

Transcript of Kissinger's News Conference

PARIS, June 13—Following is a transcript of a news conference today by Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon's adviser on national security affairs as recorded by The New York Times:

Ladies and gentlemen.

First of all I want to thank those of you who have been following me around for these many sessions, in November, December and January and now, for your patience, sometimes at the risk of your neck. I regret that I haven't been able to be more communicative at the end of each session. These negotiations are somewhat complex and involve many parties.

I understand that there has already been a previous briefing which went through the details. Let me say very briefly what we consider to be the significance of this communiqué; then I will answer your questions.

As you know, during most of March and April the United States became quite concerned by the manner in which the cease-fire agreement was being implemented. We were specifically concerned by the following points:

One, the inadequate implementation of the cease-fire.

Secondly, continued infiltration into South Vietnam and continued utilization of Laos and Cambodia as corridors for that infiltration.

Three, we were concerned about the inadequate accounting for the missing in action.

Fourthly, we were concerned about the violation of the demilitarized zone.

Fifth, we were concerned about the inadequate cooperation of the International Control Commission and the slower staffing of the Two-Party Military Commission.

Six, we were concerned about the violations of Article 20 according to the withdrawal of foreign troops from Cambodia and Laos.

Complaints on Other Side

Needless to say, the other side has its list of complaints. In these circumstances we proposed that Mr. Le Duc Tho and I meet again to review the implementation of the agreement that had been so painfully negotiated last fall. There was a preliminary meeting between Ambassador Sullivan and Prime Minister Thach, and then on May 17 Le Duc Tho and I met again and reached some preliminary conclusions.

We were in daily contact with the Government of South Vietnam through its delegation here, through our embassy in Saigon and sent Ambassador Sullivan to Saigon for further consultation, returned here, negotiations continued. There was a slight interruption last Saturday, and we reached a final conclusion today.

By the content of the joint communiqué concerned, we believe that we have achieved a satisfactory conclusion of the points that were of principal concern to the United States. There is, as you know a new—there is to be issued a new order on a



The New York Times/All N... (partially obscured)

Bombs dropped by U.S. planes fall on Communist post near Cambodian soldiers

cease-fire which is to go into effect probably 36 hours from now and which we hope and expect will be implemented.

Secondly, it is a clear repetition of the prohibition against the introduction of personnel and material into South Vietnam except as replacements of Article 7 of the original agreement and according to procedures agreed to by the two parties. There is an explicit reference to the effect for the demilitarized zone and to the prohibition of using [inaudible] into the demilitarized zone for the replacement provisions of the treaty.

The provisions for missing in action—all sides have pledged that they would make major efforts to help each other to account for the missing in action throughout Indochina, and this is a matter which is of great concern to the United States.

Laos and Cambodia

A Two-Party Military Commission is to be fully set up, and special assurances have been given in Paragraph 12 about cooperation with the International Control Commission by all the parties to grant them reasonable freedom. In respect to Laos and Cambodia the communiqué says that the provisions of Article 20 are to be scrupulously observed.

There have been long discussions on the whole complex of issues raised by Laos and Cambodia. However, the

final determinations depend on the solemn decisions of other parties. We will not discuss this subject here, and we will leave it to the results and new events, to testify to progress.

The other subject that has been discussed and which I have left separately is that of political evolution in South Vietnam. As you know the United States has always taken the view that the political evolution of South Vietnam is to be decided by the South Vietnamese. And therefore the United States has always believed, and that is reflected in the communiqué, that the political future of South Vietnam should be determined by a process of free and democratic general elections. The other provisions regarding the political evolution reaffirmed what was said in Chapter 4 of the cease-fire communication.

Now we have today signed a communiqué, ladies and gentlemen, and the history of Indochina is replete with agreements and joint declarations. I'm not naive enough to pretend to you that the mere fact of again having agreed to certain words in itself guarantees peace. But I will also say that since all parties have worked so seriously for the past three weeks, we have every hope that they will match this effort with performance.

And therefore there is great hope and, we hope, a

new spirit in the implementation of the agreement which in itself is maintained, what was signed today is an amplification and a consolidation of the original agreement—it is not a new agreement.

Now the people of Indochina, and especially the people of Vietnam, have suffered conflict for a generation. Our greatest effort has been to end their suffering and to restore peace, and it is our hope that by what has been done today a significant step has been taken in the consolidation of peace in Vietnam and Indochina.

And now I'll be glad to answer your questions.

No 'Scorecard' Provided

For my own education, would you identify yourself?

Q. What were the changes in the communiqué that made it acceptable to the South Vietnamese Government?

A. I don't think it is useful to go through all the details of the negotiations and to provide a scorecard. In any negotiation there are impasses reached that afterward are rather complex to explain. I would be glad to explain one difficulty that existed, which was perhaps not of monumental substance or significance but which was perhaps extremely time-consuming, and which concerned the form of signing of the communiqué.

The United States began by proposing that it should be a two-party communiqué

on the Results of the Paris Talks

between Hanoi and the United States and a recommendation to the South Vietnamese parties. The North Vietnamese proposed that it should be a two-party communiqué signed with the concurrence of the South Vietnamese parties. The South Vietnamese proposed that it should be a four-party communiqué. We accepted a four-party communiqué at which point Saigon proposed that it should be a two-party communiqué with recommendations to the two South Vietnamese parties, which induced Hanoi to accept the four-party communiqué. We then as a compromise accepted Hanoi's proposal of a two-party communiqué with the concurrence of the South Vietnamese parties.

There was one fleeting moment where Saigon had our position, we had Hanoi's position and Hanoi had Saigon's position. So one must not believe that every time that a great deal of time is spent in order to confirm vital issues of war and peace—this was one of the issues that took some time, but I will never discuss every issue that arose.

Political Solutions

Q. Dr. Kissinger, besides the fact that the other parties did negotiate seriously, what else makes you think that they are now willing to work together seriously for a political solution in Indochina and not a military one?

A. I think that the whole evolution of the Indochina tragedy, that the Vietnamese war, has been a slow realization by all parties that they could not impose a military solution on each other. This has been a very painful process for all concerned because, I think it is safe to say, that the art of compromise is not the most highly developed quality in Vietnam. I believe that the realities of the situation both before the cease-fire agreement, and I think it is safe to say since the cease-fire agreement, may have proved to the parties concerned the necessity of first peace before existence and eventually some political solution. But I repeat, I did not say that this was guaranteed. It is undoubtedly a process which will have its ups and downs, but we enter it with new faith, with the intention of contributing what we can to easing the situation and promoting the peace.

Q. Point 5 of the communiqué today deals with the two-side military leaders getting together to agree on what areas are controlled. Since the January agreement of the 27th, they have not been able to agree on an agenda for political discussions. Why is there reason to believe that they will be able to agree on what areas they militarily control?

A. Events will show very quickly whether they will be able to agree. One of the reasons why the two-party military has not worked sufficiently as had been hoped was because of the difficulty of agreeing on location and immunity. And that problem has been or should have been substantially solved by this agreement. With respect to

area controls and modalities of station, it is of course our view that this is determined by the military presence and on that basis both sides after it feels its part in the treaty should be able empirically to determine where the forces are located and on that basis delimit the zones of the military control.

One reason it has not worked previously is because the cease-fire was not fully observed. The extent that this new cease-fire order goes into effect, at 4 o'clock Greenwich mean time on the 15th, to the extent that that is observed, the delimitation of areas of control should be substantially eased.

Major Issues Remain

Q. Do you believe now that with the signing of this document you have more or less ended your work or that you will have a lot of difficulties?

A. The main issues in Indochina will still require a significant diplomatic effort, and we expect to continue them. Of course we remain committed to the strict implementation of the agreement and we will maintain our interests in it. I hope to be able to reduce my own participation in this process in order to be able to preserve my emotional stability.

Q. I believe that the question that was just asked has to do with American aerial work and the operation in Cambodia. If it was not, what I would like to ask is, is there anything agreed in this communiqué which substantially commits the United States to cease such operations?

A. There is nothing in this communiqué that commits the United States to cease such operations. It is our hope, and we shall make major efforts in that direction, and we are making major efforts in that direction, to continue the—that it will produce a cease-fire in Cambodia.

Q. Can I ask you what there is in the communiqué released today besides the goodwill and seriousness of the people who negotiated it, that will make it work better than the agreement that was negotiated on Jan. 27?

A. There is nothing in any communiqué that makes a communiqué work. The communiqué works because the parties concerned intend to implement it. Therefore, all a communiqué or an agreement can do is to prescribe what the obligations of the various parties are. To the extent that this communiqué lays out the specific obligations and reaffirms them it can contribute to the consolidation of peace. But it is never words alone that produces peace. It is the combination of words, intentions and the consequences of performance.

Schedule Is Defined

Q. I find in the communiqué one new point, and that is that your Government has agreed to conclude the first phase of the talks on the Joint Economic Commission with the North Vietnamese within 15 days after the signing of the accord. If I understand the American process of negotiation, I was

under the impression that in the fact the negotiations on the joint economic aid were to some extent meant to be a guarantee that North Vietnam does apply the accords. Have you managed to obtain some understanding or some guarantees from the North Vietnamese apart from what we have found in the communiqué, that they will apply the accords because I am rather surprised by the concession, if we can call it that.

A. The Joint Economic Commission has substantially completed its work at the point when we suspended negotiations, so that the schedule that is indicated in the communiqué is inherent in the resumption of negotiations.

The United States has always made clear that the final implementation of the economic clauses of the agreement have to be seen as part of the total implementation of the agreement, and of course many of you know that even after the Joint Economic Commission has completed its work, its results first have to be submitted to the conference, and secondly will have to be approved by the conference, which is not an automatic process. So there will be sufficient time in which to assess the implementation of the agreement. This Administration has left no doubt its program in the various forms is related to the overall implementation of the agreement.

Q. May I ask you a question off the subject of the Vietnam agreement?

A. Preferably not.

Q. Preferably not, but I may?

A. Well, you can ask it, then I will tell you whether I answer it.

Q. I wonder if you would be prepared to say why you went to see Chi Peng Fei today, on whose initiative, and what you talked about.

A. The Foreign Minister of China is an old friend whom I have seen repeatedly in Peking, and since we are both in the same town, a courtesy visit was arranged. It lasted 50 minutes. But you'll have to allow time for translation.

Effect of Close Contact

Q. I would like to ask, Dr. Kissinger, what kind of [inaudible] you have over the last few months in connection with the cease-fire violations? Are they intentional or accidental, controlled or out of control, on the other side, naturally?

A. In a situation where many of the forces are mingled together in very close contact, an implementation of cease-fire is of course extremely difficult. The first thing to remember is that the level of violence since Jan. 27 has dropped very widely, and it is at the lowest level that it has been in a decade.

I would say that there are daily reports of major and minor violations. I think it is safe to say that of the minor violations a significant percentage is produced by the proximity of the forces and not necessarily by deliberate design. In the case of the major violations, which have averaged around 15 a day, I think it is safe to say that a

significant majority is produced by the deliberate decisions, often of local commanders, but in any case by deliberate decision.

Q. Both the Saigon Government and, I believe, the American Government, have said they were very eager to tie down a date for free and democratic elections in South Vietnam. On the surface of the communiqué there doesn't seem to be any such tying down or linking. Are you satisfied that significant progress is being made in that particular direction?

We have two separate processes. One is the desirability of the day for general elections and the suitability of the four-party document as far as such a day goes. For that cause, when we negotiated this agreement the Saigon Government very properly took the view that it would be inappropriate for the United States or for an international document to prescribe the specific day for elections. And we spent many days on that issue, because it was at that time that the North Vietnamese wanted to find out a day, and it was we who followed the recommendations of the Saigon Government and did not do so.

Under these circumstances it is impossible for the United States to insist now on what it refused in December. Nevertheless, we have always taken the view that the political future of South Vietnam should be left to the South Vietnamese and that free and democratic general elections should be a central element in determining that future.

Individually, we support the South Vietnamese proposal that a time should be fixed for that election. We think it is a reasonable proposal. But in the line of negotiating history, it was inappropriate to introduce into a communiqué which was supposed to bring about the implementation of the agreement a clause which was not part of the original agreement, and which was not part of the original agreement at the request of the South Vietnamese Government. But nevertheless, as far as the internal negotiations are concerned, we think the South Vietnamese demand is real, and we hope it could be accepted.

Q. If this agreement does work out, do you think there is an interest of necessity in negotiating a third agreement?

A. It is a prospect I cannot face today. When we sign an agreement, we hope that it will be implemented, and whatever difficulties there are should be principally discussed between the Vietnamese parties. I don't want to go into the question of what happens in the case of violations before we have even concluded the two-party signature. We have negotiated this in good faith after a long war, a great deal of suffering, with the hope that at last the parties concerned will draw the conclusions from the overwhelming reality in Vietnam that nobody can have his way by force.

Thank you very much.