

Nixon Warns His Peace Critics On Possible Blame if Talks Fail

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 10— President Nixon laid down today a sharp challenge to Democratic critics of his Vietnam peace proposals by warning that they might have to share the blame if the Paris negotiations failed.

In a formal speech to the nation yesterday, Mr. Nixon tried to soften some of the charges leveled by his senior aides against his critics, merely asking that Democratic candidates say nothing that "might give the enemy an incentive to prolong the war until after the election."

Today, however, in off-the-cuff responses to questions at an impromptu news conference in his office, he sharpened his language to drive home his be-

lief that criticism of his proposals might encourage the enemy to wait for the election of another President before starting serious talks.

"The responsibility for the enemy's failing to negotiate may have to be borne by those who encourage the enemy to wait until after the election," Mr. Nixon said as the news conference drew to a close.

The President's comments came during another day in the escalating warfare between the Administration and its critics over the proper boundaries of domestic dissent in a political year. The White House, for vari-

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ous reasons, has chosen to fight rather than ignore its opponents, and today two more of Mr. Nixon's associates added to the verbal artillery.

Attorney General John N. Mitchell, addressing a group of Republicans here tonight, did not attack the leading Democratic critics directly.

Instead, he praised three Democrats—Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Senator Henry M. Jackson, both candidates, and Mike Mansfield of Montana, the Senate majority leader—for not "doing or saying anything to undercut the President's negotiating position."

In California, Communications Director Herbert G. Klein told the Orange County Lincoln Club that Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine, the frontrunner for the Democratic nomination, had "undermined prospects of a negotiated settlement in Vietnam" in what Mr. Klein called "an obvious attempt to placate the left wing of his party."

At his news conference, Mr. Nixon drew a sharp distinction between criticisms aimed at the origins and conduct of a war, on the one hand, and criticisms aimed at attempts to end that war on the other.

"There is, in my view—and I do not ask others to hold it, I ask them to consider it—a very great difference between criticizing policies that got us into war and criticizing the conduct of the war, and criticisms by a Presidential candidate of a policy to end the war," Mr. Nixon said.

He recalled that he had criticized what he regarded as diplomatic errors that encouraged the invasion of South Vietnam—including the partition of Laos—and that he had not been happy with President Johnson's conduct of the war.

But he said that after he had become a candidate—and after President Johnson had announced he would not run for another term—he had not attacked Mr. Johnson's efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement.

Mr. Nixon then asked his opponents to "consult their own conscience" and adopt whatever course they wished. But near the end of the news conference he said that both he and the American people might judge them harshly.

"Each of these candidates may feel that the peace proposal that we have made is one that they don't think goes far enough," he said. "They may feel that we should make one that would overthrow the Government of South Vietnam, or some other proposal that would satisfy the enemy. They have a right to say that. The American people will have to judge."

"But I am suggesting now

sharply disputed the wisdom of his critics.

Lindsay Speaks in Boston

Special to The New York Times

BOSTON, Feb. 10— Mayor Lindsay of New York renewed his attack on the Nixon Administration tonight for not speaking out against the British for the fatal shooting of 13 Roman Catholics during a demonstration in Londonderry or against the Pakistani "slaughter" of the people of Bengal.

Mr. Lindsay's criticism was made in remarks prepared for delivery before a predominantly Irish-American audience at a rally at the Lithuanian Citizen's Association, in South Boston. The Mayor was introduced by Boston Councilman John J. Moakley, who yesterday endorsed his Presidential campaign.

"The refusal of the United States to speak out in support of those who struggle for basic social justice in Ulster is indefensible," Mr. Lindsay said. "Our Government should speak out. But it also raises a question."

"For how can we expect the world to listen to our calls for justice and the return of civil rights, and an end to military violence, until we have had the courage to admit our own wrongs in Vietnam?"



United Press International
Lawrence F. O'Brien, Democratic party chairman, responded to President.

that we have made a proposal that is fair, it is forthcoming, it should be negotiated on, and the responsibility for the enemy's failing to negotiate may have to be borne by those who encourage the enemy to wait until after the election."

Mr. Nixon mentioned none of his Democratic opponents by name but was clearly referring to Senator George McGovern, who has proposed ending recognition of the regime of South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu, and Senator Muskie, who has urged increased pressure on the Saigon regime to seek a political accommodation with the enemy.

The President did not answer directly when reporters asked him to comment on the remarks of H. R. Haldeman, his chief of staff, who said on television last Monday that some of Mr. Nixon's critics were "consciously aiding and abetting the enemy of the United States."

Throughout the news conference, Mr. Haldeman sat on a nearby couch.

Mr. Nixon said that he made himself clear in yesterday's speech, in which he asserted that he did not question the patriotism and sincerity "of those who disagree with my policies to bring peace."

But he made clear that he