

Agnew Says Hanoi Seeks Press Coup

From News Dispatches

SINGAPORE, July 5 — Vice President Spiro T. Agnew said today that the North Vietnamese are likely to launch a pinpoint attack that will give them a "public relations coup" because of the way U.S. news media will report it.

He said such an attack, which would come when U.S. forces are sufficiently reduced, would "be played heavily as failure of the Vietnamization program in the United States."

The attack wouldn't succeed militarily, Agnew told reporters, but "success in the military sense is a lot different from a public relations coup, which is easily achieved because so many of our people in the national media are too ready to assist the North Vietnamese by their overemphasis on what's taking place.

"I don't think they mean to assist them," Agnew continued, "but we've gone through this terrible introspective, almost masochistic twinge of conscience in our country regarding the Vietnam war where we look with favor on anything good that happens to the enemy."

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Asked if the South Vietnamese would soon be strong enough to stop such an attack without help of U.S. combat troops, Agnew replied:

"They'll never be strong enough to stop a pinpointed attack where the enemy is willing to take the casualties, because this kind of attack is a potential at any time, in any country, under any circumstances.

"The point is, will the attack be related to the American

people in perspective, or will it be distorted as a complete defeat for the Vietnamization program?"

Pressed whether the South Vietnamese could defeat such an attack after it started, Agnew answered, "Of course they can defeat it, but the question is will the defeat be properly related to the American people?"

Agnew talked with newsmen accompanying him on his round-the-world trip before lunch and a golf game with

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew.

Meanwhile, it was disclosed today that President Nixon wants to accelerate the current U.S. military withdrawal from South Vietnam as long as it does not jeopardize the security of the country.

At a news briefing yesterday en route from Seoul to Singapore, the text of which was not released until today, Vice President Agnew said he was certain from conversation with the President and his ad-

visers that Mr. Nixon wanted to speed up the troop withdrawals, but without jeopardizing South Vietnam's defense position.

"That doesn't mean that we underwrite fully forever the Thieu government," the vice president said. "They must take over their own defense in due course.

"But it does mean that they must have a fighting chance to survive under conditions that we went in there to protect," he added.