

Nixon's Hopes Dim For Vietnam Pact



— Jack Anderson

PRESIDENT NIXON has abandoned any real hope, say insiders, of achieving a Vietnam settlement.

When the peace talks began in Paris, U.S. strategists expected long, painful negotiations. But they believed a political settlement could be negotiated.

Now the White House is convinced that the Paris Peace Talks will produce nothing but propaganda. The only hope is to produce a stalemate that will prevent a communist takeover.

The invasions of Cambodia and Laos clearly hurt Hanoi and strengthened Saigon. But rather than make the North Vietnamese more conciliatory at the truce table, these attacks made them more recalcitrant.

The communist negotiators seem determined not to negotiate a settlement that would appear to have been forced by military action.

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J EDGAR HOOVER, the scourge of public enemies, communist spies and other forces of evil, has been intimidated by a 26-year-old reporter.

The FBI chief, astonishingly, believes his "personal safety" is threatened by Charles Elliott, a reporter on my staff.

Except perhaps for a Jesse James mustache, there is nothing menacing about Chuck Elliott. He is a mild-mannered, self-effacing young man, a little on the hefty side, rumped in appearance, who shuffles quietly around Washington in pursuit of news.

I asked him last January to keep an FBI-like eye on Hoover. From time to

time, Chuck tailed him, inspected his trash and questioned his neighbors.

We never intended to frighten the great G-man. We merely wanted to dramatize, by this little burlesque, our distaste for some of the FBI's snooping tactics. We also thought it might be in the public interest to reduce Hoover, for 47 years a Washington deity, to human proportions.

For example, Chuck discovered evidence in Hoover's trash, that the great man suffers from gas pains.

All this, if audacious, seemed harmless enough to us. But apparently Hoover felt his personal security has been jeopardized.

First, there were countermeasures straight out of a Sunday night FBI television episode. Two FBI types appeared at Chuck's door, got him to identify himself, then snapped his picture and rushed off.

Then Chuck's roommate who happens to be the son of an FBI agent, told his father about Chuck. The roommate, Peter Ruehl, said he merely wanted to alert his father in case the FBI should discover the relationship.

Ruehl assured us he had said nothing about Chuck that should have caused alarm.

The father, Vincent Ruehl, promptly notified Hoover. Not long afterward, Peter received a cryptic note from the FBI chief:

"I am grateful for your actions with respect to Charles Elliott," wrote Hoover. "Your concern for my personal safety means a great deal to me personally."