

# U.S. Expected to Demand Ouster of Nhus in South Viet Nam

Editor's note: In the following dispatch United Press International correspondent Neil Sheehan presents the background, issues involved and United States attitude in the religious-political crisis in South Viet Nam.

By NEIL SHEEHAN  
Saigon, Viet Nam — (UPI) — President Ngo Dinh Diem's prolonged dispute with Buddhist leaders ended in shouts and screams last month when government troops and police stormed pagodas and herded thousands of Buddhists and other dissident elements off to jails and detention camps.

The sacking of the pagodas and the mass arrests, engineered by Diem's brother and chief political adviser Ngo Dinh Nhu, who took the occasion to put himself in control of most of the real power here, also brought sharp criticism from the United States.

Both here and in Washington, high-ranking American officials were shocked and dismayed by the nationwide crackdown since they had received solemn assurances from Diem and Nhu that the government's policy toward the Buddhist majority was conciliatory.

The State Department, which formerly had been lavishing praise on Diem's government, issued a statement disassociating the United States from these moves.

Diplomatic sources here say the crackdown has forced the United States to completely re-evaluate its policy toward Diem's government.

A Voice of America broadcast said officials in Washington had absolved South Viet Nam's top-ranking army leaders of any responsibility for the sacking of the pagodas and the mass arrests and put the blame squarely on the shoulders of Nhu and the secret police and special troops he controls.

The broadcast also said officials in Washington had warned that massive American aid to South Viet Nam might be sharply reduced if Diem did not get rid of the secret police officials responsible for the attacks.

The broadcast did not say that Diem would also have to get rid of Nhu, but this was clearly implied since the blame was pinned on him.

Although the State Department later said the V.O.A. was "in error" and denied that U.S. aid here might be sharply reduced, reliable diplomatic sources reaffirm that the V.O.A. broadcast was a statement of a new hardline U.S. policy here.

**Against Troop Withdrawal**

However, President Kennedy made it clear that he does not agree with those who advocate a withdrawal of American troops and the \$500 million yearly in U.S. aid from South Viet Nam.

"That would be a great mistake," he said this week. "I know people don't like Americans to be engaged in this kind of an effort. Forty seven Americans have been killed in combat with the enemy, but this is a very important struggle even though it is far away."

Nevertheless, the President warned that the Diem regime's dispute with the Buddhists imperiled South Viet Nam in its fight against communism. He said the attacks on the pagodas on Aug. 21 were "very unwise."

"We are prepared to continue to assist them," Kennedy said, "but I don't think that the war can be won unless the people support the effort and, in my opinion, in the last two months, the government has gotten out of touch with the people."

"In the final analysis, it's their war. They are the ones who have to win it or lose it. We can help them, give them equipment, we can send our men out there as advisers, but they have to win it, the people of Viet Nam, against the Communists."

The sources here say the denial by the State Department was made because it was later decided that this blunt public statement of policy was premature from a tactical point of view and it might unduly tie the hands of the new American Ambassador to South Viet Nam, Henry Cabot Lodge.

**U. S. Opposes Nhu**

The United States has now decided, these reliable sources say, that it can no longer afford to support a government here which includes Nhu and his beautiful but hot-tempered and outspoken wife, who has called the Buddhists "traitors" and their fiery suicides in protest against the government's religious policies "barbecues."

The Nhus always have been unpopular in this country, but it is felt that they now are hated by large segments of the population because of the crackdown.

These sources say the U.S. has decided it would have no chance of winning this largely political war against the Communist guerrillas in alliance with a government which the Nhus actually control.

Although Lodge so far has merely sparred with Diem and Nhu in talks here, these sources say he will shortly demand that Diem get rid of the Nhus.

**Expected to Resist**

Diem is not, however, expected to give in to the American demands. He has come to depend almost totally on his family to run the government, and, as these sources point out, the present regime in South Viet Nam is not a Diem government, but a family government.

These sources expect that the United States will have to follow through with its threat to sharply reduce aid here even at the expense of temporarily weakening the war effort.

It is widely believed here that only a coup by dissatisfied elements of the army could oust the Nhus.

With a new government—even a junta—the United States feels it would have more hope of winning this war, the stakes of which are the Indochinese rice bowl at a minimum, and perhaps all of Southeast Asia at the maximum.

Diplomatic sources noted that the State Department's announcement absolving the army leaders of all responsibility for the Buddhist crackdown was clearly an attempt to free their hands, and could be read as an invitation to a coup.

**Becoming More Explosive**

The same sources, however, feel that as the United States and the Ngo family move toward a head-and-head encounter, the situation is becoming more explosive. And uncontrolled explosions, they point out, can as easily name the man on the throwing end as the man on the catching end of the bomb.

Nhu and his wife, considered the strongest personality in the family, are not expected to give up without an intense struggle, which could easily end in violence to U.S. personnel and installations here.

According to sources, Nhu will try over the next few days to calm down the United States by making some purportedly conciliatory moves on the surface and telling the United States the Buddhist crisis is now over and things should return to normal.

**Reopening Pagodas**

The government is now repairing the ransacked pagodas and will release a number of priests and nuns to reopen them soon, the sources say.

The government also has released most of the students, numbering well over a thousand, who were arrested last Sunday.

Observers here believe the nationwide crackdown on Buddhists here not only has washed out U.S. chances of winning the war against the Communist guerrillas with the presently constituted Vietnamese government, but also has seriously damaged U.S. prestige in other Buddhist countries in Asia.

The crackdown may also put the U.S. in an even more embarrassing position if the Buddhist issue comes up in the United Nations General Assembly as it well may.



**USES CREDIT**—Duke, a German Shepherd dog, knows how to beat the heat at Navato, Calif. He has a charge account with Mrs. Joseph Spontini, who operates an ice cream truck. Duke gets his ice cream from the head of the line while his young master, Terry Gaffney, stands behind him. Terry's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gaffney, will pick up the tab for Duke's coolant. (UPI)

## Leg Show Pleases Automobile Group

Washington — (UPI) — You always know there were sound reasons for looking at a pretty girl's legs, didn't you? Your wife had you all wrong.

## WAVING ON HIGH

Philadelphia — (UPI) — Two window washers, stranded seven stories high when their scaffold motor failed, waved at passers-by for two hours Wednesday for help but got only waves in return. One man finally figured they were stuck and called firemen. The men, Reginald Mason and Preston Satterfield, also tapped on the sealed windows but the office workers inside only waved back.

Well, the American Automobile association has come to your aid. The AAA applauds the rising hemlines of women's skirts and calls for more of the same.

The AAA says it's "not blind to the beauty of the fair sex," but the reason it wants as much leg as possible to show is because of traffic safety.

The AAA noted that automobile headlights readily pick up the stockings or bare legs of women pedestrians at night.

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