

# C.I.A. Says Plan Seeks to Embarrass U.S.

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WASHINGTON, July 8—The Central Intelligence Agency has told President Nixon that the new Vietcong peace proposal is aimed at embarrassing the United States "both at home and overseas" and encouraging the opponents of President Nguyen Van Thieu in South Vietnam.

Other negative comments on the plan were contained in a detailed analysis submitted to Mr. Nixon and other top Administration officials last Friday a day after Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh, the chief Vietcong delegate, offered her proposals at the Paris talks.

The agency's evaluation, according to senior Administration officials, was one of several top-level studies of the Communist plan on which President Nixon and Secretary of State William P. Rogers based their decision to instruct the United States delegation in Paris to seek further clarifications today from the Communist side in "restricted sessions," or private talks.

## Reservations Expressed

The evaluation as well as the parallel studies prepared in recent days by the State and Defense Departments and the National Security Council staff have expressed numerous serious reservations about the Vietcong plan.

But all the studies also found new elements in the plan. The C.I.A. paper, for example, noted that "it softens" the Communist position on the American prisoners of war and presents "two new nuances" on the South Vietnamese political settlement. For this reason, senior officials said, the Administration chose to seek to engage in what officials here termed "meaningful negotiations."

Senior officials emphasized that they did not consider the fact that the Communists had not responded immediately to the proposal for "restricted" sessions, made today in Paris by David K. E. Bruce, the chief United States negotiator, as an outright rejection.

They said that "something resembling a negotiating process may be in the making."

At San Clemente, Calif., where President Nixon and Mr. Rogers conferred for the third time this week on strategy in the Paris talks, a White House spokesman, Gerald L. Warren, said that Mr. Bruce was attempting to start "meaningful negotiations."

The State Department press officer, Charles W. Bray 3d, said here about the Bruce proposal that "we regret that the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong did not respond affirmatively to this suggestion but continue to hope that they will do so."

## Nixon Expected to Wait

Highly-placed officials indicated their belief that President Nixon would refrain from publicly expressing his views on the developments in the talks until the situation became "much clearer" through public or private exchanges in Paris.

They said that only after such clarifications would Mr. Nixon address the nation on the state of the negotiations. They recalled that last year he had waited nearly three weeks after the Communists presented their peace plan on Sept. 17 before making his counter-proposal on Oct. 7.

"At this stage, we are not prepared to reject or to accept anything as a package," a senior official said. "We are looking and we are probing because this is the business of diplomacy."

Other officials said that the negotiating situation would be reviewed again when Henry A.

Kissinger joins Mr. Nixon and Mr. Rogers in San Clemente on Sunday. The next scheduled session of the Paris talks is next Thursday.

Mr. Kissinger, the President's special assistant for national security affairs, visited Saigon last weekend and is to confer with Mr. Bruce in Paris on Saturday.

Richard Helms, the Director of Central Intelligence, whose agency was reported to have drafted the first analysis of the Vietcong plan, participated in the discussions on the United States response to the Communist proposals after he flew to San Clemente with President Nixon and Mr. Rogers last Tuesday.

Officials familiar with various Administration evaluations of the Vietcong plan said that the C. I. A. analysis was "perhaps the most pessimistic—but also the most realistic—of the lot."

Its over-all conclusion, contained in the first paragraph of the document, said:

"The Vietcong's new seven-point proposal softens the Communists' position on the prisoner-of-war release but retains and amplifies a very tough line on United States disengagement from the war. In addition, it repackages Hanoi's demands for a political settlement in South Vietnam in a superficially more attractive form."

## New Nuances Recognized

The analysis recognized, however, that "there are two new nuances in the Communist position on a political settlement in South Vietnam."

The principal features of Mrs. Binh's plan were the Communist readiness to start releasing United States war prisoners as American troops begin withdrawing from Vietnam after a date "in 1971" is set by Washington, and the dropping of the Communists' long-standing insistence on a coalition regime in Saigon as the condition for a political settlement.

But after analyzing the plan, the C. I. A. offered this assessment of the Communist motives in presenting their July 1 proposals:

"The Communists doubtless hope that their initiative on the prisoners—coupled as it is with a restatement of their basic position on United States withdrawals—will make things awkward for the United States Government both at home and overseas."

"They may also believe that their political proposals will appeal to many in the United States who are looking for a face-saving way out of the war. They probably are also hoping that the new proposal will fuel worries in Saigon about Washington's longer-term support."

"The new formula for a political settlement in South Vietnam, by its fuzziness and air of reasonableness, is designed both to encourage individuals in South Vietnam whose support of the war is wavering and to give some ammunition to those who are already working to build an anti-Thieu, anti-war constituency."

## Coincidence of Beliefs

This aspect of the analysis was known to coincide with the belief in other Administration quarters that the Communist peace plan was launched, at least in part, to influence the outcome of the October elections in South Vietnam, where President Nguyen Van Thieu is seeking re-election.

In this context, the analysis noted that "among other things the Communists seem intent on creating the impression that the election of Big Minh could prove an initial step toward peace."

"Big Minh" is Gen. Duong Van Minh, a potential but undeclared presidential candidate

upon whom Hanoi and the Vietcong had looked with favor in the past.

The analysis said that the Vietcong plan's first "new nuance" was that instead of demanding a coalition regime in Hanoi, it "simply demands that the United States 'cease backing the bellicose group' headed by Thieu."

The other nuance, it said, is that the Communists no longer ask a "three-segment" regime, including Communists, but a broad "government of national concord" to be negotiated by the Vietcong with a "post-Thieu administration."

"The Communists seem to be trying to leave the impression that the form of government is open to negotiation," the document said. "Moreover, the language of this section—and indeed much of the statement—is cast to convey an image of

conciliation and reasonableness without committing Hanoi to anything specific."

The analysts also warned against pitfalls in the Communist proposal for releasing the American prisoners in exchange for the withdrawal of United States troops from Vietnam under a set deadline. This has appeared to be the most attractive aspect of Mrs. Binh's peace package.

But the analysis said that while "the formulation on the prisoner-release question is new," the Communist demand on total United States military disengagement "is as firm as ever."

"Moreover, by including for the first time civilian as well as military prisoners, the Communists are opening the whole thorny problem of the Communist civilian cadre who are now held by Saigon," it said.