

*(without
attachment)*

The tactical moves suggested by Washington are examined individually below. First we must make a few general comments applying to them.

The value of these tactical moves, or gestures, is symbolic. In themselves they will not put great pressure on the GVN, but they can exert immense pressure if appropriately publicized in each case, as symbols of U.S. determination to proceed, albeit moderately, to certain clear results. Properly publicized, they can undermine the "political credit rating" of certain individuals (e.g. Nhu and Diem), and show that the Ngo Family no longer has the important Confucian "Mandate of Heaven."

2. Timing is essential. The tactical moves cannot be trotted out at any time, without immediate provocation, as bits of gratuitous hostility. Each move must immediately follow a real or ostensible provocation on the part of the GVN, showing a cause and effect relationship. (We are receiving such provocations every day in the Times of Vietnam alone, so this should not be a problem. Still we must admit that three weeks ago would have been the best time to move.)

3. The tactical moves must be part of a larger plan having a definite purpose. Unless we are willing to put up, we have no choice but to shut up. Specifically, since the ARVN military is still the only force capable of effecting a non-communist takeover, negotiations with the military should proceed concurrently (presumably via Col. Conein).

(4. Even if we do not intend a takeover, the U.S. is, of course, still free to withhold aid on programs it considers unwise or repugnant, and should do so,

but such would come within normal business-as-usual, and is not what Washington is (interesting.)

5. Publicity or exploitation of tactical moves may vary from use of VOA, to leaking to the foreign press, to merely passing the word to key GVN officials, etc.

Specific Comments:

1. GVN written guarantees. Good idea, but with a clear caveat: This action should only be taken on programs to which a suspension of aid would not cripple the economy or the war effort. Reasoning: GVN would probably refuse guarantees, as such would imply they either had committed repressions or were about to do so. Then we would have to suspend aid to the program concerned. If the program was not vital, U.S. objectives would not be damaged, and appropriate publicity to the GVN refusal would put the GVN in a very bad light and greatly improve the U.S. image.

2. Combat Police and DGI. Good.

3. Hamlet Militia Leaders - Col. Tung. Excellent. Quiet publicity should be given to the fact that the U.S. is not interested in supporting personal political vehicles of Ngo Dinh Nhu.

4. DOD Psywar. We would withhold funds without stating the reasons, and when pressed by DOD Psywar, tell them "informally" that we want to help but are not willing to support the Naus, etc. Then let them make the next move. We cannot be overtly blatant about this, as it would induce a premature confrontation.