

September 6, 1963

Telegram from the Central Intelligence Agency Station in Saigon to the Agency

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Summary:

Report from the CIA station in Saigon on Ngo Dinh Nhu, stating that he is opposed to neutralism in South Vietnam. He also discusses the difficulties of negotiating or even communicating with Hanoi.

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Contents:

Transcript - English

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...8. Nhu claims he answered Maneli to the effect that, while de Gaulle's statement was interesting, only combatants in this war had the right to speak and act. SVN [South Vietnam] is allied with the US and it would be an "immoral act" to explore such a problem unilaterally behind the back of the Americans. Commercial relations with North Vietnam would have inevitable political repercussions on the fighting morale and political clarity of SVN population. Maneli asked what was the next step and Nhu said he replied, "continue building strategic hamlets." To CAS [Controlled American Source, i.e., Central Intelligence Agency] Nhu said that he has no secret channel to Hanoi but could communicate through Goburdhun or Maneli if he wished. His contacts are with the Viet Cong in SVN and his objective with them is to win them over against North Vietnam...He states that he is adamantly opposed to neutralism, although CAS had not brought up this subject. Neutralism, according to Nhu, is completely contrary to GVN's [Government of Vietnam's] outlook and policy.

9. Without specifying, Maneli told [Nhu?][1] Saigon GVN would soon have four enemies against it, presumably including the US. Nhu says he answered Maneli with the comment that GVN [was] accustomed to being attacked from many sides and would prefer to go down with dignity than to live on its knees. Nhu told CAS that neither GVN nor any other government could possibly negotiate with Hanoi either openly or secretly, except after having won a guerrilla war and not in term of neutralization, but rather within the framework of a strong SVN seeking to incorporate North Vietnam within a free world order...

[1] "[Nhu?]" in original source.