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ORIGIN/ACTION: EA-6

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

FROM : Amembassy BANGKOK
DATE: Dec [illegible] 1973

E.O. 11652: GDS; TAGS: PINS-TH

SUBJECT : Joint Mission Report on the Insurgency in Thailand -- October 1973

REF :

Action Assigned to
Action Taken
Date of Action 1/16
Action Office Symbol
Name of Officer

1974 JAN 16 PM — 45

SUMMARY

GENERAL:

On October 14 and 15, Field Marshals Thanom Kittikachorn and Praphat Charusthien -- the men who had in effect run Thailand for the past decade -- were forced to leave Thailand when the new Royal Thai Army Commander General Krit Sivara refused to use full military force to suppress student demonstrations. University student demands for a constitution and return to democratic government had developed in a crescendo since the first of the month, eventually bringing hundreds of thousands of persons into Bangkok streets in protest against the continuation of military rule. The first civilian govenrment in 26 years was appointed by the King following the departure of Thanom and Praphat. Despite allegations that communist insurgents were involved in the demonstrations, there appears to be no evidence of any Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) involvement in the immediate events which led to the downfall of military rule; but there is much evidence that the CPT is scrambling to capitalize on the political awakening in Thailand and the inexperience and initial inactivity of the appointed interim government. The wave of urban labor strikes, which began well before the October student protests, continued and suggested agitators may be involved.

Upcountry the armed insurgency again was characterized by a comparatively high level of military activity in the Northeast and quiet organization building in all insurgent areas. In the Northeast

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and North insurgents were harvesting their crops. The turbulence in Bangkok and the resultant change of government caused a week-long hiatus in military counterinsurgency acitivity after the flight of Thanom and Praphat and a one-week postponement of the beginning of the first phase of the Royal Thai Armed Forces (RTARF) Joint Training Exercise -17 -- Operation Pha Phum, a large combined RTARF and KMT field exercise in the vicinity of CPT bases in eastern Chiang Rai Province originally scheduled to begin on October 23.

Northeast:

A three-week RTA and police effort to insure a high degree of security for the October 30 visit of the King to Nong Khaen Village (VD 4853) in the heart of insurgent stronghold Tambon (township) Don Luang of NaKae District (Nakhon Phanom Province) led to 30 contacts. In circumstances leading to the King's visit, both the Governor and Deputy Governor of Nakhon Phanom Province were killed -- the latter in an ambush on October 20 and the former as a result of a helicopter crash at Nong Khaen at the dedication on October 30. As RTG forces concentrated on the Don Luang area, insurgents took the initiative elsewhere in and near the Phuphans: Tambon Kan Luang (NaKae District), Khao Wong Subdistrict of Kalasin Province (14 incidents -- 12 of which were insurgent-initiated), Don Tan Subdistrict (Nakhon Phanom), Kham Muang Subdistrict of western Kalasin, and in the Nong Han-Si That area of the western Phuphans. Western Udorn Province, the most active area in the country in September, was comparatively quiet; but insurgent activity in northeastern Loei Province (an expansion area of the CPT Udorn Province) heated up, highlighted by an October 20 ambush which wiped out a police-VDC patrol (9 KIA, 3 WIA).

North:

RTG security forces in the Tri-Province area limited their activity to routine patrols and road security functions, hence there were few reported contacts with the insurgents. The CPT, in turn, conducted agitprop sessions among the Thai population in the western piedmont area of the Petchabun Mountains.

In eastern Nan, the RTA inserted a rifle company into Meo villages -- considered by the CPT to have been "liberated areas" -- to establish operating bases, possibly in anticipation of resumption of work on the stalled Nan "Loop" Road. Chiang Rai, on the eve of JTX-17, was quiet.

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South

(Reported by Songkhla's A-4). An attack on a police station in Surat Thani, a resurgence of political mass work by CPT cadres, and reports of the expansion of CPT activity into Ranong Province on the Andaman Sea side of the peninsula highlighted insurgent activity. On October 31, Malayan Communist forces (CTO) ambushed a police convoy in Sado District of Songkhla Province killing eight. RTG activity was largely administrative. END OF SUMMARY.

A. NORTHEAST THAILAND

1. Eastern Phuphans

a. Tambon Don Luang (NaKae District) -- Nong Khaen School Dedicated by King

On October 30, the King and Queen dedicated a school in Nong Khaen village in NaKae District (VD 4853, Tambon Don Luang), Nakhon Phanom Province -- a So settlement in an area of hard-core insurgent influence a few kilometers from the reported CPT headquarters in Northeastern Thailand. (See the September report, Bangkok's A-349.)

The ceremony and the King's subsequent visit with the village people, which -- remarkably (considering the nature of the area) -- otherwise went off without a flaw, was tragically marred by a mid-air helicopter collision which killed Governor of Nakhon Phanom Province Sanant Khanasa and seriously injured RTA Second Army Region Commander LTG Phayone Phahurat. (Three other persons were killed and nine others injured in the accident at Nong Khaen as a police helicopter taking off collided into an RTA helicopter landing. There were nine helicopters involved in transporting the royal party and VIPs at Nong Khaen at the time.) The accident eliminated Nakhon Phanom Province's top leadership, as Deputy Governor Thin Detchai (with two security personnel) was killed in an ambush a few kilometers away on October 20 as he was en route to a meeting at Nong Khaen to plan security measures for the King's visit.

The most notable RTG counterinsurgency effort in northeast Thailand in October was providing security for this visit. The absence of insurgent disruptive activity during the visit was largely attributable to the overall success of the RTA efforts: five rifle companies (the Task Force Bn of the 23 Regt and two companies of the 3d Bn 13 Regt) supplied the bulk of the local security. (There are no resident RTG local security forces in this CPT-dominated area.) The RTA units and other security elements were involved in 30 contacts during the three week security effort which preceded the King's visit. Three RTG personnel were killed and five were wounded and two insurgents were

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killed in these contacts.

The RTA units were deployed in an arc around Nong Khaen: 1st Co of the 23 Regt Task Force in the hills north of Ban Don Luang -- ten kms north of Nong Khaen; 2d Co of the 23 Regt TF -- Nong Khaen itself, but patrolling to the south and to the northwest; 3d Co of the 23 Regt TF at Ban Na Lao (VD 4115) -- a communist-controlled village in a forest-enclosed canyon seven kms northwest of Nong Khaen near the CPT base area on Kai Khia Mountain (VD 3851); 3d Co., 3d Bn, 13 Regt at Ban Phon Hai (VD 4353) -- a communist-controlled village in the same canyon three kms northwest of Nong Khaen; 2d Co., 3d Bn, 13 Regt at Ban Don Sawan (VD 655600) -- a road junction 20 kms northeast of Nong Khaen; and a 2d Army Forward patrol platoon at Nong Khaen -- operating in the villages north and east of Nong Khaen.

A Border Patrol Police platoon temporarily patrolled out of Ban Lao Piat (VD 4954, a village of insurgent supporters four kms north of Nong Khaen).

Half the thirty contacts attributable to the Nong Khaen security effort (and the CPT reaction to it) were RTA-initiated: brief -- and inconclusive -- meeting engagement fire fights during patrols. From the location of the contacts, it is apparent that the RTA patrols were intensively covering the wooded hills to the ~~west~~ and north of Nong Khaen.

The two RTA company patrol bases located in the canyong of the Huai (stream) Bang Sai three kms and seven kms northwest of Ban Nong Khaen (3/TF/23 and 3/3/13) were the target of seven harassment attacks by fire, probably involving insurgent local forces from the villages in which the RTA units were based. The villages, located at the base of the northeastern slope of Phou (mt) Kai Khia (the CPT base area), are under CPT control.

The most costly insurgent-initiated incident was the October 20 ambush of a police-escorted ten vehicle convoy by which the party of Nakhon Phanom Governor Sanant Khanasa was traveling to a meeting to plan security arrangements for the King's visit to Nong Khaen. The ambush (at Ban Phon Daeng VD 5061) was triggered by a command-detonated mine which killed Deputy Governor Thin Detchai, a police sergeant major and a VDC trooper. In the fire fight which ensued, the group of 15-20 insurgents -- according to police reports -- were helped to escape by the villagers who served as lookouts for the ambush party. Phon Daeng presumably is an insurgent-dominated village.

The other insurgent-initiated incidents were snipings, firing at helicopters, and minings.

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Comment: The number of contacts with the insurgents stemming from the RTG's efforts to establish a high degree of security for the King's dedication of the Nong Khaen school tend to substantiate the report [redacted] that the CPT is well organized and active in Tambon Don Luang. The RTG deployed the equivalent of nearly two infantry battalions and one police platoon (eight to ten platoons in Tambon Don Luang itself), which otherwise would not have been stationed in the area, for three weeks of active local security operations (intensive daily patrolling and ambushing). These operations in time forced resident insurgent local forces to displace out of the immediate environs of Nong Khaen and nearby villages. The RTA units clearly performed their assigned mission; yet as most of the RTG security elements were withdrawn from the vicinity after the King's visit, we can assume CPT cadre and local forces returned to unimpeded control of most of Don Luang's 12 villages shortly thereafter. The RTA efforts again demonstrated that the CPT forces can be forced out of hard-core populated areas, but that the expulsion requires a sizeable investment in local security forces for a protracted period to establish and maintain real RTG control in such an area. In a tough area long under CPT control such as Tambon Don Luang, the RTG forces perforce were not indigenous -- amounting (in effect) to occupation forces. Thus, it can be seen that when and if the RTG eventually makes up its mind to establish control permanently over Don Luang (and a few other similar tambons in which the CPT has organized and controls the population), it will require the investment (initially and for several ensuing months) of a high density of active local forces to do the job.

b. NaKae District:
Tambon Kan Luang

Tambon Kan Luang is located 5 to 15 kms west of the NaKae District seat. The populated area is located north of the Phuphans and consists of 12 villages, most of which are located in a strip along the NaKae-Sakhon Nakhon road (Rte. 223). In terms of CPT organization, Kan Luang is the third most organized tambon in the RTG's NaKae District -- with 8 of the 12 villages reportedly [redacted] considered to be "strategic villages." (The CPT considers a village to be a strategic village if it has a CPT committee and a village military unit, if the population is organized into mass organizations, and if CPT forces can approach the village for supplies. The CPT's best organized tambons in NaKae District are Don Luang and Nong Bua, which are located over the ridge to the southeast). In the CPT organization, Kan Luang is in the "Western Subarea" (Khet Phuphan) of "Lopburi" District of Nakhon Phanom Province. (The September report noted police activities in this tambon.)

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In October while the RTG was concentrating resources on providing local security for the King's visit to Nong Khaen, CPT forces were operating in populated areas only a few kilometers west of the district headquarters. At 1300 on October 17 a group of approximately 10 insurgents ambushed a 4-man VDC security patrol in the middle of Ban Klang Mun Village (VD 341769) and captured a member of the patrol. (He was later released without his rifle). On October 19 at 0900, insurgents attempted to demolish an RTA supply truck with a command detonated mine at the eastern edge of Don Thon village (VD394757) on the hard surface Sakhon Nakhon-NaKae highway (Rte. 223). On October 29 at 0030, insurgents attacked by fire a police Special Action Force platoon - Village Security Team post in Don Thon village (VD381762) along Route 223. Blood trails found after the contact indicate that one or more insurgents were wounded in the contact. No RTG casualties were reported.

c. Don Tan Subdistrict, Nakhon Phanom Province - Amnat, Charoen District, Ubon Province

(The CPT considers this area to be part of its Saam Nakhon Province. See [redacted] September report.)

Don Tan was quiet in October, except for the following incident. On the 14th as the VST from Ban Bok (VC 1936) was in an overnight bivouac position near the base of (CPT-base area) Tak Daek hill (VST member was KIA and four others were WIA. Insurgent casualties are not known.

On October 24 at 2345, insurgents shot and wounded a VDC member on guard at a wat in Ban Bok (VC 664740). On October 28, a joint patrol of the Ubon Province police Special Action Force platoon and local VDC clashed with an unknown number of insurgents at VC 754766. One member of the patrol was wounded.

2. Central and Western Phuphans

a. Kut Bak District, Sakon Nakhon Province

On October 29 at 2240, 70 to 100 insurgents attacked & destroyed the outpost of the VST at Bon Yang Lon (UD 796823) in southeastern Kut Bak, killing one VDC member and capturing another along with eight weapons.

b. Kham Muang Subdistrict, Kalasin Province

The RTG, as elsewhere in the country, has administratively isolated two tambon (townships) of Sahat Sakhon District in which the CPT had developed popular support by creating a Subdistrict -- Kham Muang. The subdistrict comprises two small valleys on the southern edge of the central Phuphans directly across the ridgeline from the CPT stronghold area of Kut Bak. Although there are insurgent supporters in many of the villages of the subdistrict, they are not well organized. The CPT, which considers this area to be part of its Sakon Nakhon

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Province, is trying to expand the insurgent organization here.

Three shooting incidents occurred in Kham Muang in October. A small group of insurgents fired harassing shots at Ban Nong Saphang (UD 5176) on October 8 and local VST (VDC) patrols had firefights with small groups of insurgents on October 18 and 29. One VDC member was WIA. Insurgent casualties are not known.

c. Tha Kan Tho District, Kalasin Province

In the usually quiet Dong (forest) Mun area of western Kalasin Province an unusual act of terrorism occurred which merits close examination.

At 1800 on October 24 at Ban Kok Khrua (UD 167472), four VDC members -- who were guarding a wat (temple) fair -- were shot by pistol at close range. Three died and the fourth was wounded. Insurgent assassins took the weapons of the dead VDC and left.

Thirteen members of the (VDC) Village Security Team based at Ban Nong Mai Tai (UD 159464), the only RTG security force in the large (19 village) tambon, had been assigned to provide security for the fair -- presumably at the request of the host village.

The village, Ban Kok Khrua, is known to have resident communist supporters -- as do nearly all villages in the immediate area -- but the modus operandi of the insurgent assassins suggests that non-local specialists were used for the job. (The Dong Mun area is called the "Chantaburi" expansion area by the CPT and is located in the "Southern area" of the CPT's Sakon Nakhon Province "Chantaburi" expansion area, [redacted], a normally quiet area in which the CPT raises food for its forces in the central Phuphans. As of mid-1973, there were no insurgent regular or local forces in the area.)

The killings apparently were designed to make an emotional impact on villagers whose leaders had invited the VDC unit to protect the fair.

d. Khao Wong Subdistrict, Kalasin Province

CPT-initiated military activity consisted of nocturnal harassment of village security teams and bridge burnings in a cluster of five closely-situated villages in the northeastern quadrant of the basin 13 kms southeast of villages in which similar activity occurred in September (see September report).

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According to debriefings of defectors [redacted] as of September 1973 the CPT had lost much of its support in these villages, in part because of operations of the RTA 1st Bn 3d Regt over the preceding year.

Simultaneous attacks by fire in the early hours of the night on two targets separated by 1.5 to 2 kms characterized this activity. On October 6, insurgents harassed VSTs at Ban Song (VD 045474) and Ban Pon Na Di (VD 054497). On October 8, insurgents simultaneously attacked by fire the VSTs at Ban Song and Ban Kut Pla Kao (VD 033480). RTA artillery at Na Khu (UD 9753 - five to seven kms northwest) fired in support of the VSTs. On October 11, insurgents simultaneously harassed by fire the Target Area 10 (VDC) stike platoon at Ban Noi Ta Liu (VD 038498) and a VST at Ban Nong Phu (VD 016505). Shortly after these attacks, insurgents burned a bridge on the access road to the villages (at VD 018502). On October 20, insurgents again attacked the base of the Target Area 10 Strike Platoon at Ban Noi Ta Liu. On October 23, insurgents again harassed the VST at Ban Nong Phu and burned another bridge (at VD 008508). On October 25, insurgents simultaneously again attacked the VSTs at Ban Kut Pla Kao and Ban Song. There were no casualties reported as a result of these attacks.

On October 26 an RTA patrol (2d Co, 1st Bn, 3d Regt), searching the area (at VD 035565) of the attacks encountered a small party of insurgents killing one. On the 29th, an RTA patrol had a firefight (no casualties) with five insurgents a few kms north.

COMMENT:

Considering the nature of the activity, the CPT probably used both main forces and local forces in these attacks. In retrospect with the analyst's knowledge of a classic ambush on November 4 of RTA (2d Co, 1st Bn, 3 Regt) reaction troops (which killed 24 RTA troops) in the same area, it seems likely that the insurgents were seeking not only to make a psychological impact on backsliding and disenchanted villagers but also to entice the rifle company of the 1st Bn 3d Regt from nearby Na Khu into ambush situations.

e. Nong Han District - Si That Subdistrict, Udorn Province

The western end of the Phuphan chain (involving parts of Si That Subdistrict and Nong Han District of Udorn Province) is included in the CPTs Sakon Nakhon Province [redacted] Insurgent effort in this area appears to be concentrated on five villages in the narrow valley of the Songkhram River (TE 2010 to TE 3005). Were they able to develop popular support there, it would serve as a geographic link between CPT bases in the central Phuphans and bases in Western Udorn Province.

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On October 9 insurgents stole nine water buffalos of the phuyaiban (village chief) of Ban Muang Wan (UE 317031). On the nights of October 26 - 27, a force of approximately 60 insurgents virtually wiped out the VST at Ban Kham Le (UE 245065), killing four (one police M Sgt and three VDC) and wounding five. Two VDC were MIA. The insurgents captured three team radios, weapons, and other equipment.

3. Northern Sakon Nakhon - Nong Khai

On the evening of October 6, insurgents attacked the VST at Ban Na Sao (UF 9310) killing the team chief and capturing three weapons and a radio. On October 12 at Ban Pa Pack (UF 6700), assassinated a police sergeant and his wife and kidnapped the phuyaiban (village chief). On October 27, a (VDC) strike platoon on patrol nearby had a firefight with three insurgents. One VDC member was killed.

4. Southern Ubon Province

The RTG apparently is not receiving much information about CPT activity in southern Ubon Province, although the CSOC daily bulletins throughout October carried a few police reports of insurgent cadre movements and population contact work in the area. Had it not been for the windfall defection in June 1973 of Bunthoem Phromphinit, a CPT District Secretary from the area, we would know little of the CPT activities there.

5. Western Udorn - Eastern Loei

The insurgents in western Udorn Province, the most active area in the country in September, were comparatively quiet in October -- apparently transferring their attention to adjacent eastern Loei Province.

In the new Suwan Khuha Subdistrict, insurgents assassinated the assistant to phuyaiban (village chief) of Ban Som Poi (TE 201287) and an associate on October 9 and conducted a forced agitprop session at Ban Noen (TE 059380) on October 24. Further north an agi t prop session was reported at Ban Thali in Nam Som Subdistrict (TE 012554).

On October 20, insurgents wiped out a 12-man patrol near the isolated village of Ban Wang Pha (RV159687 in Pak Chom Subdistrict, Loei Province). The patrol, composed of members of the Chiang Khan District VDC Company and police officers and led by the Deputy District Officer (DDO) of Chiang Khan District, walked into an ambush triggered by a command-detonated mine one kilometer northwest of the village. The DDO and 8 others were killed and the remaining three were wounded.

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Presumably, the patrol was seeking contact with -- or information about -- insurgents which conducted agitprop sessions in and near Wang Pha on October 14 and 15.

Ban Wang Pha -- RV 1767 -- is located in remote forest-covered hills approximately 30 kms southeast of Pak Chom town on the Mekong. It is a small hamlet nearly ten kms east (over a dirt road) of the all-weather Loei - Pak Chom road and five kms from the nearest village.

A small group of CPT cadre (including several females with a squad of uniformed soldiers as protection) have been soliciting support of the population in several villages in Ban Wang Pha area since at least mid-summer. It is probable that this group was despatched from the communist stronghold in Nam Som Subdistrict, Udorn Province -- which is just over the ridgeline ten - 15 kms east.

[redacted] the CPT considers Pak Chom District to be "Area 94" -- an expansion area under the control of "Area 11" (the Nam Som area) of the Udorn Province Committee. (The CPT Udorn Province includes northeastern Loei Province and western Nong Khai Province).

B. NORTH THAILAND

The Third Army Forward October operation summary reported that there were seven contacts in its area in the month (4 RTA-initiated and three insurgent-initiated) which resulted in the following casualties: RTG -- six KIA (two RTA four civilians), 14 WIA (two RTA 12 civilians); insurgents -- eight KIA, estimated several WIA, and two arrested.

1. Tri-Province Area (Petchabun Mountains)

During the past two years, the level of insurgent-initiated military incidents has been directly proportional to the level of Royal Thai Armed Forces' (RTARF) efforts against insurgent bases in the area. When RTARF -- principally RTA -- units are active, incidents levels are up; when the RTA does little, few military contacts are reported.

Since their arrival in September, elements of the RTA 4th Regt (which replaced the 11th Regt), have been involved largely in road clearing and fire support bases (9) security activities.

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Paramilitary units and police were busier. On October 12 a naresuan (3d Army paramilitary hunter-killer team) patrol had a brief contact (in which one team member was wounded) at QU 1218 13 Kms south of the CPT base at Khao Ya (QU 1031). On October 17 a patrol of the "Thung Salaeng Luang" (national forest) base (probably Hilltribe Volunteers) were ambushed as they were walking along the main Lomsak-Phitsanulok Highway. No casualties were reported. On 11 Oct 73 a combined team, 15 men from 4th RCT, seven men from the Dang Sai naresuan team and six VDC personnel from Amphur Dan Sai reacted to prior intelligence and established an ambush site at QU 1218, 13 kms south of the CPT base at Khao Ya (QU 1031). Approximately 20 CT approached the ambush site from the rear but were detected and taken under fire by the RTG force. Contact lasted for 20 minutes and resulted in four CT KIA,one (1) AK47 captured and one RTA KIA and one WIA.

On 21-26 Oct 73 the 4th RCT conducted a company (+) size operation from QU 184476 to Khao Kho QU 105425. The operations was conducted to clear the CT forces from the vicinity in preparation for future highway road construction. On the morning of October 30 the police-led VDC strike platoon of Nakhon Thai District (Phitsanulok Province) -- which had been posted in Ban Huai Tin Tang (QU0486) an insurgent-influenced village) -- was ambushed just west of the village with their attackers in the immediate vicinity before proceeding to town. No casualties were reported.

Small teams of CPT cadre protected by local forces continue to propagandize Thai farmers in the fields along the western edge of the Petchabun Mountains. Such agitprop sessions were reported on October 10 (PU 8430 Wang Thang District, Phitsanulok), 13 (PU 8416 Chon Daen District, Petchabun), 16 (PU 8819, Wang Thang District), and 24 (QU 056673, Nakhon Thai District, Phitsanulok).

2. Nan Province

Work on the Nan "Loop" Road (see August report) is stalled, but the RTA appears to be laying the security groundwork for resumption of construction. The Cavalry Division (2d Co 23 Inf Bn) established platoon-size outposts at Ban Bayak (QB 294334) and Ban Sawa (QB 2927) in the middle of the planned eastern trace of the road. These Meo villages are located in Tambon Bo Klua Tai of Pua District, an area which the CPT reportedly in mid-1972 declared to be a "liberated area" [redacted] and are located at the southeastern base of Phu Wae (mt at QB 2736) -- the site until September 1972 of the CPT Northern Region Committee Headquarters and the CPT Area 14 headquarters. [redacted] a member of an insurgent unit in Pua District said that the two head-quarters had moved at that time eastward to adjacent border areas of Laos -- QB 4830 and QB 3862 respectively -- because of food shortages and the threat of RTAF bombing).

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The RTA initiative has been made possible by its having helicopters for insertion and resupply. (The RTA helicopters are based at Nan airfield, 65 kms to the southwest.) Helicopter operations in this area of Nan run some risk of insurgent groundfire: helicopters resupplying the Ban Sawa outpost were fired at on October 14 and 27 and Hueys on resupply runs to 23 Inf Bn outposts at the northern construction terminus of the road took groundfire on October 12 and 17.

The insurgents have tried to retain their hold on the villages, but they have not yet challenged outrightly the RTA presence. On October 16, CPT cadres kidnapped the phuyaibon (village chief) of Ban Sawa, his son and his nephew apparently on suspicion that he was assisting the RTA. On October 26, a small group of insurgents harassed the platoon position at Ban Sawan.

In October the RTAF napalmed crops four kms east of Ban Sawa (and elsewhere in Nan) to destroy suspected insurgent food supplies. The fields probably were tilled by Meo tribesmen who lived in Ban Sawa itself, which will not make the local Meo any happier with the RTG.

RTA small infantry units patrolled along the southwestern quadrant of the Loop Road in an area of long-standing influence in southern Pua District. On October 7, a reconnaissance team of the 3d Bn 21 Regt was ambushed near Ban Nam Yap (QB 042006) losing one WIA. On the 17th 2 kms to the southeast (QA 059982), a patrol of the 23 Inf Bn (Cav Div.) killed three insurgents.

3. Chiang Rai Province

a. Thoeng District

Enemy activity was highlighted by intensive agitprop work in and near the Thoeng mountains warning tribal and Thai villagers not to use the Thoeng - Ban Pong Kha road and not to cooperate with the RTG and the contractor in extending the road through the mountains (see August report). Harassment of small RTG security units continued. Insurgents attacked by fire harassment Border Patrol Police Platoon 506 at Ban Panghat (PC 543107), the northern end on the road project on the nights of October 21 and 22.

RTA 7th Regt patrols along the western slopes of the Thoeng ridgelines made no significant contact during the month.

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b. JTX-17 Target Area

JXT-17 (Opn. Pha Phum), which began on November 1 is targetted primarily at CPT bases in Chiang Kham and Pong Districts in southeastern Chiang Rai Province (see Bangkok's 16754).

Only two contacts occurred in this area as RTARF moved into forward base camps in anticipation of the operation.

On October 8 near the western approaches of Doi Pa Chi (PA 516928), a motorized patrol of the 12 Cavalry Squadron -- probably gathering intelligence for Joint Training Exercise 17 (Operation Pha Phum) -- engaged five-ten insurgents in a brief fire fight. One RTA was wounded by a booby trap. On October 26, a platoon of the 2d Co. 15 Cavalry Sqdrn was ambushed while putting out defensive mines at bivouac areas (PB 622394 -- near a tribal resettlement area close to Chiang Kham town).

4. Tak Province

Work on the Mae Sot - Umphang Road (see August report) is still stalled. CSOC Director LTG Saiyud Kerdphol, tacitly acknowledging the RTG's policy of underwriting the contractor's efforts to bribe the insurgents had failed, announced that the RTA 3d Army is setting up a joint RTA -- police-paramilitary unit to guard the construction crews. He said the unit would be ready in January 1974.

On October 12 and 13 there were two harassment attacks by fire on the BPP operating base at MT 835 522 in Umphong District. On October 27 a naresuan (paramilitary hunter-killer) team has a brief inconclusive contact with a small group of insurgents at MU 725200.

C. CENTRAL THAILAND

Continuing cadre population contact work and agitprop sessions (six) in Pranburi District, Prachuab Phini Khan Province, induced BPP patrols in reaction -- one of which was ambushed in Tambon Silaloi (NP 8357) on October 8.

D. SOUTH THAILAND

Reported in Amconsul SONGKHLA's A-04.

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