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Asia Expert Says Peace Talks Must Be Widened

By HEDRICK SMITH

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—A former Government specialist on Asia said today that allied intervention in Cambodia had made it "almost impossible" to negotiate a Vietnam settlement in Paris without enlarging the talks to deal with Cambodia and Laos as well.

Chester L. Cooper, former aide to W. Averell Harriman and for two decades a Government official said at a news conference that he believed that President Nixon's latest proposal for an Indochina conference and an Indochina cease-fire reflected recognition that the Paris talks were unlikely to make much progress as presently constituted.

"After Cambodia," Mr. Cooper said, "it's almost impossible to settle Vietnam separately. You can't settle Cambodia without Sihanouk and you can't deal with Sihanouk without China." Prince Norodom Sihanouk, deposed in Cambodia in March, is now in Peking.

Mr. Cooper spoke at a news conference to publicize his forthcoming book on the two decades of American policy in Indochina, "The Last Crusade," to be published by Dodd, Mead & Co.

Ex-Aide to Harriman Asserts Cambodia and Laos Should Be Dealt With, Too

In his book Mr. Cooper makes disclosures about secret efforts to arrange Vietnam peace negotiations or to press them forward. Among the disclosures are the following:

¶President Johnson was close to approving a restriction of American bombing of North Vietnam in May, 1967, 10 months before he actually took that step. But the Joint Chiefs of Staff appealed for a delay to permit them to raid "one juicy target"—Hanoi's thermal power plant. Efforts to revive the idea of a restriction a month later were received coolly by the White House.

¶Last November, a group that included Cyrus R. Vance, a negotiator in Paris for the Johnson Administration, proposed a "holiday peace package" to the White House. This would have included an unlimited cease-fire starting Christmas Eve and withdrawal of all American forces by the end of 1971.

¶Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin told President Johnson at their meeting in Glassboro, N. J., in

June, 1967, that Hanoi was prepared to start negotiations if the United States halted its bombing of North Vietnam. The United States gave a "cautious, tentative" reply, inquiring about how soon the talks would start and other details but "nothing more was heard from Moscow or Hanoi."

Mr. Cooper began his career in Asia during World War II with the Office of Strategic Services and later shifted to its successor, the Central Intelligence Agency. He then worked in the White House and the State Department, resigning from the Government in October, 1967, to become director of international and social studies for the Institute for Defense Analyses.

In response to questions, he suggested that the Nixon Administration should now be gearing up for open Presidential elections in South Vietnam next fall, with plans to withdraw virtually all American forces by the end of 1971.