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SF Examiner

Hoffa Puts OffHanoi POW Trip

New York - (UPI) - Former Teamsters Union President James Hoffa said today he had been invited to Hanoi to meet with American prisoners of war but "certain conditions" made him decide not to go at this time.

He said he might go at a later date.

Got Permission

Before his decision not to go, Hoffa had received the permission of both the State Department and the U.S. Parole Board to see the prisoners and if possible to try to win their release.

Hoffa is on parole in connection with the 4½-year jail term he recently completed on a jury-tampering charge.

"I am on my way back to Detroit this evening and I am not on my way to Hanoi," Hoffa said in New York. "I am not planning to go at this time."

Trade Unions

Hoffa said he had been invited by the Vietnam Trade Unions to make the trip in discussions he held with the North Vietnamese group "over the last three months."

He added that the trade unions told him he could

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meet with American prisoners of war.

He said there were "certain conditions" which made him decide not to make the trip even after the arrangements had been made. He would not say what the conditions were.

Not Discussed

Hoffa added that he had not had any discussion on the subject with President Nixon or "anybody at the White House."

First news that Hoffa might make such a trip was released by presidential news secretary Ronald Ziegler earlier today.

State Department officials said Hoffa called at the passport office Wednesday morning with his lawyer, William Taube, to apply for

passports.

Granted Quickly

They were granted quickly under the department's "expedite procedures" and specially validated for travel to North Vietnam.

Hoffa had written a letter to Secretary of State William Rogers, saying he had been invited to Hanoi as a guest and to discuss the prisoner of war question.

Officials said the letter was not immediately forwarded to Rogers but was brought to the attention of lower-level officials.

Probation Given

Charles Hengstebeck, chief U.S. Probation Officer for eastern Michigan, said Hoffa applied Sept. 1 for 30 days grace for the trip.

"We had no hesitancy at all about granting permission to make a trip like that," said Hengstebeck.

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