

USA
7/14/71

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7/71

U.S. WANTS 'SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS' AT PARIS (870)

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IPS WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT

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SAN CLEMENTE, CALIFORNIA, JULY 14--THE WHITE HOUSE SAYS THE UNITED STATES IS INTERESTED IN MOVEMENT TOWARD SERIOUS NEGOTIATION OF A VIETNAM SETTLEMENT RATHER THAN A DRAWING UP A "SPECIFIC PACKAGE RESPONSE" TO THE VIET CONG'S JULY 1 PEACE PLAN.

PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY RONALD ZIEGLER TOLD NEWSMEN JULY 14 THE UNITED STATES IS PROBING, AT THE PARIS TALKS, THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE COMMUNIST SIDE IS READY TO MOVE TOWARD "MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATION" LEADING TO AN END OF THE CONFLICT.

"THE QUESTION BEFORE US," HE SAID, "IS WHETHER WE CAN HAVE MOVEMENT TOWARD MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATION." HE NOTED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS HAD ITS OWN PEACE FORMULA ON THE PARIS TABLE FOR SOME TIME.

MR. ZIEGLER SAID HE WANTED TO DRAW NEWSMEN AWAY FROM SPECULATION THAT MR. NIXON'S MEETINGS THIS WEEK WITH SECRETARY OF STATE ROGERS AND NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS ADVISER HENRY KISSINGER ARE PART OF THE FORMULATION OF A "SPECIFIC PACKAGE RESPONSE" TO THE PLAN ANNOUNCED BY MADAME BINH FOR THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT EARLIER THIS MONTH.

"THAT WOULD BE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT," HE SAID "FROM THE APPROACH WE ARE TAKING." HE ADDED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS ARE AIMED AT DETERMINING WHETHER THE OTHER SIDE IS INTERESTED IN MOVING TO SERIOUS NEGOTIATION OF VIETNAM QUESTIONS. "THAT," HE ASSERTED, "IS WHERE OUR INTEREST IS." PS

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THE COMMUNIST SIDE HAD PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED WHAT IT CALLED A 10-POINT PLAN FOR PEACE IN PARIS IN SEPTEMBER OF 1970. PRESIDENT NIXON MADE KNOWN HIS EIGHT-POINT PROPOSAL FOR AN INDOCHINA SETTLEMENT IN OCTOBER OF 1970.

AT THIS TIME, MR. ZIEGLER ASSERTED, THE ADMINISTRATION IS OBVIOUSLY CONSIDERING AND DISCUSSING THE PARIS TALKS, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF DR. KISSINGER'S RECENT RETURN FROM A 10-DAY, PRESIDENTIAL FACT-FINDING MISSION THAT TOOK HIM TO SOUTH VIETNAM AS WELL AS PARIS.

AND, HE WENT ON, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS PREVIOUSLY DECLARED IT FOUND "POSITIVE ELEMENTS" AS WELL AS OTHERS CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE IN THE LATEST VIET CONG PROPOSALS.

ATTEMPTS TO PROVE COMMUNIST INTENTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE COURSE OF THE PARIS SESSIONS WILL CONTINUE, MR. ZIEGLER SAID, EVEN AS MR. NIXON'S FOREIGN POLICY CONFERENCES WITH SECRETARY ROGERS AND DR. KISSINGER GO FORWARD. THE PROBES WILL CONTINUE TO BE DIRECTED BY AMBASSADOR DAVID K. E. BRUCE, CHIEF U.S. DELEGATE AT PARIS.

AMBASSADOR BRUCE WILL LEAVE THE PARIS POSITION NEXT MONTH --
ALTHOUGH THE PRECISE DATE HAS NOT YET BEEN DETERMINED --
BECAUSE OF A PROBLEM CONNECTED WITH A CIRCULATORY AILMENT.
THE AMBASSADOR INFORMED PRESIDENT NIXON OF THE PROBLEM LAST MAY^{PS}
26 WHILE HE WAS IN WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATIONS AND ASKED TO
BE RELIEVED OF HIS POST. MR. NIXON ASKED HIM TO STAY ON AT PARIS
AS LONG AS HE COULD, AND THE AMBASSADOR ACCORDINGLY EXTENDED
HIS TOUR SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS BEYOND HIS OWN DESIRES.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAY THE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT A REPLACEMENT
FOR AMBASSADOR BRUCE HAVE CENTERED ON AMBASSADOR WILLIAM PORTER,
U.S. ENVOY TO SOUTH KOREA. AMBASSADOR PORTER HAS SERVED
PREVIOUSLY AS DEPUTY U.S. AMBASSADOR IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

TAKING NOTE OF PUBLISHED SPECULATION ALLEGING THAT
AMBASSADOR BRUCE PLANS TO LEAVE BECAUSE OF DISSATISFACTION
WITH THE ADMINISTRATION POSTURE ON VIETNAM NEGOTIATIONS--AND
ALTERNATIVELY, THAT THE PRESIDENT IS DISSATISFIED WITH MR.
BRUCE'S PERFORMANCE -- MR. ZIEGLER DECLARED SUCH REPORTS
"INACCURATE AND TOTALLY FALSE SPECULATION."

THE AMBASSADOR, HE SAID, HAS BEEN AND WILL REMAIN IN
"COMPLETE CHARGE" OF THE TALKS, ADDING "THERE IS NO LACK OF
CONFIDENCE ON THE PART OF THE PRESIDENT WITH AMBASSADOR BRUCE,
AND NO LACK OF CONFIDENCE ON THE PART OF AMBASSADOR BRUCE WITH
THE ADMINISTRATION."

DR. KISSINGER HAD TOLD HIM, MR. ZIEGLER SAID, THAT HE COULD
RECALL NO OCCASION WHEN THE ADMINISTRATION HAD TURNED DOWN A
SUGGESTION FROM AMBASSADOR BRUCE.

MR. ZIEGLER SAID HE COULD FORESEE NO PROBLEM IN THE TALKS BECAUSE OF AMBASSADOR BRUCE'S DEPARTURE. HE SAID THE AMBASSADOR WOULD REMAIN IN COMPLETE CHARGE, WITH THE "FULLEST CONFIDENCE" OF THE PRESIDENT, UNTIL HE LEAVES.

THE PRESIDENT EXPECTS TO CONTINUE HIS FOREIGN POLICY DISCUSSIONS WITH SECRETARY ROGERS AND DR. KISSINGER AT THE WESTERN WHITE HOUSE, AT LEAST THROUGH JULY 15, MR. ZIEGLER SAID. AMONG OTHER TOPICS, THE THREE MEN WILL BE DISCUSSING THE NATIONAL SECURITY ASPECTS OF THE 1973 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET MR. NIXON WILL SEND TO CONGRESS NEXT JANUARY. MR. NIXON PLANS TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON, JULY 18.

ON OTHER TOPICS RELATED TO VIETNAM, MR. ZIEGLER SAID HE HAD NO COMMENT ON A VIENNA NEWSPAPER'S ACCOUNT OF AN INTERVIEW WITH SOUTH VIETNAM'S PRESIDENT THIEU. THE PAPER QUOTED MR. THIEU AS SAYING WASHINGTON AND SAIGON HAVE NEVER AGREED ON A TIMETABLE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS FROM HIS COUNTRY. MR. ZIEGLER NOTED THE U.S. POSITION ON VIETNAMIZATION -- THE TRAINING AND EQUIPPING OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES TO REPLACE WITHDRAWING U.S. TROOPS -- IS WELL KNOWN, AS IS THE WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE. U.S. DEFENSE OFFICIALS HAVE NOTED THAT THE CURRENT PHASE OF THE WITHDRAWAL -- WHICH WILL REDUCE THE AUTHORIZED CEILING FOR U.S. TROOPS TO 134,000 BY DECEMBER 1 -- IS PROCEEDING AHEAD OF SCHEDULE.

MR. ZIESPER SAID HE HAD NO COMMENT ON A REPORT BY THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY LEADER QUOTING CHINESE PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI AS SAYING THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA WOULD BE INTERESTED IN A NEW INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TO SETTLE THE VIETNAM CONFLICT. CTEN

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