

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Dr. Henry A Kissinger, Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs
Winston Lord, NSC Staff

Huang Hua, PRC Ambassador to the United
Nations
Shih Yen-hua, Interpreter

DATE & TIME: Friday, August 4, 1972 - 5:15-6:45 p.m.

PLACE: New York City

(There were some opening pleasantries, including Dr. Kissinger's favorable remarks on the Ambassador's light-weight, light grey Chinese outfit.)

Dr. Kissinger: I saw Ambassador Bush this morning. You scared him about Korea. You intimidated him. We will have to give him more backbone.

Ambassador Huang: (Immediately pulling out a piece of paper and reading from it.) Following our talk last time, I would like to express the following views regarding the primary point of the message of July 26 given by Dr. Kissinger, that is the idea that the United States and the Soviet Union sign a treaty on a mutual nuclear nonaggression.

"First, the Chinese side considers the Soviet proposal to be nakedly aimed at the establishment of nuclear world hegemony.

"Secondly, the Soviet proposal only stipulates that the Soviet Union and the United States should not use nuclear weapons against each other or their allies. This is obviously an attempt, following the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to go a step further and monopolize nuclear weapons, maintain nuclear superiority and make nuclear threats against countries

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2

with few nuclear weapons, non-nuclear countries, and countries in which the production of nuclear weapons is barred, and force them into spheres of influence of either this or that hegemony so that the two hegemonies may have a free hand in dividing up the world and manipulating the destinies of countries of the world at will.

"It is impermissible for such an agreement to be concluded between the Soviet Union and the United States. It is likewise impermissible for such an agreement to be concluded among all the nuclear countries."

Dr. Kissinger: "It is impermissible among all nuclear countries?"

Mrs. Shih: The same, either between the Soviet Union and the United States, or all nuclear countries.

Ambassador Huang: (Resuming his reading):

"Should an agreement be concluded, how will there be any equality between all countries of the world, big or small? This is what China categorically will not agree to. Should the Soviet Union brazenly advance this proposal, it will arouse extensive opposition and condemnation throughout the world.

"Point 3. We hope the United States will value principle jointly affirmed by China and the United States in the Shanghai Communique that it would be against the interests of the peoples of the world for any major countries to collude with another against other countries, or for major countries to divide up the world into spheres of interest, and reject the Soviet proposal.

"Point 4. The U. S. is aware of the entire position of the Chinese government on nuclear weapons. The Chinese side has consistently stood for the conclusion of an agreement on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons through consultations by all countries and as a first step, reaching an agreement on the non-use of nuclear weapons. Not only should nuclear countries not use nuclear weapons against each other, but what is more important, nuclear countries should not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries. Only such an agreement will be just and can really solve the problem.

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PA/HO, Department of State
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3

"We hope that the U. S. side will give serious consideration to this."

Incidentally, I have two other items to discuss.

(He pulls out another piece of paper and reads):

"The Chinese side expressed the following views with regard to Dr. Kissinger's July 26 message on the Korean question.

"The so-called United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea, and the United Nations Military Command stationed in South Korea are both products created more than 20 years ago during the Cold War period. Over all these years they have served as obstacles to the realization of the independent and peaceful reunification of Korea, and the majority of United Nations member states have long been unwilling to be associated with them.

"Since North and South Korea have expressed, in their July 4 joint statement, their desire to realize peaceful reunification without the interference of outside forces, it is even more unjustified for these two organizations to continue their existence.

"Now Algeria and other countries have proposed that the Korean question be put on the agenda of the coming session of the United Nations General Assembly, and this proposal has won the support of China and many other countries. This indicates the general trend in the international situation.

"As U. S. side has repeatedly stated that it is for the relaxation of tension in the Korean peninsula and that it supports increased communication between North and South Korea, it should really be in favor, or at least not be opposed to, the reasonable proposal put forward by Algeria and other countries. We hope the U. S. side will reconsider its idea of postponing discussion of the Korea question until the 28th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

"In our view, if the U. S. side takes the idea of sailing with the tide, the discussion of the question this year will not necessarily lead to confrontation between the U. S. and other countries. Otherwise, it is indeed possible that such a situation would appear from the very beginning."

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4

Above is the message on the Korean question. I have two other short messages for you.

(Again reading):

"First, the Chinese side appreciates Dr. Kissinger's indication of a desire to promote contact between China and West Germany. During Mr. Schroeder's visit to China, he conducted useful talks with the Chinese side. Mr. Schroeder expressed the desire of various quarters concerned in West Germany for the establishment of diplomatic relations with China at an early date, and the Chinese side responded positively to this. As the West Germany government has no relations with the Chiang Kai-shek clique, it is possible for China to establish diplomatic relations with West Germany."

The second short message is that:

"During Prince Sihanouk's visit to five countries of Europe and Africa he met no accident with regard to his security. Considering the fact that the U.S. side indicated its willingness to do something for the security of the Prince during his visit in other countries, the Chinese side is glad to inform the U.S. side of this."

That is all I have about the messages.

Dr. Kissinger: Thank you. I appreciate this very much. Let me ask first about the Korea item. You say if we agree to a debate, a confrontation can be avoided. I don't understand this.

Ambassador Huang: What is said in the message (reading):

"If the U.S. side takes the idea of sailing with the tide, the discussion of the question this year will not necessarily lead to confrontation between the U.S. and other countries."

Dr. Kissinger: If we agree with your proposal!

Ambassador Huang: (Looking at his message) If the U.S. side takes a stand consistent with its repeated stand that it is in favor of a relaxation of tension in the Korean peninsula and increased contact, communication, between North and South Korea, if it takes this attitude -- favorable or at least not opposing Algeria and the other countries -- then this would not lead to a confrontation as the U.S. is worried about.

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5

Dr. Kissinger: We are not worried that there may be a confrontation if we agree to your proposal! It would be very embarrassing to us if under Chinese leadership this year certain measures were taken which are embarrassing to our allies. This is our difficulty. (Dr. Kissinger pours a cup of tea for the Ambassador.)

Ambassador Huang: I don't see any difficulty in this question. One question is the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea, and most people have long ceased to support it. So, needless to say, its continued presence will be an obstacle to the realization of the principles stated in the joint statement of North and South Korea for the independent, peaceful reunification of Korea. And as I said last time, the United Nations Military Command is something very ridiculous.

Dr. Kissinger: We told you last time that if a debate is avoided, we would bring about the disbandment of UNCURK before the next General Assembly. So the practical result will not be extremely different from what you were saying. We do not want to be maneuvered into a position of being forced to do something that we might be prepared to do voluntarily and that one of our allies objects to very strenuously when it comes in this particular fashion.

Ambassador Huang: It is our view that it is appropriate to discuss the Korean question at the 27th Session of the General Assembly, and we hope, as stated in our message, (again reading) "that the U.S. side will reconsider its idea of postponing discussion of the Korean question until the 28th Session of the General Assembly."

Dr. Kissinger: I understand your view, and I will let you know our decision next week. I am practically certain that we cannot reconsider it, and we think we made a reasonable proposal to you.

I'll have Ambassador Bush get in touch with you next week. The Chinese side should have some understanding for the particular difficulty that we face, this year in particular.

Now on the German question . . . there are a number of things I want to talk to you about with respect to the nuclear issue, but I want to save that till the last because it will take a little longer.

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6

I have a direct channel to the German Chancellor which does not go through the diplomatic line.

Ambassador Huang: The Chancellor?

Dr. Kissinger: Chancellor Brandt. He is the Chancellor's assistant for Foreign Policy, who has roughly the same job I do for the President. He has asked my opinion about the establishment of diplomatic relations between Peking and Bonn. He has stated as his own personal opinion that he thinks there is no enormous hurry and that the weight of Germany's interests is in Europe.

Now I am considering what reply to give to him. We know from certain information that Bahr -- that's the name of the man -- is very close to the Soviet Union, and he reports almost every conversation to the Soviet contact that he has. So I have to be somewhat careful in my reply. But as I told you I may be in Germany early in September and I can talk to Brandt directly.

As for us, we are in favor of diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic and the People's Republic. The question is whether you want to establish those before the general elections which are in December -- December 3, he tells me in his cable; December 3, it hasn't been announced yet -- and to what extent you want to deal with this group.

Ambassador Huang: We haven't gotten specific instructions.

Dr. Kissinger: Of course. I will give him a non-committal reply until I hear from you.

Ambassador Huang: The message indicates (looking at it) that during Mr. Schroeder's visit to China he indicated the desire of various quarters of West Germany for the establishment of diplomatic relations at an early date and the Chinese side responded positively.

Dr. Kissinger: The question now is the definition of "early date." I am prepared, if you want, to indicate to the Germans that you are prepared to do this, but perhaps you will let me know. I will have to do this through a channel other than him.

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7

Mrs. Shih: What?

Dr. Kissinger: Through someone other than Bahr because Bahr will report it immediately to the Soviet Union. But if you have any views, you let me know, and I will wait for a reply.

Ambassador Huang: And from the fact that West Germany doesn't have any relations with the Chiang kai-shek clique we can see that there will be less difficulty than with other countries which have diplomatic relations with Chiang kai-shek.

Dr. Kissinger: Well it is primarily a tactical question, whether you want to wait until December 3 or whether you want the preliminary steps to be taken now, and whether you will want to concentrate on dealing with Schroeder and his friends, or whether you will also want to open communications with the other party. I will reply only in a general way and simply say that I have always found you very honorable to deal with, without indicating anything on the timing. And I will say I will be in touch with him later when I have had a chance to think about it.

Ambassador Huang: Well, Doctor, when are you going to Europe?

Dr. Kissinger: I am planning to go in the first week in September.

Ambassador Huang: Well, we can report your views to Peking.

Dr. Kissinger: Of course, I go now occasionally for Vietnamese discussions, and it's easy to go to Bonn from there.

Now let me talk to you about the nuclear issue. First of all, we agree with the general analysis you have presented, although we, of course, cannot accept the motives you have ascribed to us. (Ambassador Huang corrects Mrs. Shih on the word "ascribe.") Because if those were our motives we wouldn't consult with you.

Let me give you our analysis of the situation and of the strategy we intend to pursue, and then we can talk about this. Our analysis is that there is a deliberate Soviet policy to isolate you, and that the many agreements the Soviet Union has made in the last two years and the patience they have shown in the face of setbacks in the West, can only be explained to us in terms of aggressive intent in the East. (Ambassador Huang questions Mrs. Shih on something.) This is our analysis. We believe the period of greatest

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8

danger in this respect is likely to come in the period 1974-76. We believe also that it is against our interests to permit the establishment of an hegemony in Eurasia dominated from Moscow. And therefore, it is in our interest to resist this without any formal agreement [with the PRC] simply out of our own necessity.

Now the problem is how to accomplish this. We cannot artificially maintain tensions in the West when our allies pursue the policies they do, and when we have no direct interest in tensions in the West.

Ambassador Huang: You mean you don't have a direct interest in the West?

Dr. Kissinger: In tension in the West. We have no interest in maintaining tension in the West, but we have an interest in maintaining our position in the West. And if we remain in office, we shall not reduce our forces in Europe unilaterally, and as I told the Prime Minister, even by agreement we will not reduce them by much more than 10 percent.

But what we have to try to accomplish before that time period that I mentioned to you is to establish enough of a relationship with you so that it is plausible that an attack on you involves a substantial American interest. And you would make a great mistake if you thought that we had primarily commercial interests, because with this Administration at least, that's of a third order of interest. Our basic strategy is what I mentioned to you. In order to have a plausible basis and in order avoid giving the Soviet Union the pretense of claiming that they are being encircled, we want to do enough with the Soviet Union to maintain a formal symmetry. (Ambassador Huang checks Mrs. Shih's translation, then smiles and indicates that Dr. Kissinger should continue.)

It is a very complicated policy, but it is a very complicated situation. And we will not participate in any agreements that have the objective tendency of isolating you, or can be directed at you. But what we are looking for is to find some formulation that deprives this proposal of its substantive content but gives it some general abstract qualities, that gives it no operational significance. We have not yet replied, so I am telling you our thinking.

For example -- I want to tell you this is an internal paper which we are considering now -- we are playing with the idea of a proposal that in the

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9

first paragraph, when they say there is an obligation not to use nuclear weapons against each other, we might say we agree to do the utmost to create conditions in international relations in which nuclear weapons are not used by anybody. And then have a second paragraph which says that in order for this condition to be realized, there cannot be either a threat or the use of force by one side against the other, by one side against the allies of the other, or by either side against a third country. And furthermore, that neither side will encourage the threat or use of force by any of its allies or by any other third country.

We have not submitted this, and we are debating it. This makes it very general. It isn't confined to nuclear countries and it isn't an obligation. If you have any views, we would welcome them. And I said, we have not responded and we will certainly not accept the proposal I mentioned to you.

Ambassador Huang: The Chinese side's attitude is very clearly stated in the first message (looking at the message), that is, the Chinese side hopes the U. S. side will give serious consideration to the Chinese side's proposal that an agreement on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons will be reached through the consultation of all countries. (Repeating) . . . through the consultation of all countries.

Dr. Kissinger: I understand your point.

Ambassador Huang: (Looking at the message) As a first step, an agreement should be reached on the non-use of nuclear weapons by nuclear countries against each other and by nuclear countries against non-nuclear countries. We would consider that only such an agreement is correct and would really solve the problem.

Dr. Kissinger: I understand this point and it is not inconsistent with our views.

Ambassador Huang: Do you think the Soviet side will accept such a proposal? What is the possibility?

Dr. Kissinger: (Pausing) Will they accept such an agreement?

Mrs. Shih: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: You made it before.

Ambassador Huang: At the session of the General Assembly last year, we reaffirmed our statement on this question and asked Mr. Malik to reply, and

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10

he didn't. In the past, the Soviet side had proposed a similar view, similar proposals.

Dr. Kissinger: I can't judge. I doubt it, but I can't be sure.

You can be certain that you will be informed of every step that is taken in this matter before it is taken.

Ambassador Huang: And does the U. S. side agree to our proposal?

Dr. Kissinger: (Pausing): We are trying to avoid a situation where the Soviet Union can threaten our allies with conventional forces, and we are then prohibited from using nuclear weapons in defense of Western Europe.

Ambassador Huang: Because the Chinese proposal for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons is not an isolated step. It is proposed as a first step.

Dr. Kissinger: This is our principal concern, the Soviet military concentration in Europe which none of our allies are capable of resisting themselves.

Ambassador Huang: Well, I hope when the U. S. side has considered this question, you will let us know.

Dr. Kissinger: You can be certain. We will not make any move which you are not aware of and have not had a chance to make a comment on. You can assure the Prime Minister now that we will not accept the Soviet proposal.

Ambassador Huang: I will report this to the Premier.

Dr. Kissinger: I wanted to mention two other things to you. I have also with respect to the British the same confidential channel that I have with respect to the Germans. I met last week with Sir Burke Trend who is the British Cabinet Secretary.

Ambassador Huang: Burt?

Dr. Kissinger: Burke. B-u-r-k-e Trend. I gave him most of the same analysis that I have given to you about the Soviet intentions, and about our interest in preventing the situation from arising. He told me that the British Foreign Secretary will visit Peking in October.

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Ambassador Huang: October.

Dr. Kissinger: And we will invite him to Washington before he goes so that we can continue the conversation; we have reason to believe that the general British approach is sympathetic. You have to do a little missionary work about their Indian friends with them. He gave us a lot of trouble last year on India-Pakistan.

A second thing I wanted to tell you

Ambassador Huang (Interrupting) Just a matter for clarification. You said that you have an interest in avoiding this situation. Was this sentence directed against the Soviet's proposal? You said "avoid this situation."

Dr. Kissinger: We are interested in trying to avoid a situation of Soviet aggressive actions in East Asia. We also discussed the Soviet proposal with them, but we have not yet received their reaction. We discussed this in somewhat less detail than with you. But those are the only two countries that I have discussed it with.

As you know, I had another meeting with the North Vietnamese

Ambassador Huang (Interrupting) I had another question -- sorry.

Dr. Kissinger: You have another question?

Ambassador Huang: Would you elaborate on your view that the greatest danger is the period 1974-76?

Dr. Kissinger: It is my impression that it will take until then, or maybe just before then, to complete the pacification of the West, the European Security Conference and maybe some more progress in disarmament, and the shift of military forces.

Ambassador Huang: So when the European Security Conference and disarmament will make some progress

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, and when it has established a basically peaceful intent or reputation has been established, and their military buildup is completed. One reason is that there are new nuclear weapons introduced which will not be completed until 1974.

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12

Mrs. Shih: You mean nuclear weapons introduced . . . ?

Dr. Kissinger: In the strategic forces. They are more directed against us.

Ambassador Huang: Directed against you?

Dr. Kissinger: Some. I don't want you to think you are in a monopoly position in receiving all the attention. The strategic forces to keep us . . . are directed mostly against us, some against you, but they are mostly against us.

Ambassador Huang: I thank you for the clarification.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't want to mislead you. This is our interpretation in the White House. Not everybody agrees with it. If you get a change of Administrations they would take a less cataclysmic view of the probable evolution.

Mrs. Shih: What?

Dr. Kissinger: Our opponent in the campaign takes a different view as you probably know.

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As you know, we had another meeting with the North Vietnamese this week. We made a particular proposal which I introduced with a special opening statement. I thought the Prime Minister for his information would like to read it.

It is our view that the only thing that could hold up a solution now is their attempt to play on our domestic politics. We are prepared to settle on a reasonable and just basis. I think you will find some points that were made to us were taken very seriously.

(He hands over the proposal and opening statement at Tabs A and B respectively.) This is simply for your information. We are not asking for any particular (Pointing to the documents) This is the statement I made when I presented it. This was the formal proposal by us. It follows the outline of their seven points. 4

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13

Ambassador Huang: That finishes our work?

Dr. Kissinger: Yes.

(There were then some closing pleasantries while the Ambassador waited for his car. Dr. Kissinger mentioned that he received many requests from people wishing to make movies in China, such as documentaries or landscape films. For example, Bob Hope, a good friend of the Administration, had just asked for help with his request to shoot background shots of China for a show. Dr. Kissinger inquired whether these should be sent to Ottawa with a copy to Ambassador Huang in New York, or how else to handle these matters. He said that he would not get involved in these cases very often, but occasionally just to indicate to the Chinese that it would be nice if certain people got a personal response. It did not mean that the U. S. Government or he necessarily endorsed the initiatives, and the response could be negative. Ambassador Huang said that in Mr. Hope's case, he could either write to him directly or write to Ottawa and send a copy to him.)

There was some other light conversation until the Ambassador's car arrived. He and Mrs. Shih then departed.)

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1. Regarding the withdrawal of U. S. and other foreign forces allied with the Government of South Vietnam:

There will be a total withdrawal from South Vietnam of all U. S. troops, military advisors and military personnel and those of other forces allied with the Government of South Vietnam within four months of the signature of this general agreement. Weapons and war materials belonging to those forces will also be withdrawn and bases under U. S. control will be dismantled.

2. There will be a general cease-fire throughout Indochina, to begin when this general agreement is signed. The cease-fire will include cessation of United States acts of force against North Vietnam, the mining of North Vietnamese ports and harbors, and an end to all U. S. air and other military activities in South Vietnam. As part of the cease-fire, there will be no further infiltration of outside forces into any of the countries of Indochina, and the introduction into Indochina of reinforcements in the form of arms, munitions and other war material will be prohibited. It is understood, however, that war material, arms and munitions which have been destroyed, damaged, worn out or used up after the cessation of hostilities may

be replaced on the basis of piece-for-piece of the same type and with similar characteristics.

3. The release of all military men and innocent civilians captured throughout Indochina will be carried out in parallel with the troop withdrawals mentioned in Point 1. Both sides will present a complete list of military men and innocent civilians held throughout Indochina on the day this general agreement is signed. The release will begin on the same day as troop withdrawals and will be completed when they are completed.

4. Regarding the political problem in South Vietnam:

The political future of South Vietnam will be left for the South Vietnamese people to decide for themselves, free from outside interference.

For its part, the United States declares that it respects the South Vietnamese people's Right to self-determination; it will remain completely neutral with respect to the political process in South Vietnam; it will abide by the outcome of any political process shaped by the South Vietnamese people themselves; and it is prepared to define its military and economic assistance relationship with any government that exists in South Vietnam.

There will be a free and democratic Presidential election in South Vietnam no later than six months from the date of final agreement on the details of a political solution. The election may be held earlier if that is agreed among the parties. This election will be organized and run by an independent body representing all political forces in South Vietnam which will assume its responsibilities on the date of final agreement on the details of a political solution. This body will, among other responsibilities, determine the qualification of candidates. All political forces in South Vietnam can participate in the election and present candidates. There will be international supervision of this election.

Before the Presidential election takes place, the incumbent President and Vice President of South Vietnam will resign. The Chairman of the Senate, as caretaker head of the government, will assume administrative responsibilities except for those pertaining to the election, which will remain with the independent election body.

The right of all political forces to participate freely and peacefully in every aspect of the political process will be guaranteed. In addition to the Presidential election, all political forces will be eligible for appointment or election to positions in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.

In keeping with the provisions of Article 14 (C) of the 1954 Geneva Accords the Vietnamese parties will undertake to refrain from any reprisals or discrimination against persons or organizations on account of their activities during the hostilities and to guarantee democratic liberties.

5. After the new President has been elected, the political forces in South Vietnam will meet with a view to revising the Constitution within one year and agreeing on steps to implement it.

6. The details of a political solution based on the principles of Points 4 and 5 above will be negotiated between the South Vietnamese parties within three months of the signature of this general agreement.

7. Regarding the peaceful reunification of Vietnam:

Reunification of Vietnam will be achieved step by step by peaceful means, on the basis of discussions and agreements between North and South Vietnam without constraint and annexation from either party, and without foreign interference.

Pending reunification, and in keeping with the provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam, North and South Vietnam will refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries, and from allowing any foreign country to have military bases, troops and military personnel on their soil.

Pending reunification, North and South Vietnam will develop and maintain close relations in all fields.

8. Regarding the foreign policy of peace and neutrality of Indochina:

The countries of Indochina shall pursue a foreign policy of peace, independence and neutrality, establish relations with all countries regardless of their political and social regime, maintain economic and cultural relations with all countries, and participate in programs of regional economic cooperation.

9. Both sides will respect the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Indochina and those of 1962 on Laos. There will be no foreign intervention in the Indochinese countries and the Indochinese peoples will be left to settle their own affairs by themselves.

10. The problems existing among the Indochinese countries will be settled by the Indochinese parties on the basis of mutual respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's affairs. Among the problems that will be settled is the implementation of the principle that all armed forces of the countries of Indochina must remain within their national frontiers.

11. There will be international supervision of the military aspects of this agreement, including the cease-fire and its provisions, the release of prisoners of war and innocent civilians, the withdrawal of outside forces from Indochina, and the implementation of the principle that all armed forces of the countries of Indochina must remain within their national frontiers.

12. There will be an international guarantee for the fundamental national rights of the Indochinese peoples, the status of all the countries of Indochina, and lasting peace in the region.

Both sides express their willingness to participate in an international conference for this and other appropriate purposes.

Mr. Special Adviser, Mr. Minister --

When we adjourned on July 19 we agreed that both sides would study the record and formulate new concrete proposals. We agreed as well at that meeting that we should both make an effort to find a solution, meet each other part way, and put our proposals side-by-side, with the attitude of finding a solution.

We approach this session in this spirit. We have closely reviewed your remarks at our last meeting, as well as all your earlier statements and proposals. The President has authorized me to introduce a concrete new plan. I look forward to hearing the new proposals you have promised. We can then compare the two sides positions to reconcile them.

The time has come to replace rhetoric with reasonableness, to move from debating points and propaganda to a joint search for a settlement. Two weeks ago, the Special Adviser said that in negotiations "you cannot win everything you put forward, as we cannot win everything we put forward." If that approach can be translated into action, here, we can rapidly reach a settlement. It will be our approach.

As I said last time, I am here to meet in a spirit of conciliation and good will, prepared to forego unilateral demands, ready to look understandingly at your point of view. If you choose to negotiate in the same spirit you will find us both forthcoming and reliable. The Special Adviser asked last time whether you could be sure that we will keep the agreements that we may make. I want to tell you as solemnly as I am able that you can. We will maintain every agreement we make with you, not only in letter but also in spirit. We will abide by the consequences of whatever process we jointly start here.

Furthermore, we are prepared to give the same guarantee to your allies as to you. We are willing to link our important relations in Moscow and Peking to our good faith in Indochina. You would thus have as guarantee not only our word to you but the force of American interest in its global diplomacy. Let me explain, incidentally; we have not discussed this with your allies.

-2-

Let me explain in uncomplicated language. If you do not believe our word to you, we are prepared to give the same promises to your allies or any other country you trust. Therefore if we break our promise to you we will also be breaking our promise to them. It is an assurance to you, we do not insist on it. We have not discussed it with your allies. No other country has seen this text.

In addition, we are prepared to enter into specific understandings with you on how to interpret certain aspects of an agreement. These, too, will be meticulously observed and can be, if you wish, conveyed to your allies.

Now then, to our proposals. We have looked once again at everything you have said, especially regarding the political question. We agree to recognize that military and political issues should be solved together. We have made a serious effort to bridge our differences. For this is the basic barrier to a settlement. We have, as well, added new elements to meet specific points you have raised on other issues. As a demonstration of our good will, we have accepted the basic structure of your Two-Point Elaboration and the Seven-Point Proposal. To speed agreement, we have even adopted much of your language.

Now I shall read the plan, and then I shall explain what it means.

"Point One, regarding the withdrawal of U.S. and other foreign forces allied with the Government of South Vietnam.

"There will be a total withdrawal from South Vietnam of all U.S. troops, military advisers and military personnel and those of other forces allied with the Government of South Vietnam within four months of the signature of this general agreement. Weapons and war materials belonging to those forces will also be withdrawn and bases under U.S. control will be dismantled.

We will give you a text when we are finished.

"Two, there will be a general cease-fire throughout Indochina, to begin when this general agreement is signed. The cease-fire will include cessation of United States acts of force against North

- 3 -

Vietnam, the mining of North Vietnamese ports and harbors, and an end to all U. S. air and other military activities in South Vietnam. As part of the cease-fire, there will be no further infiltration of outside forces into any of the countries of Indochina, and the introduction into Indochina of reinforcements in the form of arms, munitions and other war material will be prohibited. It is understood, however, that war material, arms and munitions which have been destroyed, damaged, worn out or used up after the cessation of hostilities may be replaced on the basis of piece-for-piece of the same type and with similar characteristics.

"Three, the release of all military men and innocent civilians captured throughout Indochina will be carried out in parallel with the troop withdrawals mentioned in Point 1. Both sides will present a complete list of military men and innocent civilians held throughout Indochina on the day this general agreement is signed. The release will begin on the same day as troop withdrawals and will be completed when they are completed.

"Fourth, regarding the political problem in South Vietnam:

"The political future of South Vietnam will be left for the South Vietnamese people to decide for themselves, free from outside interference.

"For its part, the United States declares that it respects the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination; it will remain completely neutral with respect to the political process in South Vietnam; it will abide by the outcome of any political process shaped by the South Vietnamese people themselves; and it is prepared to define its military and economic assistance relationship with any government that exists in South Vietnam.

"There will be a free and democratic Presidential election in South Vietnam no later than six months from the date of final agreement on the details of a political solution. The election may be held earlier if that is agreed among the parties. This election will be organized and run by an independent body representing all political forces in South Vietnam which will assume its responsibilities on the date of final agreement on the details of a political solution. This body will, among other responsibilities, determine

-4-

the qualification of candidates. All political forces in South Vietnam can participate in the election and present candidates. There will be international supervision of this election.

"Before the Presidential election takes place, the incumbent President and Vice President of South Vietnam will resign. The Chairman of the Senate, as caretaker head of the government, will assume administrative responsibilities except for those pertaining to the election, which will remain with the independent election body.

"The right of all political forces to participate freely and peacefully in every aspect of the political process will be guaranteed. In addition to the Presidential election, all political forces will be eligible for appointment or election to positions in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.

"In keeping with the provisions of Article 14(C) of the 1954 Geneva Accords the Vietnamese parties will undertake to refrain from any reprisals or discrimination against persons or organizations on account of their activities during the hostilities and to guarantee democratic liberties.

"Five, after the new President has been elected, the political forces in South Vietnam will meet with a view to revising the Constitution within one year and agreeing on steps to implement it.

"Point Six: The details of a political solution based on the principles of Points 4 and 5 above will be negotiated between the South Vietnamese parties within three months of the signature of this general agreement.

"Point Seven: Regarding the peaceful reunification of Vietnam: Reunification of Vietnam will be achieved step by step by peaceful means on the basis of discussions and agreements between North and South Vietnam without constraint and annexation from either party, and without foreign interference.

"Pending reunification, and in keeping with the provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam, North and South Vietnam will refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries,

and from allowing any foreign country to have military bases, troops and military personnel on their soil.

"Pending reunification, North and South Vietnam will develop and maintain close relations in all fields.

"Eight, regarding the foreign policy of peace and neutrality of Indochina:

"The countries of Indochina shall pursue a foreign policy of peace, independence and neutrality, establish relations with all countries regardless of their political and social regime, maintain economic and cultural relations with all countries, and participate in programs of regional economic cooperation.

"Nine, both sides will respect the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Indochina and those of 1962 on Laos. There will be no foreign intervention in the Indochinese countries and the Indochinese peoples will be left to settle their own affairs by themselves.

"Ten, the problems existing among the Indochinese countries will be settled by the Indochinese parties on the basis of mutual respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's affairs. Among the problems that will be settled is the implementation of the principle that all armed forces of the countries of Indochina must remain within their national frontiers.

"Eleven, there will be international supervision of the military aspects of this agreement, including the cease-fire and its provisions, the release of prisoners of war and innocent civilians, the withdrawal of outside forces from Indochina, and the implementation of the principle that all armed forces of the countries of Indochina must remain within their national frontiers.

"Twelve, there will be an international guarantee for the fundamental national rights of the Indochinese peoples, the status of all the countries of Indochina, and lasting peace in the region.

"Both sides express their willingness to participate in an international conference for this and other appropriate purposes."

-6-

Now let me explain what we mean by this plan. Let us look seriously and in good faith at what we have done. We have cast our plan in terms of the Seven-Point Plan and Two-Point Elaboration. We have accepted the basic principles of your proposals, although there are differences with regard to timing and procedure. Let me go through these proposals, point by point.

With respect to Point One, on the military questions:

- Your side has asked for the complete withdrawal of allied forces and their equipment and the dismantling of U. S. bases. We have agreed that we will do this.
- You have asked for an early deadline. We have shortened the timetable for complete withdrawal of our forces to four months. Were we to agree by September 1st, the last American soldier will have left South Vietnam by the end of this year.

With respect to Point Two, on the political questions: You will notice that we have accepted many of its principles and that we have agreed to consider it together with the military questions.

First, on the overall process. Your position as expressed in the Seven Points and the Two-Point Elaboration is that the present government must change and then the new government should develop a new constitutional structure. We accept this general outline as to procedure, and also the two-stage approach it represents. We have made a conscientious effort to leave the decisions to the South Vietnamese people. We solemnly declare that we will abide by the results of the process we are proposing. The only thing we will not do is to prescribe that outcome in Paris. We will not insist on a particular government; but we will not impose it either.

More specifically:

- You have asked that we respect South Vietnamese self-determination and that the political process be free of American interference. We have agreed to this in our readiness to make a series of commitments about the political future of South Vietnam once an agreement is signed.
- We have proposed elections to choose a new President. And we have specified that this election be organized and run by an

-7-

independent electoral commission made up of all political forces and that it be internationally supervised.

- You have asked that President Thieu resign. He has agreed to do so and we have reason to believe that the deadline for his resignation prior to new elections is flexible.
- You have asked that democratic liberties be guaranteed. We have agreed to your specific point that democratic liberties, as defined in the 1954 Geneva Accords, be assured in South Vietnam. In addition, we have proposed that all forces be eligible for election or appointment to all branches of government and that they participate in every aspect of the political process freely and securely.
- You have asked that a new government of South Vietnam bring about a new constitution. We have agreed that after the new elections the political forces in South Vietnam should meet to revise the Constitution within one year and agree on steps to implement it.
- In addition to the merit of these proposals individually, you will no doubt consider the impact of the publication of this agreement and principles on the political process and on the expectations of the people of South Vietnam.

We have thus addressed every aspect of your political proposals. We have agreed to your basic approach and many of its details. There are some remaining differences to which I will turn in a minute.

With respect to the other points in the [PRG] Seven-Point proposal: We have met every one in substance, and in many instances we have incorporated the specific language.

- Point Three, the disposition of Vietnamese armed forces, is subsumed under our Point Ten.
- Point Four, the reunification of Vietnam and the relations between North and South, is covered by our Point Seven.
- Point Five is covered by our Point Eight.
- Point Six on reparations we cannot accept, but we maintain our position of last summer regarding our willingness to consider a reconstruction program for all of Indochina.

-8-

Our other points (nine, ten, and eleven) represent areas of essential agreement last summer when they were based on your nine points.

Finally, we have met your concern that the intent of these proposals could be defeated through delaying tactics in the implementing process by placing a three-month time limit on the negotiation to work out the details of the political process. This time limit would enable us to help guarantee that the intent of these proposals is carried out because our withdrawals would not be completed until a month after these negotiations are completed also. At the same time one could not affect the political process with our forces since they would have left at least five months before the elections.

Let me explain. We agree on these principles; after these principles, it will take three months to work out the details of the process, it will take four months to withdraw all our forces. Our forces will be withdrawn one month after the details are worked out. The elections will be six months after the details are worked out, or five months after the forces are withdrawn. But the elections can be earlier.

Let me point out the new elements in our plan as compared to our January 27th and our May 8th proposals:

[Withdrawals] The deadline for total withdrawal of all U.S. and allied forces from South Vietnam is reduced to four months, instead of the six months in our Eight-Point proposal. Assuming the final details of a political settlement are worked out within three months of the general agreement and a new election held six months later, all US and allied forces would be out of South Vietnam five months before the elections. This contrasts with our January 25th plan where U.S. withdrawals would be completed by the date of the election.

Prisoners. Unlike the President's May 8th proposal, prisoner release would take place after the cessation of acts of force and mining against the DRV rather than making these conditional upon completion of prisoner release.

-9-

Political Issues. Our political proposals offer major new elements expressly designed to meet concerns that you have expressed in your message of May 18 and at our last meeting.

First, we have reaffirmed that President Thieu and Vice President Huong will resign before the holding of presidential elections. Our new plan deliberately does not specify the time limit. We are prepared to have an understanding with you that we will support an extension of the period beyond the one month provided in our proposal of January 25.

Second, the election will take place several months after the last American soldier has left Vietnam, in contrast to our earlier plans.

Third, we have specified that in addition to the Presidential election, all political forces would be eligible for appointment or election to positions in all branches of government -- executive, legislative and judicial. No political force will be excluded from participation in any part of the political process, at any level.

Fourth, we have added an explicit statement about guarantees on the rights of all political forces to participate freely and peacefully in the political process. This clause meets your concern that forces aligned with your side, and others opposed to the present Saigon Administration, might be hindered or prevented from political activities.

Fifth, in response to your direct request at our last meeting, we have included a specific reference to Article 14(c) of the Geneva Accord and the guarantee of democratic liberties.

Finally, we have added the provision that after a new President has been elected, the political forces in South Vietnam will meet in order to revise the Constitution within one year and agree to implement it. This accepts the outline of this aspect of your side's second point elaboration. Thus, your side will not only have the chance for power in the Presidential election; they will also have the opportunity to negotiate with the new government on revisions of the Constitution. The political process, in other words, is extended beyond one office or one event.

These would be formal agreements which we would be prepared to sign. The Special Adviser last time mentioned unsigned agreements as well. I am not sure to what he was referring. But we would be prepared to reach and observe certain private understandings in addition to formal agreements.

-10-

First, we would be prepared to use our influence, all our influence, with the Government of South Vietnam to implement the details of this agreement.

Second, as I have indicated, we have reason to believe that President Thieu -- as his personal contribution to a guaranteed and lasting peace -- might consider the deadline for his resignation negotiable. We envisage, for example, that he might agree to a two-month rather than one-month interval before new elections. In any event, we will support such an understanding with him and Vice President Huong. Let me remind you that last summer you said that President Thieu's resignation was the only real requirement for a settlement, after which all other problems could be solved easily. If this was a serious proposal, the opportunity now exists.

Third, in conjunction with an overall agreement, we are willing to make certain understandings with regard to the future levels of US military and economic aid to South Vietnam.

Fourth, as I have pointed out, we will be prepared to reaffirm privately to your major allies every agreement and understanding we make with you. Thus if we were to violate any agreements, we would be breaking faith not only with you but also with countries whose relations are very important to us.

Fifth, we are prepared to listen seriously to any proposals you may wish to make with regard to future understandings.

Our proposals are a deliberate, conscientious attempt to give the people of South Vietnam an opportunity to shape their own future. We have structured them within the framework your side has put forward. But we have refused to impose a particular solution. We cannot so weaken the political forces opposed to the NLF that the resulting political process will be a sham. We will cooperate honestly in constructing a truly free political process. We will not participate in a thinly veiled subterfuge for imposing one particular solution.

I tell you solemnly that we will carry out these agreements without any afterthought to undo its unfolding. We are prepared to live with its consequences. We have proposed a plan that irrevocably removes the American military presence, stops the conflict and the suffering, and lays out a concrete political process to give the people of South Vietnam

-11-

a free choice, and a deadline to achieve it. This plan would be guaranteed by our agreement with you; by our commitment to your major allies; by other international forces; and by the geopolitical realities of the 1970s.

The need on both sides for a peaceful resolution has never been clearer. Recent events have demonstrated that no one can "win everything" on the other fronts of this conflict either. We have no wish to impose a military solution and no illusion that it could be purchased cheaply. We have no intention of inflicting needless destruction. We do not want to humiliate you. We consider your independence an essential element of long-term Southeast Asian policy. We are ready to take risks to terminate the fighting now, end our involvement, and set the stage for political competition among the Vietnamese alone.

We have made our basic decision to settle this conflict if you will meet us part way.

You have a similar decision to make. You can join us now in a serious effort to reach a negotiated settlement that takes account of both sides' concerns. This requires concrete proposals and movement from both sides, and a willingness to leave some matters to a political evolution.

Your other choice would be to wait upon events, listening to what we have to say without budging from your essential positions. You would thus be hoping for one of two things to happen: Either we accept all of your demands, which will not happen, or a new President is elected in November who will accept all of your demands.

The waiting course would be a serious mistake. You should not be misled by temporary Congressional votes -- as you know, they do not address political questions at all.

As for looking towards our elections, you will make your own judgment about the prospects of the opposition. I will not discuss our domestic politics with you. It is clear, however, that if our election turns into a national referendum on Vietnam, you will be gambling for high stakes. This Administration's position can only be greatly bolstered by such an outcome.

Over recent years, you often have decided to wait, and the objective result has been a worsening of your overall position. Even if the opposition

were to win, could they really execute what they now promise as candidates, or if they attempt it will it make a decisive difference by January 20, 1973? Over time, the South Vietnamese government and military posture will continue to grow stronger, and our influence on any settlement will decrease.

You have often accused us of missing opportunities. But you too have often waited too long. The basic mistake in the summer of 1971 was not this or that agreement, but your basic decision to start the negotiations much too late to influence the election. By July [1971] when we first talked seriously it was much too late. Do not make that same mistake again.

I therefore hope you will give serious consideration to what has been presented. It is not presented on a take-it-or-leave-it basis; we are prepared to hear counterproposals. We have, however, included just about every element that we think can contribute to a fair and open political process for all forces. The only thing we have not done is to guarantee your side's victory in advance.

I welcome your comments. And I look forward to hearing your own concrete proposals. At our last meeting you spoke eloquently about US-Vietnamese cooperation at Viet Bac at the end of World War II and about the prospect of a "new page" in our relations at the end of this war. We share these sentiments. I want to repeat again today that the United States has no greater goal than to end this conflict in a manner that will respect the interests of all parties and will heal the wounds that have been inflicted. Our two countries do not present any long term threat to one another. There is every reason to rekindle the cooperation that existed at the end of a previous war.

So let us now end this war. Let us both devote our energies today, and in the coming weeks, to find a just settlement that will allow us to turn a new page in relations between our two countries and our two peoples. That is our attitude.