

Time 17-9-73

Later this month, however, as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee sits down to review the 1974 foreign-aid budget, it will find that U.S. aid to Thieu's police continues to flow richly through a series of semicamouflaged channels. Senator Edward M. Kennedy, who has denounced the practice as "repeating the mistakes and failures of the past," estimates the total at \$15 million a year and adds: "Presumably there is more buried elsewhere."

The largest amount of aid to Thieu's police has come openly from the Defense Department. Since the Paris treaty permits one-for-one replacement of worn-out military equipment that was in Viet Nam at the time of the truce, and since the police seem to be wearing out their supplies at a great rate, the Pentagon is shipping them Jeeps, radios and other equipment at a cost of \$8.8 million this fiscal year.

Next comes \$2.6 million from the U.S. commercial import program. Under this, the Agency for International Development pays U.S. exporters in dollars, but the piasters paid by Vietnamese importers are turned over to Thieu's regime. Saigon's use of the money has helped the police force grow almost 70% since 1968.

One of the most interesting items in the AID budget for the next fiscal year is the funding of a sophisticated computer-data system for Thieu's police. By the agency's own estimates, the computer system will have amassed data on 11.5 million South Vietnamese citizens by 1975. Initiated two years ago, the electronic setup is being developed by Computer Sciences Corp. of Los Angeles. Political and personal data on two-thirds of all adult South Vietnamese have already been fed into the system. According to congressional auditors, police training and computers are being financed through a variety of innocent-sounding programs:

► Of AID money budgeted for "technical support," \$869,000 is ear-

marked for the future schooling of 200 South Vietnamese national policemen as computer programmers.

► In the name of "public works," \$870,000 is being requested for the replacement of computer and communications equipment.

► Under "public administration general support," \$256,000 is being sought to train 64 national police officers.

When questioned, AID spokesmen have made no effort to deny what their budget involves, and they say that they are adhering to the letter of the Paris pact. "There is no skulduggery here," said one AID official. "If critics want to stop it," he added, "they can try to get enough support on the Hill. We are supporting the national police within the limitations of the agreement."

**Cruel Police.** That may not be enough for Congress, however. Senators Kennedy and James Abourezk have denounced the U.S. support of Thieu's police, and Senator Alan Cranston told TIME: "AID is continuing to bolster a cruel and repressive police apparatus in South Viet Nam. A vast surveillance system is in effect, aided by U.S. communications equipment and personnel. Police torture and inhuman jail conditions, including the notorious tiger cages, await those who criticize the government's policies. That the American taxpayer should subsidize torture is an outrage."

Officials of Computer Sciences Corp., meanwhile, are claiming a blissful ignorance about their own role in the politics of South Viet Nam. "We are doing nothing to set up dossiers," said a company spokesman, "and we have no knowledge of what [the South Vietnamese] are doing with the technical training we are giving them." As for its future plans, Computer Sciences has been awarded a \$43 million contract to process data for federal agencies in Washington, starting with population and price figures.

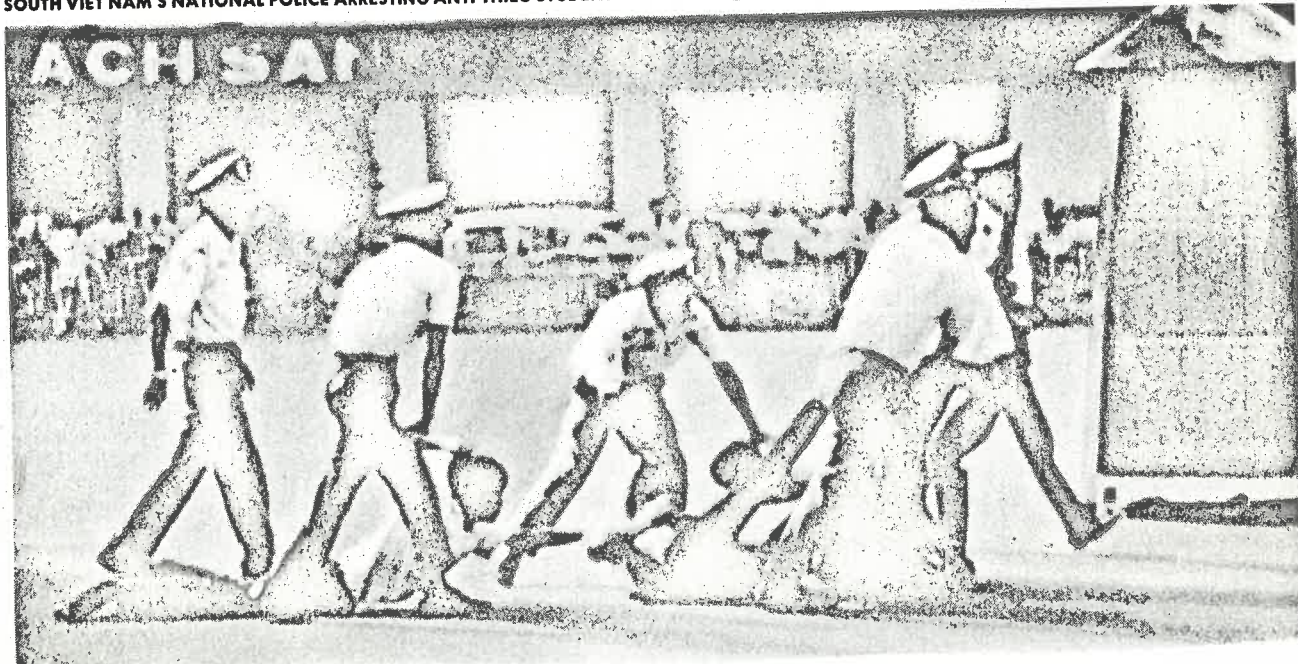
FOREIGN RELATIONS

Paying for Thieu's Police

When William P. Rogers signed the Paris truce agreement last January, the U.S. agreed that "advisers to all paramilitary organizations and the police force will be withdrawn" from South Viet Nam and that it would not "intervene in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam." Presumably that meant that the U.S. would stop training and subsidizing President Nguyen Van Thieu's 122,000-man national police force, which has collected more than \$131.7 million in U.S. assistance since 1967.

SOUTH VIET NAM'S NATIONAL POLICE ARRESTING ANTI-THIEU STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS IN SAIGON

h 39



LENN