

May 16, 1965

**Discussion between Zhou Enlai, Nguyen Van Hieu
and Nguyen Thi Binh**

Citation:

"Discussion between Zhou Enlai, Nguyen Van Hieu and Nguyen Thi Binh", May 16, 1965, Wilson Center Digital Archive, CWIHP Working Paper 22, "77 Conversations."
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/113060>

Summary:

Zhou Enlai addresses Nguyen Van Hieu and Nguyen Thi Binh concerning the steps to take should the US escalate in Vietnam and expand into China, comparing Vietnam to Korea.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

ZHOU ENLAI AND NGUYEN VAN HIEU, NGUYEN THI BINH^[1]

Beijing (The Great Hall of the People), 16 May 1965

Zhou Enlai: I had talks with Mr. Ayub Khan when he was preparing the trip to the US at the latter's invitation. I asked him to tell the US the following four sentences. I was sure that the US would ask him whether Pakistan, having good relations with China, knew of China's thoughts. He should then tell them these sentences and say that they were the opinions of the Chinese premier.

The first one: China will never launch a war against the US. Taiwan is a case in point. China has had talks with the US for 10 years already. We are persistent in the principle that the US should withdraw from Taiwan. The US, however, does not agree and the problem cannot be solved.

There should be peaceful coexistence but this must be based on the 5 principles of peaceful coexistence, not be unconditional. The US has not accepted it because they do not want to withdraw from Taiwan. Because they do not want to withdraw from Taiwan, it also means that they do not want to withdraw from South Vietnam. The people in Taiwan have not risen up as in South Vietnam. We have to render self-criticism to our shortcomings not to lead them to rise up.

The second one: China's words and deeds are consistent. We will go to Vietnam if Vietnam is in need, as we did in Korea.

The third one: China is now ready. It is clear to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam that the provinces bordering with it are ready. The whole of China is also ready.

The fourth: The war will have no limits if the US expands it to Chinese territory. The US can fight an air war. Yet, China also can fight a ground war.

^[1] Nguyen Van Hieu (1922-), a journalist and roving minister for the NLF, undertaking many goodwill tours abroad. He served as General Secretary of the NLF 1961-63. By 1967 he was nominally NLF ambassador to Cambodia, but was generally seen as responsible for NLF foreign affairs. In 1976 he became SRV minister of culture. Nguyen Thi Binh (1927-), Chief representative of the NLF at the Paris talks in 1968, Foreign Minister of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG) from its foundation in June 1969. Headed the PRG delegation in the Quadripartite negotiations in Paris. She became Minister of Education in 1976, was elected Vice President of the SRV in the early 1990s, and reelected in 1997.