos-Viet Minh borders." The Pathet Lao also attempt subversive operations by small groups through south and central Laos but as yet apparently have had only minimal success.

8. South Vietnam

Besides the Viet Minh who are covertly conducting clandestine activities primarily of a subversive nature at this time, there are three major potential dissident elements in South Vietnam. The Hoa Hao and Cao Dai are essentially religious sects with political-military overtones with an estimated total membership of 400,000 and 1,500,000 respectively. The Dai Viets are essentially a political force which does not accept President Diem's administrative policies and is reported to have a military "maquis" force of about 1500, and are located generally in the mountainous coastal regions of Central Annam. They are reported as awaiting the outcome of Diem's campaign against the other sects before resuming political activity. Their leaders believe that Diem's repression of all nationalist groups obviates the possibility of mutual compromise.

The Viet Minh military personnel and political cadre personnel in South Vietnam present the greatest potential dissident threat to the internal security of South Vietnam. These military personnel are probably organized as skeletal

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units with armaments and equipment cached nearby. Unit locations are not fully known, nor is the identity of their leaders. However, the strongest groups and most extensive activity appear to be centered in the coastal mountains of Southern Annam, the interior mountains of Central Annam, the Plaine des Jones area of Cochin China, and in the Camau peninsula region of Cochin China. These elements are probably engaged in intelligence activity, organizational and training functions, and in protecting local headquarters and bases. They are probably attempting to assist, support and join, and eventually control, the indigenous dissident Hoa Hao military forces. Available information indicates that the Viet Minh in South Vietnam retain a continued capability for armed action and for a campaign of mass intimidation, assassination, sabotage and terrorism. The Viet Minh probably exercises effective political control only in areas which are remote and underpopulated and in which the government has made no strong effort to establish and maintain its own administration. These include pockets in the plateau and foothill areas of South - Central Vietnam, the Camau peninsula in the extreme southern part of Vietnam, and the Plaine des Jones in Cochin China. The Viet Minh also probably exerts influence in rural areas where government administration is present and supported but still ineffective. In urban areas where national government control is greatest, the Viet Minh are working primarily through front organizations such as labor unions, social service, and "peace" groups. There appears to be little Viet Minh infiltration into the higher echelons of the Vietnamese National government or armed forces but there are indications of fairly extensive penetration of lower units of the administration, possibly including regional and provincial governments and almost certainly the village councils.

The Cao Dai, the most powerful of the sects, aspires to political control of South Vietnam and is potentially Diem's most important non-Communist opposition. "They entirely dominate the Tay Ninh Province of Cochin China spreading over into adjacent areas of the Plaine des Jones with a few pockets of followers located throughout South Vietnam with a relatively cohesive religious following of some 1,500,000 Vietnamese." The bulk of its armed force has been integrated into the Vietnamese National Army. For the time being, the Cao Dai military leader, General Phuong, is supporting Diem and has forced the Cao Dai spiritual leader, Pope Tac, to desist from overt political activity against Diem.

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Because General Phuong and other Cao Dai leaders lack popular support, it is not considered that they will elect to resist Diem by force. It is not considered that any Cao Dai military efforts of significance will be made. However, if made, they would not pose a major threat to South Vietnamese security but the effort required to suppress it would disrupt badly needed army training and reorganization and divert attention from other critical tasks including the establishment of effective internal security, particularly by administrative rather than military means.

The so-called "Hoa Hao" dissident military forces of Ba Cut and Tran Van Soai have been denounced as criminals and Hoa Hao religious believers have been directed to support Diem fully in a statement by Huynh Cong Bo, father of the Hoa Hao sect founder and the nearest approach at present to a religious leader recognized by the whole sect. Ba Cut's force is estimated at about 1500 and recently has been reported as dispersing into relatively smaller groups in simultaneous widely scattered armed clashes in order to take over control of individual villages and population in the countryside by military control and terrorism, a common Viet Minh tactic. He is believed to have Viet Minh advisors and possibly local Viet Minh military personnel with him as troops. His forces are presently believed to be in the Tri Ton - Rach - Gia - Long Xuyen area. Tran Van Soai has the other dissident Hoa Hao military force of about 1200 in the Plaine des Joncs area. He has been inactive militarily for some time but exercises a great degree of control over the local population in that area. It appears that a destruction of Ba Cut's and Soai's forces as complete as that of the Binh Xuyen is an early, although very difficult aim of Diem and the Vietnamese National Army, and its accomplishment would leave only one major dissident element in South Vietnam, and that at present covert, the Viet Minh.

9. Pakistan

The dissident threat to Pakistan lies along her western border with Afghanistan. Here are indications that the Afghanistan government is strengthening

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and assisting the Pushtoon border tribes in an attempt to create a new independent state. This area as claimed by Afghanistan would comprise more than half the total territory of West Pakistan. The political and cultural heartland of the Pushtoons is the so-called Tribal Areas, a narrow strip on the Pakistan side of the border. Here live about 2,500,000 well-armed tribesmen who have always considered themselves exempt from Pakistan law. The Pushtoon tribes and clans in the area have virtually no economic assets and many have never had a common ethnic allegiance. They constantly feud among themselves and there is practically no support among among them for Pushtoonistan as a political entity. Few feel any national allegiance to either Afghanistan or Pakistan. Shooting incidents are regular occurrence on the border and the Pakistan Security Force maintains a large border guard in the area.

Since the Pushtoonistan issue serves to express Afghanistan's irredentist feelings for the area and incidentally to divert the tribes from possibly threatening the government, it is unlikely to be abandoned permanently. Pakistan is equally adamant. It has given priority to economic and social development of these areas which so far has offset Afghan efforts at inducing an effective independence movement. However, little success has attended Pakistan efforts to extend control into the more remote areas.

The decision of Afghanistan to accept considerable USSR financial support indicates the probability of increased USSR influence and control in this highly strategic area.

Afghanistan has a total of only 62,000 troops of all types and of relatively low combat efficiency and a negligible air force while Pakistan has ground forces of 224,000, of fair effectiveness and a comparatively large air force of 200 tactical aircraft.

Pakistan and India are unable to make any agreement concerning Jammu and Kashmir. The Chinese Communists have claimed certain portions of Kashmir (Hunza and Baltistan) and sporadic border violations in this area by the CHICOMS have taken place for the past few years according to Pakistan.

It appears at this time that except for a global war situation, no large scale overt military activities will be undertaken against Pakistan either by the border dissident forces, Afghanistan or USSR and Communist China. In East Pakistan, local, political and economic unrest probably present a potentially fertile field for Communist subversive and clandestine activities.

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