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Former Diem Adviser Favors Counterattack

By CAROLYN BARTA



—Dallas News Staff Photo.

Father De Jaegher . . .
"At the conference table,
we would certainly lose."

A former personal adviser to the late President Diem of South Vietnam said here Tuesday he feels United States forces should make a "counterattack" in North Vietnam now, while the Chinese Communists are fighting within their party.

The Rev. R. J. De Jaegher said the United States should not only bomb Hanoi and Haiphong, but should also "land and try to take over."

"This would not be an invasion," he stressed. "It would be a counterattack. They attack in the south, so we counterattack in the north."

At a press conference preceding a talk at the University of Dallas Tuesday night, the Catholic priest said the United States stands less chance of getting in a war now with Communist China because "they have too many problems of their own."

He cited the Red Guard movement which is trying to gain control of China.

If they are busy with a division within the party, they cannot go to war in Vietnam now." He added, however, that "they can go later."

Father De Jaegher said he met Ngo Dinh Diem in China in 1947 and became his friend. He acted as his consultant in Vietnam from 1955 to 1963, primarily on problems with China and the Chinese Communists.

A native of Belgium, Father De Jaegher spent most of his life in China before becoming an adviser to Diem. While in Vietnam, he founded two high schools, a news agency, magazine and daily newspaper.

Now serving in the diocese of Taipei, Formosa, Father de Jaegher feels the United States should try to win the war quickly in Vietnam.

"The more the South Vietnamese suffer, the less chance we have," he said, "because of Communist subversion." The Communists want to destroy the morale and population of the

Vietnamese until the people will be willing to say, 'American, go home.'"

He added that the North Vietnamese do not want an all-out war because they know that the military strength of the United States is "too great."

They would rather win the war through Communist propaganda, he said, by telling the people "no more suffering, we have peace."

At the conference table, Father De Jaegher thinks the United States "would certainly lose." He added that Hanoi refuses to go to the conference table because the North Vietnamese feel they can defeat South Vietnam, but that isn't all they want.

"It's not only South Vietnam at stake, but all of Southeast Asia."

Father De Jaegher spoke at a public lecture at the University of Dallas sponsored by the university's Politics and Economics Union and Kappa Rho chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, national history society.

He earlier was the luncheon guest of Gen. Paul D. Harkins, former commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam.

O. likes this idea.

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