

Vietnam Student Group Attacking

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Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Sept. 15—A scrawny 16-year-old Vietnamese high school student, who loathes American soldiers, tried his best today to burn an American Army van and the G.I. driving it.

It was another incident in a three-week-old campaign, now causing concern to United States officials, by high school and university students in Saigon to burn American military and civilian vehicles, and to beat up G.I.'s.

In an interview today, the leaders of the group, who call it the Movement Struggling for the People's Right to Life, said their aim was to force all American troops to leave Vietnam immediately. The presence of American troops here in massive numbers since 1965 was cited by these students as the cause of "much suffering" in the country.

Role in Explosion Denied

The students say they are limiting their campaign to vehicles and assaults on soldiers. They deny responsibility for such terrorist acts as an explosion tonight in a Saigon nightclub in which at least 8 persons were killed and 16 seriously wounded.

In today's attempt to burn the army van, Nguyen Van Chanh, working with three other students, dashed in front of the vehicle in a crowded residential area and tried to throw a plastic bag of high-octane gasoline into it. They then had planned to throw in lighted matches.

But Nguyen Van Chanh's aim was bad. The plastic sack hit the windshield and the American soldier drove off as quickly as he could.

"Bad shot," said Doan Hoa Trung, a 23-year-old law student who goes out every day with an assault group.

Navy Man Burned

Last Tuesday an American navy man suffered second-degree burns when students set his car afire. He "burned like a human torch," according to one of the students.

The leaders say there are more than 1,500 in their group and that they have burned 32 American vehicles since Aug. 23.

These figures have not been confirmed by the United States Embassy. It was learned today, however, that American officials are considering restricting the movements of United States military personnel in South Vietnamese cities because of a growing display of anti-Americanism, and that the attacks on vehicles are viewed with apprehension.

Vo Thi Bach Tuyet, the

movement's 23-year-old vice president for external affairs, said in Vietnamese, "I do not think the Americans understand the war in Vietnam and many of them perhaps feel that their soldiers are here under a good banner, here to fight Communists."

Reason for Attacks

"So if the American people see that it is the Vietnamese people, the people in the South, who are hurting the American soldiers, they will better understand the situation," she added.

The head of the movement, Nguyen Xuan Thong, is a 25-year-old senior in the faculty of Science at Saigon University. He appears to be a gentle, softspoken and almost cautious man.

"The root of our hatred for the Americans perhaps goes back to the way we felt about the French," he said. "We think by hurting a G.I. we can cause more of a shock in America than by hurting an important official, and if we burn the jeep of an American soldier, that is trouble. If we burn the car of the Ambassador, or some big shot, then they can easily get another one."

Lam Thanh Qui, a 20-year-

old high school student, said any G.I. would be attacked who did not wear a peace symbol or show it on his vehicle's windshield. But there was some confusion in this group on the peace symbol. It was finally decided that American vehicles and soldiers had to show the one passed out by the movement. It is a slip of paper showing two hands breaking an American M-16 rifle. The words on the paper, in Vietnamese, say: "Down with the war of the M-16 rifle. Aggression by the American imperialists."

December Burning Cited

The leaders said their movement was responsible for the burning of 50 automobiles in the Saigon area last December after an American soldier shot and killed a 12-year-old student at Quinhon in Binh Dinh Province. American officials said at the time that the boy was killed after the soldier had fired warning shots to prevent other boys from stealing from an army truck. Two days of student demonstrations and riots drew national attention to the incident.

A similar situation followed the fatal shooting of a 16-year-old student by a G.I. in Hue

Sunday. It is believed that the boy was trying to steal the American's wristwatch. Since the rioting was ended by the police using water hoses and tear gas, Hue has been off limits to Americans.

A demonstration today by 300 Vietnamese in Hue was described as "orderly." One American vehicle was burned.

Headquarters for the Saigon assault groups is in the dormitories for male university students in Cholon, the Chinese section of the city. Tear-gas grenades were thrown into this student compound this morning after the burning of two

election posters of President Nguyen Van Thieu. The students intend to burn many more posters to show their contempt for the elections, for the President and for his American support, they said.

University and high school students, who ride on motorcycles, usually work in teams of four. The oldest student is usually the leader. He coordinates the reconnoitering, the attack and the getaway.

Do Trong Nam, 22 of the Van Hanh Buddhist University here, supervised the group that tried to burn the van today. Earlier in the day his group tried to burn a Thieu poster and failed.

G.I.'s and Trucks