

VIETCONG PRESENT REVISED PROPOSAL AT TALKS IN PARIS

New Version of Peace Offer
Does Not Directly Call on
U.S. to Remove Thieu

BASIC DEMANDS STAND
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Plan Says Saigon President
Must Quit, Then a Parley
on Coalition Can Begin

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PARIS, Feb. 3 — The Vietcong presented at the peace talks here today a revised version of their seven-point peace plan of last July that appeared more conciliatory to the present South Vietnamese Government.

Acting with North Vietnamese support, they called for the immediate resignation of President Nguyen Van Thieu and said they would then enter

Excerpts from Vietcong plan
are printed on Page 4.

into negotiations with the Saigon administration if it changed what they described as its policy of waging war and repression.

The United States was not directly asked to oust the South Vietnamese President as in the past, nor did the revised plan repeat the earlier demand for a new administration in Saigon. However, the Vietcong reiterated their basic demands for total and unconditional American withdrawal and said the United States should set "a precise date."

U.S. Plan Rejected

At the same time the eight-point American peace proposal, which was advanced in a secret message to the North Vietnamese last Oct. 11 and disclosed by President Nixon Jan. 25, was called "unacceptable for all persons of conscience devoted to independence, freedom and peace." The statement was made by Xuan Thuy, the North Vietnamese delegate.

As described by President Nixon, the United States position is that there would be an American withdrawal and a new South Vietnamese presidential election six months after an agreement on ending the war. Under the plan President Thieu would resign one month before such an election.

The allied reaction to the revised Vietcong plan seemed somewhat uncoordinated. The South Vietnamese rejected it. The Americans appeared more cautious. During today's session William J. Porter, the United States delegate, asked numerous questions of the Communists but received no direct replies.

Stephen Ledogar, the American delegation's press spokesman, commented:

"They kept telling us to study this new initiative. There is nothing to study, not until we have some idea of what, if anything, it means. On the face of it, it means nothing."

Later Mr. Ledogar made it

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clear that some studying would go on. He said he saw in the revised Vietcong plan a hardening in the proposals dealing with military issues. As for the political side, he declared, "We will have to study it."

Further on, he said he was interested in the Communist motives that might hold out a possibility for negotiations.

"If the other side is interested in exchanging information," he said, "there is room for progress. If the other side is interested in some face-lifting of their public position, then there is not much hope."

After the session there was a widespread belief here that the Communists were, at the least, on a propaganda counteroffensive. The purpose, it is believed, would be to regain whatever ground they may have lost by President Nixon's disclosures last week of the secret talks that Henry A. Kissinger, his

special assistant for national security affairs, conducted with the North Vietnamese last year in an effort to find common ground for an agreement.

Mr. Nixon reported in his telecast Jan. 25 that the secret talks had ended in November when the North Vietnamese said three days before a scheduled session that their senior negotiator, Le Duc Tho, was ill.

Last Monday the North Vietnamese followed up Mr. Nixon's disclosures by making public several documents that had previously been secret, among them their own nine-point peace plan. They had presented it at one of the secret talks last June 26, five days before the Vietcong put forward their original seven-point program at the regular peace talks here.

At today's session Mr. Thuy, the North Vietnamese delegate, called the American proposals "a plan to pursue a policy of

Vietnamization of the war" and to prolong the war itself.

"Such a plan is, of course, unacceptable for all persons of conscience devoted to independence, freedom and peace," Mr. Thuy declared.

Broadcast From Hanoi

The revised Vietcong proposals were made public in a statement broadcast from Hanoi last night and presented here today by Nguyen Van Tien, the chief Vietcong delegate. Ly Van San, the Vietcong delegation's spokesman, described as new the plan's call for "a precise date for the complete withdrawal from South Vietnam of all troops, military advisers and personnel, arms, war equipment of the United States and of other foreign countries in the American camp without putting any condition whatever."

He said that previously his side had proposed a withdrawal date for the United States to

accept. It was recalled, however, that the Vietcong had usually accompanied such a proposal with the suggestion that if it was not acceptable the United States should suggest a "reasonable" date of its own.

The Americans saw a hardening of the Communist position in that it made no mention of a cease-fire, as the original Vietcong plan did in its first point or the nine-point North Vietnamese plan did in its seventh point. Today's formulation also did not specify parallel liberation of prisoners as troops were withdrawn, which previous proposals have specified.

The point on a political solution differs markedly in language from previous plans.

The original Vietcong plan had envisaged a "new administration favoring peace, independence, neutrality and democracy" with which the so-called Provisional Revolutionary Gov-

ernment would negotiate to form a coalition.

The new proposal, in addition to calling for the resignation of Mr. Thieu, says the Saigon administration must end "its bellicose policy, abolish its apparatus of repression and coercion against the population, put an end to the policy of pacification, dissolve the concentration camps, liberate persons arrested for political reasons and guarantee the democratic freedoms stipulated by the 1954 Geneva accords on Vietnam."

The chief Vietcong delegate, Mr. Tien, said when he emerged from the conference hall that "if the United States and Saigon delegates have goodwill," they would find "new elements" in the revised plan.

Nguyen Trieu Dan, Saigon's spokesman, said, "What the Communists want is the destruction of the legality and the legitimacy of the regime in the person of President Thieu."