

2010

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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August 31, 1972

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: AMBASSADOR ELLSWORTH BUNKER
DR. HENRY A. KISSINGER
PETER W. RODMAN, NSC STAFF

DATE & TIME: Thursday, August 31, 1972
7:55 a. m. - 8:45 a. m. (breakfast)

PLACE: Dr. Kissinger's Room
Kuilima Hotel
Oahu, Hawaii

Dr. Kissinger: Where do you think we stand?

Of all the treacherous sons of bitches, the Japs take the cake. It's not just their indecent haste in normalizing relations with China, but they even picked National Day as their preference to go there. We have an intelligence report which says the Chinese didn't even want them then, or any foreigners. And yesterday they send me a message saying their Deputy Vice Foreign Minister Tsurumi wants to meet with me privately to work out the agenda, and the next thing you know they've told Rogers and Johnson, who were then hovering all around me. I don't know how they do it. I told (the Japanese) I wouldn't see him.

But back to our problem. What bothers me most is, do you think we've made an unreasonable proposal?

Ambassador Bunker: No, I do not think so.

Dr. Kissinger: We haven't sacrificed all these years in order to sell out now. If you think this is unreasonable, we'll change it. And we'll pay whatever price we have to.

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Ambassador Bunker: The guts of it, of course, is Point 4.

They feel -- and I've tried to dissuade them of this -- that the Committee will be seen as a disguised coalition government, or at least as a first move towards getting to one. On the other hand, their proposal for a referendum is unrealistic.

Dr. Kissinger: Isn't it a patent fraud? The same objections to the election will be made to this.

Ambassador Bunker: Yes. If the referendum is held with the government in power, it will be rigged just as the Presidential election of last October was -- unnecessarily rigged.

Dr. Kissinger: Does Charlie Whitehouse know of this?

Ambassador Bunker: Yes. He's the only one.

Dr. Kissinger: That's all right. I just want to know. What does he think?

Ambassador Bunker: He agrees it's a reasonable proposal.

They (the South Vietnamese) also feel they might lose control of their part. They fear that if we surface it, they'll be charged with giving away too much. It's a question of their resolve, and the morale of the armed forces.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes.

Ambassador Bunker: And finally, there is a feeling that South Vietnam is not yet ready to face a political confrontation with the Communists, frankly.

Dr. Kissinger: Neither side feels ready to face up to a political confrontation.

Ambassador Bunker: Yes. They fear they are not yet well enough organized to compete politically with such a tough disciplined organization. Their efforts at integrating politically are feeble.

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Ambassador Bunker:(con't) The evidence of all this is that Thieu for the first time consulted with his full Security Council -- The Vice President, the Prime Minister, and the Foreign Minister. Nha told me this.

Dr. Kissinger: Will they leak?

Ambassador Bunker: No.

I went to see him. I wrote out the whole sequence of events for you. (Tab A). I think he was too embarrassed to tell me. He asked me to send a memorandum first, and then he would see me, so I sent one. Then I waited for an appointment. I told Nha I certainly should see the President anyway.

Dr. Kissinger: Do they recognize that we have accepted many of their proposals?

Ambassador Bunker: They should; I pointed it out to them.

So I waited until 7:30 for an appointment and called Nha. He said it couldn't be arranged but they would have a message. Meanwhile the Palace called Eva (the Ambassador's secretary) and told me a messenger would come by at 7:30. Nha came himself at 7:30, with no memorandum. Nha said they were shocked at our turndown of their proposals.

Dr. Kissinger: I think we're better off sticking where we are, with no referendum.

If we go too far, Ellsworth, you tell us.

Ambassador Bunker: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: If all of this works, with all these elaborate forums, the process will last at least through November. We then can say it's a mess, we can go back to the proposal for the military issues alone. We can say, give us the prisoners and a ceasefire; we're getting out.

Ambassador Bunker: They won't accept it anyway.

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Dr. Kissinger: That's right. And even if they did, this is the January 25th proposal with the Electoral Commission called a Committee of National Reconciliation.

Ambassador Bunker: That's quite right.

Dr. Kissinger: We've changed parts to meet their concerns. We say we will "review the Constitution for its consistency with the conditions of peace." We've taken out "equality." We've taken out "neutrality."

But where do we go from here?

Ambassador Bunker: They promised to have a memorandum for me when I got back.

Dr. Kissinger: But we cannot have a confrontation now. It will be their death, and our death. We have positioned ourselves domestically so that a confrontation would prove McGovern's case. It would be the biggest boost for McGovern.

They can't have the President go through the whole election without their help and then have a confrontation with the North Vietnamese in November as we plan.

Should we write a letter to them?

Ambassador Bunker: That may be a good idea. You draft it, putting down your points.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Rodman:) We should say, first, on the basis of the Ambassador's report, we've made adjustments which the Ambassador will explain. On the other hand, it is essential for us to have a position from which we can demonstrate to the American people that the only obstacle is the Communists' insistence on our putting them in power. Once we do this, we can survive a stalemate and have a basis for returning to the May 8th position -- settling the military issues alone.

We have to survive if the letter surfaces. Don't say the May 8th position. Say that it will show world opinion the lengths to which we are willing to go, and provide a basis for handling the consequences if it fails.

Their suspiciousness is unbelievable.

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Ambassador Bunker: This is Thieu's defect.

Dr. Kissinger: But it's true of Le Duc Tho, too. They'll never accept this.

Our plan is this, to be precise: If there is no settlement by November 7th we plan to walk out by November 9th.

If Thieu wants to do a heroic landing operation, let him do this. Seriously, is he planning this?

Ambassador Bunker: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: Seriously. Let him do it.

We're facing sabotage in Washington. Laird has just recommended a 20% cut in the augmentation forces, a 40% cut in the sortie rate, and a cut in our ammunition supplies -- and all this in a written memorandum to the President! Tell Weyand this. And at this moment! If Thieu wants to deal with Laird

We brought Laird to San Clemente, not for the draft but to tell him he can't do it. The President handed him a written order not to make the cuts. Then Laird went out and told the press that 27,000 wasn't the final figure -- which we had gone to great lengths to avoid doing. Then he asked Moorer to make a military request for the cuts!

You have to stick with us. You always have. I have to be the headmaster of a reform school. When we hit some Chinese lifeboats, MACV came out with a denial. The Chinese sent us an apologetic note explaining why they had to protest publicly!

Tell Thieu: His only friends are the President and I. Therefore I'm really concerned by his attitude towards you.

Ambassador Bunker: I think Thieu was embarrassed to tell me he didn't have a memorandum.

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Dr. Kissinger: In the letter, we should say, "I have come through four years. We will not overthrow our ally. What we do is in the mutual interest. The only danger we face now is mistrust between us. Please work with Ambassador Bunker in the spirit of total frankness that we have always had. We have told you our every move. It is essential now."

After November we will be in a unique position. We have never had a mandate for an honorable end to the war. In 1968 we promised to end the war. Even if it's only by 51%, we can claim the other guy made it an issue and we won.

We've got theater planned through November. Monday we'll announce I'm going to Moscow. Have I told you this?

Ambassador Bunker: Yes, you told me you were going.

(At this point, Dr. Kissinger spoke on the phone with General Haig, instructing him, inter alia, to tell DOD that the President wanted no further comment on troop withdrawals.)

Dr. Kissinger: Here are the papers for you. There is a new substantive proposal (Tab B) and a new procedural proposal (Tab C). And here is an annotated copy of our August 18th paper showing which of their suggestions we have accepted and which we have not. (Tab D).

Ambassador Bunker: That's helpful.

Dr. Kissinger: On Point 4, we've addressed many of their concerns.

Ambassador Bunker: You've taken out "neutrality."

Dr. Kissinger: Yes.

Ambassador Bunker: (reading): "Review the Constitution for its consistency with the conditions of peace." That's good.

Dr. Kissinger: So they don't have to "revise" it. And a "referendum" is in there to ratify it.

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Ambassador Bunker: Good, yes. "Fairness" you did accept.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes. Frankly, if it becomes a sticking point we'll have to fall off it.

Ambassador Bunker: Yes. (Reads:) "Lessening the burdens of people." They wanted it out?

Dr. Kissinger: What does it mean?

Ambassador Bunker: I don't know.

Dr. Kissinger: Maybe we should accept all their sacramental phrases.

Ambassador Bunker: I don't know what it means.

Dr. Kissinger: Even if Thieu should tearfully say, "Let's sign it," we wouldn't be able to sign it right away. If we table this on September 15th, it will take through October. I will take personal charge of confusing who offered what. We will be able to say to McGovern that the only thing we haven't offered is a Communist government. I don't see why Thieu is so obtuse.

Ambassador Bunker: Some of their proposed changes are meaningless: "Various" in place of "all." Some we rejected, with good reason: "for purely defensive purposes."

Can I use this?

Dr. Kissinger: Yes. We thought it would help you run through it with Thieu.

Ambassador Bunker: You say "Deal with" in the procedural part.

Dr. Kissinger: They wanted to say "discuss" and not "resolve". We propose "deal with," which is more neutral.

Le Duc Tho is the same. They'll raise a theological point and stick to it forever.

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Dr. Kissinger (con't): One other thing they (the North Vietnamese) keep coming back to: At one meeting I said in passing that if it was useful I would be willing to meet with any other Politburo members in complete secrecy, at a different location if necessary. They keep coming back to this. And in messages, too. They haven't proposed it, but they mentioned Laos, or Hanoi. I don't know how physically I would do it.

Would a visit by me to Hanoi wreck everything in Saigon? Or would it depend on the outcome?

Ambassador Bunker: It would depend on the outcome.

Dr. Kissinger: I'd go to Saigon first, I suppose, and then disappear to Hanoi.

(At 8:45, conversation broke up and Dr. Kissinger accompanied Ambassador Bunker to see the President.)

(The letter to Thieu drafted later for the President's signature is at Tab E.)

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By UB NARA Date 8/18/04

GVN REACTION TO OUR RESPONSE TO THEIR
MEMORANDA ON OUR PEACE PROPOSALS

- August 29 I received our response to GVN memoranda in early afternoon. Met with Thieu at 5 p. m. and went over our response point by point. He requested memorandum saying he would need time for consideration and would meet with me the next day, August 30. Thieu had prepared letter for delivery to the President but withheld it saying it would have to be rewritten in view of our response. Memorandum delivered to Nha 7 p. m.
- August 30 Having heard nothing from Palace I telephoned Nha at 5 p. m. and asked about time for meeting. He replied that memorandum would be delivered to me at 7:30 p. m. I said that in any case it would be important for me to see President Thieu and asked him to let me know when Thieu could see me.
- As I had had no reply, I telephoned Thieu at 6:30 on the Executive line but received no answer. I then instructed my assistant to get in touch with Nha and ask about my appointment with Thieu. Nha replied that the appointment could not be arranged. In the meantime, Captain Lam of the Palace Protocol Office telephoned Miss Kim to say that I would not have an appointment with the President but that a messenger would deliver a letter for me at my residence at 1930.
- Nha arrived at the residence without a letter and said that there had not been sufficient time to coordinate their views and prepare a response. He intimated that our response to the GVN memoranda, especially on Point 4, had come as something of a shock. President Thieu had felt compelled to consult with the National Security Council - Vice President Huong, Prime Minister Khiem, and Foreign Minister Lam. Our reply to their memoranda created a difficult problem for them and they were unable to give it adequate consideration in so short a time.

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Comment: I think it is clear that our Point 4 has given them great concern. They seem to view the composition of the Committee of National Reconciliation as a disguised form of coalition or at least an entering wedge toward it. There is evidence also of lack of confidence in ability to control their representatives on the neutral part of the Commission - fear of - or respect for - the communists' powers of subversion.

I believe, also, there is apprehension that if it becomes necessary to surface our proposal (in case the other side rejects it) the reaction will be strongly negative, that there will be a feeling that the GVN has conceded too much, and a questioning of the government's resolve. This in turn, they probably feel, will adversely affect the morale of the armed forces.

Finally I think there is still a feeling that SVN is not yet ready for a political confrontation with the communists, that the nationalist side is not well enough organized, despite an overwhelming majority, to compete with the tough, highly disciplined communists. Efforts at political party integration have been tentative and feeble and Thieu's efforts to organize a party have been stymied by the offensive. The government now exercises control through the province, district and village chiefs but an election in which their influence was inhibited would be a matter of concern.

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1. The United States respects the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Vietnam, as recognized by the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam.

2. The total withdrawal from South Vietnam of all troops, military advisers, and military personnel, armaments and war material belonging to the United States, and those of other foreign countries allied with the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and the dismantlement of all U.S. military bases in South Vietnam will be completed within three months after the signing of the overall agreement.

After overall agreement is reached, the U.S. is prepared to define its level of military aid with any government that exists in South Vietnam in direct relation to other external military aid introduced into Indochina.

3. The release of all military men and innocent civilians captured throughout Indochina will be carried out simultaneously with and completed on the same day as the aforesaid troop withdrawal. The parties will exchange complete lists of the military men and innocent civilians captured throughout Indochina on the day of the signing of the overall agreement.

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4. The South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination will be respected.

a) The South Vietnamese people will decide the political future of South Vietnam through genuinely free and democratic Presidential elections, review of the Constitution, and any other political processes they agree upon which will reflect the aspirations and will for peace, independence, democracy, and national reconciliation of the entire people.

Electoral procedures will guarantee freedom and equality during the campaign and balloting for all citizens, irrespective of their political tendencies or place of residence.

A Presidential election will be held within 5 months of an overall agreement.

The Presidential election will be organized and supervised by a Committee of National Reconciliation which will assume its responsibilities on the date of overall agreement. This body will decide electoral procedures, determine the qualification of candidates, ensure the fairness of voting and verify the election results.

The Composition of the Committee will be as follows:

- Representatives of the Republic of Vietnam to be designated by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam;

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- Representatives of the NLF to be designated by the NLF;
- Representatives of various political and religious tendencies in South Vietnam associated neither with the Government of the Republic of Vietnam nor the NLF but designated by mutual agreement between the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and the NLF.

There will be international supervision of this election.

b) Before the Presidential election, the incumbent President and Vice President of South Vietnam will resign. The Chairman of the Senate, as caretaker head of government, will assume administrative responsibilities except for those pertaining to the Presidential elections, which will remain with the Committee of National Reconciliation.

c) When he assumes office, the new President will form a new government in which all political forces will be represented in proportion to the number of popular votes they received in the Presidential election.

d) 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.

e) 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.

f) After the Presidential election, the Committee of National Reconciliation will remain in existence in order to review the Constitution for its consistency with the conditions of peace. The Committee will undertake this task with a view to restoring a spirit of national reconciliation throughout the country. Any constitutional changes proposed by the Committee will be ratified by referendum or any other process mutually agreed to between the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and the NLF.

5. The question of Vietnamese armed forces in South Vietnam will be settled by the Vietnamese parties themselves in a spirit of national reconciliation, fairness, and mutual respect, without foreign interference and with a view to lessening the burdens of the people.

6. The re-unification of Vietnam will be achieved step by step, through peaceful means, on the basis of discussions and agreements between North and South Vietnam, without coercion or annexation from either side and without foreign interference. The time for re-unification will be agreed upon, after a suitable interval following the signing of an overall agreement.

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Pending re-unification, North and South Vietnam will promptly start negotiations toward the reestablishment of normal relations in various fields on the basis of mutual respect.

In keeping with the provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam, while Vietnam is still temporarily divided, North and South Vietnam will refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries, and from allowing foreign countries to maintain military bases, troops, and military personnel on their respective territories.

7. The Geneva Agreements of 1954 on Indochina and those of 1962 on Laos will be respected by all parties. The people of each Indochinese country will settle their own internal affairs, without foreign interference.

The problems existing between the Indochinese countries will be settled by the Indochinese parties on the basis of respect for each other's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's internal 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.

8. The countries of Indochina shall pursue a foreign policy of peace and independence. They will observe the military provisions of the Geneva Agreements of 1954 and 1962, establish relations with all countries regardless of their political and social regimes, maintain economic and

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cultural relations with all countries, and participate in programs of regional economic cooperation.

9. At a time mutually agreed upon, a general ceasefire will be observed throughout Indochina under international control and supervision.

As part of the ceasefire the U.S. will stop all its acts of force throughout Indochina by ground, air, and naval forces, wherever they may be based, and end the mining of North Vietnamese ports and harbors.

As part of the ceasefire, 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.

10. a) There will be international control and supervision of the provisions under points 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9 of this agreement. The composition, tasks, and organization of the international control and supervision commission and the subjects to be controlled and supervised will be agreed upon by the belligerent parties prior to the ceasefire.

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b) There will be an international guarantee for the respect of the ceasefire, of the Indochinese people's fundamental national rights, for the status of Indochina and for the preservation of lasting peace in this region. The countries participating in the international guarantee and the form of guarantee will be agreed upon by the belligerent parties.

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The following procedures shall guide the conduct of negotiations.

1. The parties agree that there will be the following forums:

-- First, a forum of private meetings between representatives of the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam:

This forum will deal with military issues such as the withdrawal of United States forces, cease-fire, the return of prisoners of war and such other military issues as may be agreed between the parties. In addition, the two parties will deal with the principles and general content of the political questions affecting the settlement of the Vietnam war.

The two parties will deal with questions one by one. If, in the course of negotiations, there remain disagreements on one question, the parties will agree to move to the discussion of another question, returning to outstanding points of disagreement at a subsequent time.

As these bilateral negotiations proceed, principles dealt with between the two parties will be recorded for subsequent discussion in detail in the forums enumerated below. When one question has been dealt with in this forum, the parties may, by mutual agreement, refer it immediately

for detailed discussion to one of the forums listed below.

2. Second, a forum of private meetings between representatives of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and the NLF:

This forum will deal with the agreements on the military questions, as well as the principles and general contents of the political questions in South Vietnam also dealt with in the forum between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. This forum will also deal in detail with such other political and military questions which may not have been dealt with in the forum between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The forum will also deal with any other matters mutually agreed for discussion between the Republic of Vietnam and the NLF.

3. Third, a forum of private meetings between the Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the NLF:

This forum will discuss the settlement of specific questions concerning North and South Vietnam.

4. Fourth, a four-party forum between the United States, the Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the NLF: This forum will discuss the settlement of a number

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of specific questions concerning the four parties.

5. It shall be the right of any of the four forums enumerated above to refer a matter to another forum if, after discussion and mutual agreement, this is considered appropriate and helpful to facilitating solution of the matter in question.

6. When agreement is reached at the above-mentioned forums, an overall agreement will be signed. Besides the overall agreement, the parties may also reach agreements with one another.

7. The parties may also agree on the establishment of a wider international forum to deal with those aspects of a settlement which also pertain to all of Indochina.

US PLAN GIVEN TO THIEU

8/31/72

AUGUST 18, 1972

AND CHANGES MADE OR PROPOSED SUBSEQUENTLY

1. The United States respects the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Vietnam, ^[North & South] [as recognized by the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam].
2. The total withdrawal from South Vietnam of all troops, military advisers, and military personnel, armaments and war material belonging to the United States, and those of other foreign countries allied with the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, [and the dismantlement of all U.S. military bases in South Vietnam] will be completed within three months after the signing of the overall agreement.

GVN addition 8/18
we reject.
GVN deletion 8/18
we reject.

GVN deletion 8/28
we reject
Agreed figure
8/18

After overall agreement is reached, the U.S. is prepared to define its level of military aid with any government that exists in South Vietnam in direct relation to other external military aid introduced into Indochina.

3. The release of all military men and innocent civilians captured throughout Indochina will be carried out simultaneously with and completed on the same day as the aforesaid troop withdrawal. The parties will exchange complete lists of the military men and innocent civilians captured throughout Indochina on the day of the signing of the overall agreement.
4. The South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination will be respected.

GVN addition 8/28
we reject.

GVN addition 8/28
we reject.

[N.B.: GVN offered complete redraft 8/28]

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a) The South Vietnamese people will decide [themselves] the political ^{future} ~~system~~ of South Vietnam through genuinely free and democratic Presidential elections, ^{review} [revision] of the constitution, and any other political processes they agree upon ^{which will} ~~to form a new government of South Vietnam~~ reflecting the aspirations and will for peace, independence, [neutrality] democracy, and national reconciliation of the entire people.

US deletion,
US change
US response to
FVN concern
US change
GVN deletion
we accept.

Electoral procedures will guarantee freedom and equality during the campaign and balloting for all citizens, irrespective of their political tendencies or place of residence.

A Presidential election will be held within 5 months of an overall agreement.

The Presidential election will be organized and supervised by a Committee of National Reconciliation which will assume its responsibilities on the date of overall agreement. This body will, ~~among other responsibilities~~ decide electoral procedures, determine the qualification of candidates, ensure the fairness of voting and verify the election results.

US deletion

The composition of the Committee will be as follows:

- Representatives of the Republic of Vietnam to be designated by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam;
- Representatives of the PRG to be designated by the PRG;

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e) 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.

f) After the Presidential election, the Committee of National Reconciliation will remain in existence in order to ^{review} ~~revising~~ the Constitution for its consistency with the conditions of peace; ~~and agree on steps to implement its provisions.~~ The Committee will undertake this task with a view to restoring a spirit of national reconciliation throughout the country.

US change in response to GVN concern

Any constitutional changes proposed by the Committee will be ratified by referendum or any other process mutually agreed to between the GVN and the NLF.

US addition in response to GVN concern

5. The question of Vietnamese armed forces in South Vietnam will be settled by the Vietnamese parties themselves in a spirit of national reconciliation, ^{fairness} ~~equality~~ and mutual respect, without foreign interference ~~and with a view to lessening the burdens of the people.~~

[The question of NVA in SVN should be settled in the framework of a general ceasefire.]

GVN change & we accept

GVN deletion addition 8/18; we reject.

6. The re-unification of Vietnam will be achieved step by step, through peaceful means, on the basis of discussions and agreements between North and South Vietnam, without coercion or annexation from either side and without foreign interference. The time for re-unification will be agreed upon after a suitable interval following the signing of an overall agreement.

Pending re-unification, North and South Vietnam will ^{promptly start} ~~reestablish~~ negotiations toward the reestablishment of

GVN change 8/18; we accept.

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VARIOUS

normal relations in [all] fields on the basis of mutual respect.

GVN change 8/18
we accept.

In keeping with the provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam, while Vietnam is still temporarily divided, North and South Vietnam will refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries, and from allowing foreign countries to maintain military bases, troops, and military personnel on their respective territories, ^[except for purely defensive purposes and on a temporary basis]

GVN addition 8/18
we reject.

7. The Geneva Agreements of 1954 on Indochina and those of 1962 on Laos will be respected by all parties. The people of each Indochinese country will settle their own internal affairs, without foreign interference.

GVN 8/18
proposes moving up principle on armed forces to first ¶ on Geneva;
we reject.

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

GVN addition 8/18;
we reject.

8. The countries of Indochina shall pursue a foreign policy of peace, ^{and} independence, ^{and} ~~neutrality~~ ^{They will observe the military provisions of the Geneva Agreements of 1954 and 1962,} establish relations with all countries regardless of their political and social regimes, maintain economic and cultural relations with all countries, and participate in programs of regional economic cooperation.

GVN deletion 8/18
we accept.

US addition.

9. At a time mutually agreed upon, a ^{general} standstill ceasefire will be observed throughout Indochina under international control and supervision.

GVN change 8/18
we accept.

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As part of the ceasefire the U.S. will stop all its acts of force throughout Indochina by ground, air, and naval forces, wherever they may be based, and end the mining of North Vietnamese ports and harbors.

addition 8/18;
 ve reject.

As part of the ceasefire, there will be no further infiltration of outside forces into any of the ^[four] 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.

addition 8/28;
 e accept.

10. a) There will be international control and supervision of the provisions under points 2, 3, 5, 7, and 9 of this agreement. The composition, tasks, and organization of the international control and supervision commission and the subjects to be controlled and supervised will be agreed upon by the ^{belligerent} parties, prior to the ceasefire.

addition 8/18;
 e accept.

addition 8/18;
 e accept.

b) There will be an international guarantee for the respect of ^{the ceasefire, of} the Indochinese people's fundamental national rights, for the status of Indochina and for the preservation of lasting peace in this region. The countries participating in the international guarantee and the form of guarantee will be agreed upon by the ^{belligerent} parties.

addition 8/18;
 ve accept.

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GVN suggests 8/18; [Now Separate document]
US accepts

11. The following procedures shall guide the conduct of negotiations.

a) The parties agree that there will be the following forums:

-- First, a forum of private meetings between representatives of the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam:

This forum will ~~(discuss and resolve)~~ ^{deal with} military issues such as the withdrawal of United States forces, cease-fire, the return of prisoners of war and such other military issues as may be agreed between the parties. In addition, the two parties will ~~(discuss and resolve)~~ ^{deal with} the principles and general content of the political questions affecting the settlement of the Vietnam ^{war} ~~(problem)~~.

The two parties will ~~(discuss and resolve)~~ ^{deal with} questions one by one. If, in the course of negotiations, there remain disagreements on one question, the parties will agree to move to the discussion of another question, returning to outstanding points of disagreement at a subsequent time.

As these bilateral negotiations proceed, principles ~~(agreed upon)~~ ^{dealt with} between the two parties will be recorded for subsequent discussion in detail in the forums enumerated below. When one question ~~(is resolved)~~ ^{has been dealt with} in this forum, the parties may, by mutual agreement, refer it immediately

GVN deletes "resolve"
8/18. US suggests
"deal with"

(same)

GVN change 8/28;
We accept.

(same as above)

GVN substitutes
"discussed," 8/18.
US suggests "dealt with"

GVN change 8/28;
We accept.

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for detailed discussion to one of the forums listed below.

-- Second, a forum of private meetings between representatives of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and the ^{NLF} ~~PRG~~

This forum will ^{deal with} ~~discuss and implement~~ the agreements on the military questions, as well as the principles and general contents of the political questions, ^{in South Vietnam} ~~already reached~~ in the forum between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. This forum will also ^{deal} ~~discuss and resolve~~ in detail such other political and military questions which may not have been ^{dealt with} ~~resolved~~ in the forum between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The forum will also deal with any other matters mutually agreed for discussion between the Republic of Vietnam and the ^{NLF} ~~PRG~~.

-- Third, a forum of ~~tripartite~~ ^{and} private meetings between the Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

^{On which the NLF can participate.} ~~and the PRG~~ This forum will discuss the settlement of specific questions concerning North and South Vietnam, ~~such as the problem of the Vietnamese armed forces, and any other matters mutually agreed between the three parties.~~

change 8/18; accept.

substitutes "resolve" "implement" 8/28; propose "deal with"

addition 8/28; re accept.

N deletion 8/28; re reject.

IN change 8/28; re accept.

UN change 8/18; we accept.

IN deletion 8/18; we accept.

UN change 8/28; we reject.

UN deletion 8/28; we accept.

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~~and Governments of~~

-- A four-party forum between the United States, ~~the Republic~~ ^{the four countries of Indochina, in which the NLF can participate.} of Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the PRC:

GVN change 8/28
We reject.

This forum will discuss the settlement of a number of ^[interested] specific questions concerning the ^{four} parties ^{[such as an} Indochina-wide ceasefire.]

GVN change 8/28
We reject.

GVN deletion 8/28
We accept.

b) It shall be the right of any of the four forums enumerated above to refer a matter to another forum if, after discussion and mutual agreement, this is considered appropriate and helpful to facilitating solution of the matter in question.

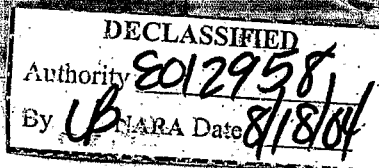
~~c) In the course of negotiation the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam assume the joint responsibility to help overcome obstacles and difficulties which may arise among the parties.~~

GVN deletion 8/28
We accept.

c) When agreement is reached at the above-mentioned forums, an overall agreement will be signed. Besides the overall agreement, the parties may also reach ~~bilateral or tripartite~~ ^{with one another.} agreements.

GVN change 8/28
We accept.

d) The parties may also agree on the establishment of a wider international forum to deal with those aspects of a settlement which also pertain to all of Indochina.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

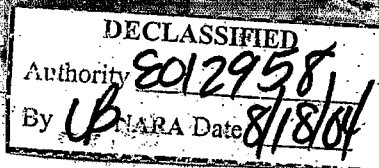
August 31, 1972

Dear Mr. President:

I was most pleased to receive from Ambassador Bunker in Hawaii a full and current report on your views with respect to the ongoing peace negotiations, on which our two governments have recently had a number of detailed exchanges. On the basis of the Ambassador's report, we have made a number of adjustments in our substantive and procedural proposals, which the Ambassador will be able to discuss with you. I believe our new drafts represent a constructive peace proposal reflecting our mutual interest in an honorable peace settlement which insures the South Vietnamese people the right to determine their future without an imposed solution or outside interference. The Ambassador will give you our thinking in detail. You can be certain that he speaks for me.

At this delicate moment in the negotiations, let me assure you once again, personally and emphatically, of the bedrock of the U. S. position: The United States has not persevered all this way, at the sacrifice of many American lives, to reverse course in the last few months of 1972. We will not do now what we have refused to do in the preceding three and a half years. The American people know that the United States cannot purchase peace or honor or redeem its sacrifices at the price of deserting a brave ally. This I cannot do and will never do.

Our essential task now is to work closely together, on the basis of complete frankness and trust, as we have done so successfully throughout these years. Our objective is a common and mutual one. I have instructed Ambassador Bunker to maintain the closest contact with you, to insure meticulous and thorough consultation with you at every stage.



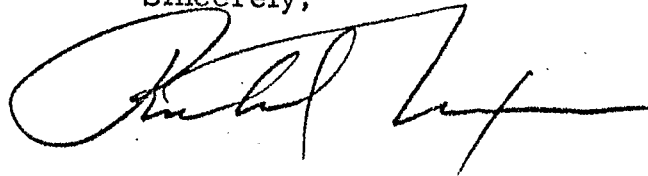
- 2 -

I believe our new proposals reflect unmistakably that we have offered every legitimate concession for a fair political process. If the other side rejects these proposals, it will be proven to even the most skeptical that the obstacle to a settlement is not one leader, but their insistence on being handed at the conference table what they can win neither at the ballot box nor on the battlefield. If they accept our proposal they must accept your Government as a negotiating partner, and you will be fully protected by being present in each forum.

Finally, Mr. President, I want to express to you again the American people's admiration for the courage and performance of the people and armed forces of South Vietnam in their successful defense against the North Vietnamese invasion, and for your sterling leadership. The courage and unity of your people is the ultimate guarantee of their freedom. But for us to succeed on this last leg of a long journey, we must trust each other fully. We must not hand the enemy through our discord what we have prevented through our unity.

With my best personal regards.

Sincerely,



His Excellency
Nguyen Van Thieu
President of the Republic
of Vietnam
Saigon