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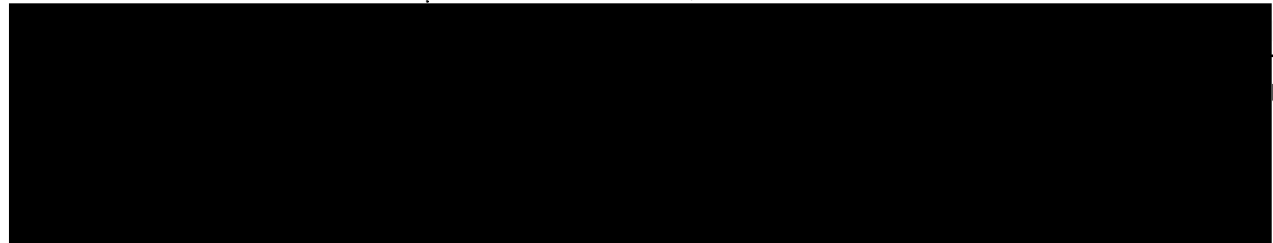
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
12 May 1977

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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

VIETNAM: ATTITUDE TOWARD PARIS TALKS

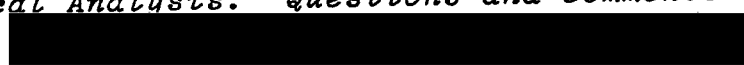
The evidence we have seen to date regarding Hanoi's reaction to the first round of talks this month with the US has been mixed. One theme that does come through, however, is that the Vietnamese are sticking by their demand for US economic assistance and intend to press this case more vigorously at the second round of talks.



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*This memorandum was prepared by the Office of Regional and Political Analysis. Questions and comments may be addressed to* 

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[REDACTED]

The cabinet minister warned that Hanoi would not take the same "soft" line during the next round of talks. In the next round, he said that Hanoi would attempt to cut the linkage between the MIA and assistance issues and focus on the US "obligation" to provide economic assistance under Article 21 of the 1973 Paris accords.

A more strident and pessimistic tone also has been reflected this week in Hanoi's propaganda reaction to the US House of Representatives vote against any discussion of US reconstruction aid and follow-up State Department affirmation that aid under Article 21 would not be considered. Hanoi describes these moves and statements as proof that the US went into the talks with a negative attitude. In contrast to the more positive initial Vietnamese reaction in Paris, Hanoi's propaganda now professes to see the US agreement to Vietnam's UN membership as merely an admission of the inevitability of this event rather than a significant concession.

Hanoi warns that whether or not the coming session in Paris is successful depends entirely on the US, because Vietnam's "good will and justice" toward the US has been evidenced by its "good faith" in providing information on the MIAs.

The hints of some limited Vietnamese flexibility we have seen relate to modalities rather than the basic Vietnamese determination to press the issue of reconstruction aid. On 4 May, during the first round of talks, the counselor of the Vietnamese embassy in Paris said [REDACTED] that the Vietnamese were considering asking for help on specific industrial reconstruction projects or oil exploration rather than an outright grant, hoping that the US might be more responsive to this arrangement. Before the opening of the first round of talks, the Vietnamese ambassador in Paris said that the Vietnamese would accept any reasonable indication of a US willingness to provide aid, and that details could be worked out after everyone had "become friends."

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The Vietnamese do appear committed to continuing the talks, on a protracted basis if necessary. Even before the initial meetings in Paris, one Vietnamese diplomat expressed Hanoi's recognition that the talks might be longer and more difficult than the Kissinger-Le Duc Tho discussions in 1973.

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