

**TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM**

**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

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CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS  
**NOFORN/CONTINUED CONTROL**

**FILE**

COUNTRY	SOUTH VIETNAM	REPORT NO.	[ ]	(b)(3)
SUBJECT	VIEWS OF NGO DINH NHU ON THE VALUE OF STRATEGIC HAMLETS	DATE DISTR.	24 JULY 1962	
DATE OF INFO.	[ ]	PRECEDENCE	ROUTINE	
PLACE & DATE ACQ.	VIETNAM, SAIGON [ ]	REFERENCES	IN 33475	(b)(3)
APPRAISAL	SEE BELOW [ ]	<b>RETAIN OR DESTROY</b>		(b)(3)

THIS IS **UNEVALUATED** INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

1. NGO DINH NHU, BROTHER AND POLITICAL ADVISOR OF PRESIDENT NGO DINH DIEM, SAID [ ] THAT HE HAS NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE DANGER IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF TOO MANY STRATEGIC HAMLETS TOO QUICKLY AND THAT HE IS AWARE OF THE FACT THAT MANY OFFICIALS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) HAVE NOT GRASPED FULLY ENOUGH THE VARIETY OF CONCEPTS BEHIND THE STRATEGIC HAMLET PROGRAM. CERTAIN OF THE MEDICAL AND CIVIC ACTION BENEFITS ENVISIONED FOR THE PROGRAM MIGHT BE PREMATURE BECAUSE SOME OF THE HAMLET AND VILLAGE LEADERS ARE INCLINED TO TAKE OVER THESE BENEFITS FOR THEIR PERSONAL AND PRIVATE USE.

2. AS A RESULT OF NHU'S COMPLAINTS OVER THE POOR QUALITY OF

- ~~LONGAN~~
- ~~KAYSER~~
- ~~KILDUFF~~
- ~~PETERSEN~~
- ~~SCHLESINGER~~
- ~~TAYLOR~~
- ~~BELK~~
- ~~ROBERTSON~~
- ~~JOHNSON~~
- ~~KLEIN~~
- ~~KOMER~~
- ~~RASKIN~~
- ~~SAUNDERS~~

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GROUP 1  
Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and  
declassification

STATE	ARMY/ACSI	NAVY	AIR	JCS	SECDEF	NSA	NIC	USIA	OCI	ONE	OCR	ORR	OO	DIA	EXO
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TRAINEES SELECTED FOR THE FIRST STRATEGIC HAMLET TRAINING COURSE AND HIS INSISTENCE ON MORE CAREFUL SELECTION OF FUTURE TRAINEES, THOSE SENT TO THE SECOND COURSE, WHICH OPENED 2 JULY, WERE ASSISTANT DISTRICT CHIEFS OR PERSONS OF COMPARABLE LEVEL IN THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION. NHU PLANS TO ENSURE THAT ALL 200 DISTRICT CHIEFS AND OTHER PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS OF COMPARABLE RANK ATTEND THE TRAINING COURSE. WHEREAS, UP UNTIL A SHORT TIME AGO THE STRATEGIC HAMLET PROGRAM WAS NEITHER FULLY UNDERSTOOD NOR ACCEPTED OFFICIALLY OR POPULARLY, IT HAS NOW STARTED TO GAIN MOMENTUM.

3. USING THE STRATEGIC HAMLET PROGRAM AS A BASIC APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF ECONOMIC UNDERDEVELOPMENT, ESPECIALLY IN THE AGRARIAN SECTOR THAT IS REPRESENTATIVE OF MOST UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES, NHU PLANS TO AVOID THE COMMUNIST SOLUTION OR THE STATE SOCIALIST SOLUTION BEING ATTEMPTED IN OTHER COUNTRIES. WHILE RECOGNIZING THE NEED FOR ADEQUATE GOVERNMENT CENTRALIZATION IN DEALING WITH THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SOUTH VIETNAM, HE HOPES TO ACHIEVE A PROPER BALANCE BETWEEN GOVERNMENTAL CENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL AUTONOMY, I.E., VILLAGE OR COMMUNITY AUTONOMY, BASED ON LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND INITIATIVE. THE STRATEGIC HAMLET PROGRAM IS EXPECTED TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF SOLIDARITY OR COHESION AMONG THE VILLAGES. THE VIETNAMESE VILLAGER HAS GROWN UP HISTORICALLY UNDER THE CONFUCIAN "HIERARCHY OF VALUES," BUT THIS SYSTEM HAS

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BEEN OVERTAKEN BY HISTORY AND IS NO LONGER APPLICABLE. THIS SYSTEM TENDED TO BENEFIT THE ESTABLISHED CLASSES PRIMARILY AND TO PERPETRATE ABUSE, CORRUPTION, USURY, AND TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT, HEREDITARY LEADERSHIP BASED ON WEALTH AND POSITION. WITH THE PASSING OF THE CONFUCIAN SYSTEM IT BECAME NECESSARY TO SEEK A NEW MEANS OF PROVIDING FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND COHESION AS WELL AS FOR A NEW "HIERARCHY OF VALUES."

4. NHU HAS BEEN SEEKING THIS MEANS THROUGH THE CONCEPT OF PERSONALISM AND THROUGH THE STRATEGIC HAMLET PROGRAM. NHU SAID THAT HE HAD GRADUALLY ACQUIRED HIS IDEAS DURING HIS STUDENT DAYS AND ASSOCIATIONS IN FRANCE DURING THE NINETEEN THIRTIES. HE CLAIMS TO BE A HEGELIAN IN BELIEVING THAT THE IDEA IS THE PRIMARY MOTIVE POWER AND BECOMES REALITY SO LONG AS THE IDEA IS RIGHT OR RATIONAL; COMMUNISM MUST BE COUNTERED BY OPPOSING VALUES AND IDEAS OR WITH SOME SORT OF DOCTRINE.

5. UNTIL RECENTLY THE RURAL PEOPLE WERE CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO OPPOSING FORCES, I.E., THE COMMUNISTS AND THE GVN, AND THEY WERE INCLINED TO CHOOSE NEITHER SIDE IN ORDER TO AVOID TROUBLE. THE PEASANTS HAVE HAD NO REASON TO CHOOSE THE DIEM REGIME WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS OLIGARCHIC, CORRUPT, BOURGEOIS, AND NOT SUFFICIENTLY MODERN. IT IS TACTICALLY WRONG TO ASK THE PEASANTS TO FIGHT THE COMMUNISTS IN DEFENSE OF THE GVN; THEY SHOULD BE ASKED TO DEFEND

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THEMSELVES THEIR INTERESTS, THEIR VALUES, AND THEIR VILLAGES. THE PRESENT REGIME WILL BE REPLACED SOONER RATHER THAN LATER UNLESS IT ACHIEVES A MORE REVOLUTIONARY QUALITY.

6. THE STRATEGIC HAMLETS, BY BRINGING THE PEOPLE INTO PERSONAL COMBAT WITH THE COMMUNISTS FOR THEIR OWN SELF INTEREST, HAVE A VARIETY OF ADVANTAGES. BEFORE THE PEASANTS BECAME COMBATANTS, THEY TENDED TO REJECT THE YOUNG MEN OF THEIR VILLAGES WHO JOINED THE ARMY, REPROACHING THEM AS DUPES OR INSTRUMENTS OF THE REGIME WHO WERE BEING USED TO FIGHT THEIR OWN PEOPLE. THE SOLDIER WAS NO HERO IN HIS HOME VILLAGE AND FOUND IT DANGEROUS TO GO THERE ON LEAVE BECAUSE OF THE PROBABILITY THAT THE COMMUNISTS WOULD KILL HIM. WITH THE EXPANSION OF THE STRATEGIC HAMLET PROGRAM AND THE PARTICIPATION OF THE LOCAL CIVILIANS IN THEIR OWN SELF DEFENSE, THE SOLDIER CAN SAFELY RETURN TO HIS VILLAGE WHERE HE IS VIEWED AS A DEFENDER OF THE PEOPLE AND CONSEQUENTLY MORE OF A HERO TO THEM.

7. NHU HAS OPPOSED THE USE OF MILITARY GUARD POSTS FOR EIGHT YEARS. THESE POSTS HAVE HISTORICALLY BEEN ISOLATED FROM THE LOCAL POPULACE, WHO HAVE OFTEN BEEN VICTIMIZED BY THEM. THE SOLDIERS, FOR INSTANCE, WOULD POCKET THE MONEY PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE POSTS AND WOULD LEVY WORK AND MONETARY REQUIREMENTS ON THE PEOPLE IN ORDER TO BUILD THE POST. NHU FEELS THAT THESE POSTS ARE USELESS BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT STRONG ENOUGH

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AND PARTICULARLY BECAUSE THEY SEPARATE THE PEOPLE AND THE ARMY.

8. FIELD DISSEM: STATE ARMY NAVY AIR USMACV MAAG USOM  
CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF.

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