

# Nixon proposes Indochina cease-fire

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Nixon proposed Wednesday night a standstill cease-fire in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, immediate release of all prisoners and a broadened peace conference to seek a settlement of conflict throughout all of Indochina.

Departing in several major instances from previous American initiatives, Nixon said of his cease-fire plans: "My hope is that it will break the logjam in all the negotiations."

However, an administration official who insisted he not be identified by name said the administration would be surprised if the five-point Nixon plan were immediately accepted by North Vietnam and the Viet Cong.

He said officials in Washington are hopeful rather than the president's suggestions will trigger a process of exploration at the bargaining table.

In Paris, where it was early Thursday morning when Nixon spoke, the word from the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong delegations was that there would be no comment until later in the day.

Nixon, declaring that his program has the "full support" of the governments of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, said in a national television-radio address:

"The time has come for the government of North Vietnam to join its neighbors in a proposal to quit making war and to start making peace."

The President asserted the United States is prepared to negotiate a complete withdrawal of American troops from South Vietnam as part of any settlement. The anonymous administration official indicated the pull-out would be accomplished over a 12-month period once an agreement was reached.

Nixon called also for "the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of war held by both sides" — declaring that such moves "could serve to establish good faith, the intent to make progress, and thus improve the prospects for negotiation."

A fifth main point of the Nixon plan — presented in Paris today by chief U.S. negotiator David K. E. Bruce — calls on North Vietnam to recognize that there are two sides to the conflict in the South and that any meaningful settlement must satisfy both.

In this connection, he employed tough language at the only

point in his address. Referring to recent Viet Cong suggestions for a settlement that would, among other things, rule out continued office holding by Saigon President Nguyen Van Thieu and Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky, he said:

"Let there be no mistake about one essential point: the other side is not merely objecting to a few personalities. They want to dismantle the organized non-Communist forces and insure the takeover by one party, and they demand the right to exclude whomever they wish from government."

"This patently unreasonable demand is totally unacceptable."

While asserting that the United States is prepared to be flexible on many issues, Nixon said:

"We stand firm for the right of all the South Vietnamese people to determine for themselves the kind of government they want."

The chief executive said the Indochina-wide cease fire he seeks "must be effectively supervised by international observers" and that there should be safeguards against violations.

He put his suggestion in these terms:

"I propose that all armed forces throughout Indochina cease firing their weapons and remain in the positions they now hold. This would be a 'cease-fire-in-place.' It would not in itself be an end to the conflict, but it would accomplish one goal all of us have been working toward: an end to the killing."

Through diplomatic channels, the Soviet Union was given advance word earlier in the day of the general content of Nixon's address. And officials recalled that last April Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister Jacob Malik talked approvingly of a possible new Geneva conference to deal with the Vietnam war.

Said Nixon: "An international conference is needed to deal with the conflict in all three states of Indochina. This war in Indochina has been proved to be of one piece; it cannot be cured by treating only one of its areas of outbreak."

Nixon said "the essential elements of the Geneva accords of 1954 and 1962 remain valid as a basis for settlement of problems between states in the Indochina area" and that the United States would accept agreements reached by those nations.

"While we pursue the convening of an Indochina peace conference," Nixon said, "we will continue negotiations in Paris. Our proposal for a larger conference can be discussed there as well as through other diplomatic channels."

He said the Paris talks "will remain our primary forum for reaching a negotiated settlement" in the absence of a broader international meeting.

The White House official who briefed newsmen indicated the United States believes a larger conference should bring together those nations having the greatest interest in promoting peace in Southeast Asia. He said it would seem logical that the Soviets might want to be present and declared the United States certainly would not oppose such a development.

Nixon spoke less than three weeks in advance of the Nov. 3 off-year election and the briefing official was asked, in effect, if the five-point plan was expected to end Vietnam as a political issue.

The questioner was told that the administration does not treat Vietnam as a political matter and that Nixon put forward his ideas at the earliest moment when, in his best judgment, he felt he could do so responsibly.

The chief executive did not hold out any promise of further speeding withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, merely sticking to a previous pledge that by next spring more than 260,000 men will have been pulled out — "about one-half the number in South Vietnam when I took office."

After pointing with pride to what he termed the lowest U. S. casualty rates since early summer for any comparable period in 4½ years, Nixon said:

"We are ready to negotiate an agreed timetable for complete withdrawals as part of an overall settlement. We are prepared to withdraw all our forces as part of a settlement based on the principles I spelled out previously and the proposals I am making tonight."

The briefing officer, asked whether the latest package supplemented or replaced Nixon suggestions that came earlier, replied that Nixon's newest outline represents the new position of the United States.

In talking of the search for a political settlement, Nixon said the United States is governed by three principles:

"—We seek a political solution that reflects the will of the South Vietnamese people.

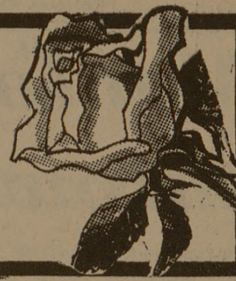
"—A fair political solution

would reflect the existing relationship of political forces.

"—We will abide by the outcome of the political process agreed upon."

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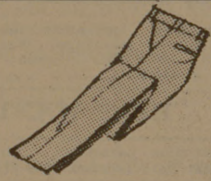
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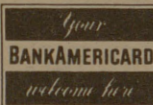
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The Basement — 8-11 p. m. Keith Sykes sings.

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Individual Residence Hall and Corp Outfit activities.

Townhall — 8:00 p. m. — G. Rollie White Glenn Yarbrough

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