

How Hanoi Uses The Peace Talks

TRYING TO END the Vietnam war by negotiating with Communist enemy representatives in Paris — either in public or in private — is far more than a futile waste of time for the United States.

It is, and has been for the last three years, a self-defeating effort that serves the cause of Hanoi and nothing else.

When they agreed to the Paris talks, North Vietnam and the Viet Cong had no intention of conceding anything for the sake of peace, and they have not.

Right along they have demanded not only a total and unconditional withdrawal of American and Allied forces, but our active aid in deposing the Saigon government.

In sticking to demands that amount to nothing less than our dishonorable surrender, and simultaneously using the Paris talks as a propaganda forum, the enemy has been playing one of the shrewdest games in the Communist manual—using a pose of negotiation as a key weapon of war.

They succeeded, diabolically. Much of the world came to swallow the Red line that the U.S. was a monstrous intruder in a patriotic struggle for independence instead of being an all too idealistic country trying to save another from ruthless aggression.

FAR WORSE, countless Americans and many of their representatives in Congress also took up the Communist line — that it is the U.S. which is immorally prolonging a war the Communists are anxious to settle on just terms.

President Nixon, in making public the far more than generous peace proposals privately offered the enemy in Paris, at least in part has illuminated the Communist duplicity and confounded his home front war critics—at least temporarily.

Administration spokesmen have voiced hope that disclosure of the proposals may yet result in meaningful negotiations in Paris — pointing out that the enemy, despite a clearly negative reaction, has not flatly refused further discussion of our offer.

Of course the enemy has not. They want those talks to go on and on. The Communist propaganda forum in Paris is still Hanoi's best single hope of achieving the total victory it seeks and is determined to get.