

June 6, 1956
**Letter from the President (Syngman Rhee) to
Minister Duk Shin Choi**

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Summary:

President Rhee orders Choi Duk Shin to no longer pursue the creation of a South Korea-South Vietnamese defense pact.

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CONFIDENTIAL

To: Minister Duk Shin Choi

From: The President

I wish to thank you for your two confidential reports Nos. 1 and 2 and attached letter dated May 25.

I have carefully studied your discussion with the American Ambassador to Saigon. From the points I gather that Vietnam is not free to make any open or written military pact or alliance without the concurrence of a third power, particularly America. As you know, we accepted the Vietnamese proposal but they must do all they can to have some agreement or understanding with a third power.

I caution you not to urge them to any action because you will only embarrass them. On our side we are rather hesitant due to the fact that if any military difficulty arises here we will have very little hope of getting protection from Vietnamese forces. For the sake of mutual protection we are willing to make a treaty but, as I said before, we have no reason to urge them.

The same thing goes for inviting ROK instructors to Vietnam. It was outlined to you that according to the agreement they are unable to reinforce their army with a foreign contingent and that even American military personnel is restricted to this prohibition. In spite of the fact that President Diem does not consider the armistice final I doubt that he will risk doing anything to upset the friendly powers. I wish you would not pursue the matter further unless they ask you.

cc: The Acting Foreign Minister

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