

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1970

Bruce Asks Check on Vietnam's Prisons

By HENRY GINIGER

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, Dec. 3—The United States proposed today that all prisoner facilities in North and South Vietnam be opened to inspection and recommendations by an impartial international organization such as the Red Cross.

The proposal was presented by David K. E. Bruce, chief of the American delegation at the Vietnam peace talks here. But North Vietnam and the Vietcong demanded in turn that the United States agree to leave Vietnam by next June 30 and said that this was the only way to settle questions, including that of prisoners of war.

To that demand, Mr. Bruce "remained as mute as a mangel," Nguyen Than Le, Hanoi's press spokesman said. With neither side accepting the other's proposals, the result of the 93d session of the peace talks was some five hours of fruitless talk.

Exchange of Charges

both during the formal session and in the subsequent briefing period, the opposing delegations traded charges of inhumanity. The Communists stressed American bombing and what they termed indiscriminate killings and destruction while the United States and South Vietnam stressed the treatment accorded prisoners of the Communists.

Discussing the prisoners, Mr. Bruce called for agreement on measures necessary for the International Committee of the Red Cross "or some other impartial observer, to visit reg-

ularly all prisoner camps in North and South Vietnam."

"We would also agree," he added, "that each of us would be guided by recommendations of that commission on treatment of prisoners."

Stephen H. Ledogar, the United States spokesman, explained later that prisoner camps of all types, including those holding people guilty of civilian crimes, would be included. The Communists have been critical of some camps housing civilian prisoners.

Mr. Ledogar additionally indicated that the proposal had been all-inclusive so as not to give the North Vietnamese a reason to open to inspection some camps but not others.

The camps would include those operated in South Vietnam by the Vietcong. The South Vietnam of Government has a list of 3,000 people who it believes are held by the Vietcong.

Response by Communists

Mr. Bruce did not give much detail of his proposal at the formal session and when he returned to the United States Embassy from the International Conference Center on the Avenue Kleber, he neglected to mention the proposal to the press until he was prompted by Mr. Ledogar.

Mr. Bruce said that he did not consider that the Communists had given an answer, although, he added, "they showed a strong lack of sympathy, to put it mildly." He added that they had appeared rather surprised and had not been prepared to answer.

Instead of outright rejection, the Communists termed the proposal "a perfidious maneuver to deceive opinion and

to camouflage unspeakable crimes." Ly Van Sau, spokesman for the Vietcong's provisional revolutionary government, also said that the inspection proposal had not been new and had constituted "a deliberate maneuver to elude discussion of fundamental questions."

Mr. Sau and Mr. Le both said that the fundamental questions continued to be American military withdrawal and the removal of the present Saigon Government.

Issue Pressed by House Panel

WASHINGTON, Dec. 3 (UPI)

—The House Armed Services Committee voted, 28 to 2, today to recommend that the United States refuse to negotiate with North Vietnam on other questions "until there is substantive progress on the prisoner-of-war issue."

The chairman, Representative L. Mendel Rivers, Democrat of South Carolina, sponsored the motion. He said he understood that the State Department opposed it.

The only votes against the resolution were by Representative Robert L. Leggett, Democrat of California, and Representative Lucien N. Nedzi, Democrat of Michigan.