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NETNAM

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Viet Peace Plan Given to Moscow

By Drew Pearson

Most important and secret peace formula so far proposed in the backstage Vietnam peace maneuvering is that submitted to Moscow calling for neutralization of the entire Indochinese peninsula under the International Control Commission.



Pearson

Net result would be to increase Russian influence in Southeast Asia at the expense of Chinese influence. This the United States much prefers.

Actually, this proposal has been made by the British, but with American willingness to withdraw from Vietnam, with the International Control Commission then taking over, not only in South Vietnam but Laos and Cambodia, to keep the entire area neutral. The commission would also take jurisdiction in North Vietnam.

The International Control Commission was created under the Geneva Treaty of 1954, which arranged for French withdrawal. Its members are India, Canada and Poland. The Russians would have indirect representation through Poland, the United States and Britain would have some influence through Canada.

The commission would have

to be given more power and some kind of a police force to enforce neutrality.

So far, no reply from the Russians. None was really expected until sometime after Alexander Shelepin returned from his trip to Hanoi, possibly not until after British Prime Minister Harold Wilson goes to Moscow Feb. 21-24.

Cocky Premier Ky

Chief reason Secretary of State Dean Rusk went to Saigon was to persuade Premier Nguyen Cao Ky to take a deep breath and not knock over the peace talks—at least not publicly. Ky, who has brazenly admitted that his hero is Adolf Hitler, has been popping like a Mexican jumping bean ever since the Johnson peace offensive got going.

As recently revealed by Clayton Fritchey, Ky has told Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge repeatedly that he would not go along with peace talks, that he is not ready to sit down at the conference table, and that the United States cannot commit the government of South Vietnam to peace.

Chief reason Ky is so jittery is that his government controls only about 700 villages out of 2600 in South Vietnam. In other words about one-third of the territory. He isn't strong enough to go to the conference table, and he wouldn't have the ghost of a chance of survival if American troops pulled out.

Some of Ky's military commanders feel even stronger about this, and there have been rumbles that if the United States goes too far with peace, Ky will be either ousted or assassinated.

This is why Rusk stopped off in Saigon. He was successful—publicly. But privately, the bantam premier of South Vietnam is still about as sore as a stepped-on crocodile in the Mekong River.

Merry-Go-Round

The Air Force, which has a reputation for giving straight answers to newsmen, has been fudging regarding the President's future son-in-law, Pat Nugent, now on active duty with the Air National Guard. Air Force officials claimed Pat had only one weekend off during the Christmas holidays. Tweren't so. Pat had more weekends off than any other man at Lackland Air Force Base. . . . Two biographers of my ex-mother-in-law, Cissy Patterson, have been racing to publish books on her glamorous, sulphuric career. Alice Hoge, Cissy's niece, finally beat Paul Healy of the New York News to the punch. Bennett Cerf sneaked Alice's book "Cissy Patterson" in for February publication. Double-day will bring out "Cissy" in April. . . . Meanwhile, Frank Waldrop, former editor of the Washington Times-Herald, has finished a fascinating book,

"McCormick of Chicago," Cissy Patterson's cousin, the late publisher of the Chicago Tribune. . . . Pan American Airways saved a lot of lives in Brazil when it hustled high-speed vaccine injectors down to Rio de Janeiro following the catastrophic rains. The entire city was threatened with plague. . . . Ohio Democrats have picked Mike Sweeney, a highly respected Ohio legislator, to run against unpopular Democratic Congressman Mike Feighan. Once a dedicated member of Congress, Feighan has turned sour.

Tender Tiger

A different kind of student Vietnam demonstration is being staged at Pennsylvania Military College, Chester, Pa., where I drilled during World War I.

PMC students have organized "Operation Tender Tiger" to build an orphanage in South Vietnam.

At the rate the Vietcong are winning popular support in South Vietnam, Koch would appear to be right.

PMC students have devised a symbol of a ferocious tiger with an olive branch in its teeth and are selling "Operation Tender Tiger" buttons to raise money for the orphanage.

The idea has spread to nearby high schools, and 22 of them are also selling Tender Tiger buttons.

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