

DRV PRESS BRIEFING - July 15, 1971
Nguyen Thanh Le
Questions and Answers

Pol. Set.	
FILE	SUBJ.
DATE	SUB-CAT.
7/71	

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Q. Villa- AFP

What do you think of the information according to which Peking would now be favorable to a broadened Conference on Indochina?

A. We have no official information on this subject. We have told you many times that China, the Soviet Union, other socialist countries and many peace-loving countries in the world wholeheartedly support the struggle of our people against the American aggression in various fields.

Q. Valery - NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Have there been secret contacts between members of your Delegation and the U.S. Delegation in the week just ended.

A. Can you make your question a little more specific? If not, our answer would have to be the same as last week.

Q. Valery - NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

No, I am not making my question more specific. I am awaiting your answer. Have there been secret contacts between members of the U.S. Delegation and members of your Delegation during the week just ended?

A. Our answer is no.

Q. Valery - NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

This reply differs from the one you gave last week.

A. Last week's question dealt with the possibility of a meeting with Mr. Kissinger.

Q. Valery - NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Not quite, your answer had been "we have no information on the subject" and now your answer is "no".

A. Our answer encompasses last week's answer as well as today's.

Q. Lewis - NEW YORK TIMES

May I ask a question in English?

Mr. Bruce asked you whether in fact the first of the Seven Points of Mme. Binh were demands not subject to negotiation. In fact, can there be negotiation in your view on Point I?

A. In her July 1 statement, as well as on July 8, today, and in other statements as well, Mme Binh has declared the following: The Seven Point plan is the basis for serious negotiation. It is also the basis for a peaceful settlement of the Vietnamese problem. Concerning Point I, Mme. Binh has said: "If the United States sets a date for the withdrawal of troops in 1971..." that is to say roughly between now and December 31st. It is up to the Nixon administration to pick a date between now and December 31st. In putting forward

her Seven Points, Mme. Binh was careful to stress that this is a perfectly correct position on the part of the PRG showing its good will and flexibility. On July 8, as at today's session, Mme. Binh asked the U.S. Delegate what points he agreed with and what points he did not. So far she has received no answer from the U.S. Delegation.

Q. Belgian Journalist (Blass?)

You are setting as a condition for prisoner release the withdrawal of the troops. Does this imply end of Vietnamization or not? That is to say, Vietnamization must end with the withdrawal of the troops in order for the soldiers to be released and for negotiation to begin. I have a second question. Mr. Bruce raised the question of a cease-fire. Do you consider that a cease-fire could facilitate the negotiation on troop withdrawal and all related problems?

A. I already answered your first question last time. Please refer to it in order not to waste too much time. Roughly, we said that the U.S. has used all kinds of maneuvers, both political and military, to commit aggression against Viet-Nam. It is only natural that the U.S. should withdraw its troops from SVN and cease to support the Thieu administration. The Seven Points will settle the Vietnamese problem in the overall. It is the only way. Our wishes, just like those expressed by world opinion, and by all persons interested in the return peace in Viet-Nam, are to

sign an agreement at the same time on all Seven Points to settle the Vietnamese problem and reach a conclusion on all questions. To express our good will and our flexibility, if in the process of negotiation the question mentioned in Point I can be settled, that is to say troop withdrawal in '71 and release of military and civilians captured in the war, these points will be carried out immediately after an agreement on troop withdrawal and prisoner release. In the meantime the other questions will continue to be discussed in order to reach agreement on them. Therefore, concerning Point I, the U.S. sets a deadline in 1971 for withdrawal of its troops and those of the other countries in its camp. The parties will come to an agreement concerning the modalities of the safe withdrawal of these troops and also on the release of the military of all parties and the civilians captured in the war. Troop withdrawal and prisoner release will begin and end on the same date. These are inherent aspects of troop withdrawal and prisoner release mentioned in Point I. The question of cease-fire has been taken up in Point I and Point II and I have no further comment on this point.

Q. Shub - WASHINGTON POST

If the Government of the United States agrees, is your Delegation prepared to give priority to an intensive negotiation here at the Paris Conference on Point I?

A. It is now up to the U. S. Delegation to give a positive answer to Point I and to all the Seven Points. Let us assume that today the U. S. Delegation sets a deadline for withdrawal of its troops in 1971. The parties can immediately go to work, this very day, at the session -- we are still making assumptions -- to discuss the modalities of troop withdrawal and prisoner release. We do not believe it will be difficult to reach agreement about the modalities. If need be, we could work night and day on this.

Q. Sedben - REUTERS

Do you have the feeling that we are perhaps going ahead at a very slow pace, beating around the bush, but that there is free time to think some more. Do you have that feeling?

A. From July 1 until today we can say that the attitude of the Nixon administration has not changed. The policies are the same.