

China Would Join Talks on Vietnam

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China would join in an international conference on Vietnam similar to the 1954 Geneva talks that ended France's war in Indochina, but it should be in an "Asian framework," the leader of the Australian Labor party said yesterday.

Gough Whitman made the statement on his return from 12 days in China as head of a Labor delegation. He talked with Premier Chou En-lai and other leaders.

"I discussed the Geneva Conference and its revival with Chou, and the Chinese

are quite willing to participate in any renewed Geneva Conference," Whitlam told a news conference.

Whitlam, whose party is opposed to Australia's participation in the Vietnam war, pointed out that Britain and the Soviet Union, conveners of the 1954 conference, both are European and only one of the three nations on the policing International Control Commission is Asian. The three nations are India, Canada and Poland.

He did not enlarge on Chou's ideas about a new conference, but said "administrative arrangements . . . would have to be more in an Asian framework."

It seemed likely those also were Chou's views, although Whitlam did not say so.

Whitlam sent Prime Minister William McMahon of Australia a cable from Peking saying he felt the Viet Cong's July 1 peace proposal gave the United States "an honorable opportunity for early disengagement."

He said yesterday he still holds that view and added that Peking endorses the Viet Cong proposals.

"This is a real initiative by

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the other side for American disengagement," he said. "For this reason the American government has been very slow rejecting it. One would hope for an American response."

The new Viet Cong plan proposes release of all prisoners of war simultaneously with U.S. troop withdrawals if the United States pulls out all its forces by the end of this year.