LISTENING TO PEACE PROPOSALS: Vietnamese civilians in Saigon during President Nguyen Van Thieu's speech

Private and Public U.S. Statements on Peace Efforts

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26—
A series of secret diplomatic efforts to end the war in Vietnam formed the central disclosure made by President Nixon last night and discussed today by Henry A. Kissinger, his adviser on national security. Following is a listing of some of the formerly secret events, with a comparison of the publicly known and privately held activities that surrounded them:

First Kissinger Trip

PRIVATE
President Nixon said that he had sent Mr. Kissinger to Paris on Aug. 4, 1969, to begin a series of secret peace negotiations.

PUBLIC
Five days before the beginning of the secret discussions, the President declared during a visit to Saigon, "We have gone as far as we can or should go in opening the door to negotiations which will bring peace. It is time for the other side to sit down with us and talk seriously about ways to stop the killing, to put an end to this tragic war which has brought to great destruction to friend and foe alike."

On July 25, 1969, Mr. Nixon outlined to reporters on Guam a Nixon doctrine for Asia, with twin precepts of a United States commitment to honor treaty obligations to allies and a requirement that the allies assume responsibility for their own defense.

Throughout 1969 and 1970, the President voiced skepticism about the Paris peace talks and emphasized, as an alternative, a program of Vietnamization to strengthen South Vietnamese combat forces while withdrawing United States troops.

In April, 1970, Mr. Nixon sent United States troops into Cambodia and, in February, 1971, provided American air support for a South Vietnamese incursion into Laos. Both campaigns were designed, the President said, to weaken the enemy forces and purchase time for the Vietnamization program.

On Oct. 7, the President proposed in a televised address a cease-fire throughout Indochina, exchange of prisoners of war and a broadened peace conference to cover all of Indochina. The offer rejected.

Today, in addition to refusing to give details of his first meeting, Mr. Kissinger declined to discuss the five subsequent meetings during 1969 and 1970, "because they are not relevant to our immediate concern."

Second Kissinger Trip

PRIVATE
The President said last night that Mr. Kissinger conveyed a United States offer "to agree to a deadline for the withdrawal of all American forces in exchange for the release of all prisoners of war and a cease-fire."

PUBLIC
At a news conference on April 29, 1971, Mr. Nixon declared that the setting of a date for unilateral United States withdrawals "is not something that is in our interest; it is only in the enemy's interest."
Vietnamese knew when the United States would leave Vietnam, he said, they would have an incentive to negotiate with the United States toward peace.

On June 28, spurred by an intensive Administration lobbying effort, the House of Representatives, which had declined to instruct its conferees on the draft bill to accept the Mansfield amendment, voted for its passage, thereby committing the government to a major escalation of the war.

The President disclosed on Aug. 16, 1971, that the United States had put in writing its willingness to "abide by the outcome of any political process in South Vietnam" and that the Communist were not "committed to any particular government."

At a news conference on Sept. 13, 1971, Mr. Nixon defended Mr. President Thieu's election position as an uncontested candidate for a second term. He said it had taken England 500 years to achieve Parliamentary democracy and a democratic system "didn't spring up full grown when the United States neutrality "would not take over" and warned that if there were a Congressional change in American policy forcing him to "move more precipitately, then everything that we have fought for in South Vietnam could be lost."

The impression among Senate war critics that the peace talks were being disregarded prompted Senator Mansfield to attempt to revive his proposal for a withdrawal, accompanied by release of prisoners, in nine months. The White House, arguing that such a unilateral declaration would tie the hands of the negotiators, mounted a successful lobbying campaign to defeat the measure.

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PUBLIC

The White House described the public plan as one with "positive, as well as clearly unacceptable elements," but neither here nor in Paris did Mr. Nixon offer a direct reply. Criticism from antiwar spokesmen grew during the summer as the public plan went unanswered.

On July 13, the White House made known that it would replace the ailing Ambassador to the Paris talks, David K. E. Bruce, with William J. Porter. On July 15, Mr. Nixon announced that he would send a delegation to Peking to meet Chinese officials in a search for world peace. He subsequently warned that it would be risky to expect a Vietnam settlement to emerge from the China meeting, which has been scheduled for Feb. 21 to 23.


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10th Kissinger Trip

PRIVATE

The President disclosed that the United States offered to undertake a "major reconstruction program" throughout Indochina, including North Vietnam, and that the United States, which the White House said it could not accept. In a search for an "agreement in principle," the secret talks dealt in June and July with the nine points, Mr. Kissinger said.

Ambassador Bruce, retiring on July 29, complained that the Communists were demanding "unilateral action from us on troop withdrawals as the price for even beginning discussion on other issues." In a letter to Mr. Nixon, Mr. Bruce said that it was the Communists, "and they alone, who bear the heavy responsibility for the continuation of the war in Indochina."

11th Kissinger Trip

PRIVATE

Mr. Nixon said that on Aug. 10, 1971, Mr. Kissinger offered "the complete withdrawal of United States and allied forces within nine months after an agreement on an over-all settlement." Mr. Kissinger said that this included the designation of Aug. 1, 1972, as a deadline if the North Vietnamese agreed on an over-all settlement by Nov. 1, 1971. The United States also offered to limit its aid to South Vietnam if North Vietnam would agree to a limitation and to the principle of a neutral South Vietnam if acceptable to "all the other countries of Indochina."

PUBLIC

At a Public appearance in Portland, Ore., on Sept. 25, the President said he has given his consistent search for a Vietnam solution that would allow a "Communist takeover" and warned that if there were a Congressional change in American policy forcing him to "move more precipitately, then everybody believes that we have fought for in South Vietnam could be lost."

Secret Message to Hanoi

PRIVATE

On Oct. 11, Mr. Nixon sent to North Vietnam a written, eight-point peace plan — essentially, Mr. Kissinger said, as it was outlined last night — in an attempt to break the deadlock. It reduced the withdrawal period from nine months to six and offered new, internationally monitored Presidential elections in South Vietnam. Despite efforts to arrange another secret negotiation session, the White House said, the North Vietnamese had not replied to the proposal.
On Nov. 12, after announcing additional troop withdrawals, Mr. Nixon hinted at secret peace talks and said he was determined to secure the release of war prisoners. Mr. Nixon added, however, that he would "not like to leave the impression that we see the possibility of some striking breakthrough in negotiations in the near future."

Last night, in disclosing the secret negotiations in a television and radio address, Mr. Nixon pledged a flexible approach to the issues. He said that he was making the record public because, "just as secret negotiations can sometimes break a public deadlock, public disclosure may help to break a secret deadlock."