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# SPECIAL MEMORANDUM

*FOREIGN RADIO AND PRESS REACTION*

*TO PRESIDENT NIXON'S 25 JANUARY TV ADDRESS ON VIETNAM*

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*1 February 1972*

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FOREIGN RADIO AND PRESS REACTION  
TO PRESIDENT NIXON'S 25 JANUARY TV ADDRESS ON VIETNAM

## SUMMARY

## COMMUNIST MEDIA

NORTH VIETNAM AND THE FRONT: Hanoi promptly acknowledged the President's 25 January TV speech in a radio commentary which dismissed the eight points as a plan designed to quiet his critics and thus aid him in the presidential election next fall. However, this initial commentary ignored the President's revelations about the series of U.S.-DRV private meetings, and it was not until the 31st that Hanoi released its version of what had caused the breakdown of the talks. Hanoi was also slow in offering press comment on the President's speech, with Commentator articles in the party paper NHAN DAN on the 29th and in the army daily QUAN DOI NHAN DAN on the 31st. Both the communist delegates at the Paris session on the 27th, where the allied side formally submitted the eight-point peace plan, and Hanoi commentators focused their criticism on the proposals for U.S. troop withdrawal from South Vietnam and the holding of South Vietnamese presidential elections six months after an agreement is reached. There have been passing references to the release of POW's and a cease-fire throughout Indochina, but the other points have been ignored.

PATHET LAO: Attacking the President as "warmongering and cunning" and registering concern lest "one be misled into believing his propaganda," a Pathet Lao broadcast insisted that the U.S. peace plan is "no different" from past ones. Another broadcast stated that the Pathet Lao hews to its own plan for settling the conflict in Laos and also declared that "the only way to bring peace and independence to our country is to fight and defeat the enemy."

SIHANOUK: The Information and Propaganda Ministry of Sihanouk's government denounced the proposals of the "international gangster Nixon" as designed to "continue U.S. imperialist aggression" and sustain the U.S. "colonialist yoke" in Indochina. Scolding the United States for having "trampled" on the Geneva agreements, it neglected to mention the points in the U.S. proposals on respect for the Geneva accords and on

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international guarantees and an international conference. In a brief statement of his own, Sihanouk said the President's proposals have been "unanimously" rejected by the DRV, the PRG, the RGNU, and the Pathet Lao.

THE PRC: Peking has denounced the proposal as an attempt to impose "truculent and unreasonable conditions" for a U.S. troop withdrawal and "a new strategem" for prolonging the war. In its most authoritative reaction to the President's address, a PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator article reaffirmed Peking's support for the PRG's seven-point plan and warned the United States that neither "peace fraud" nor "military blackmail" can save it from failure. A charge in an accompanying NCNA commentary that U.S. "war blackmail" is a provocation against the Chinese suggests concern over a possible intensification of hostilities in Vietnam as the time for the President's visit to the PRC approaches.

NORTH KOREA: Typically intemperate Pyongyang comment denounced the President's proposals without discussing them in any detail, complaining only that he offered no guarantee of an end to U.S. military operations in Indochina and assailing his "heinous" plan for South Vietnamese elections contrived to protect the "puppet clique."

THE USSR: Taking care not to get out ahead of the Vietnamese communists, Moscow reacted to the President's address somewhat belatedly and only after the DRV and PRG Paris delegations had issued their statements. Moscow has criticized the troop withdrawal, election, and cease-fire points in the President's plan while ignoring the provisions on international guarantees and an international conference on Indochina. Soviet comment has linked the President's proposal with the U.S. election and has publicized critical remarks by the President's opponents. Moscow has also taken the occasion to play the theme of Sino-U.S. collusion in denigrating the President's proposal.

THE EAST EUROPEAN BLOC: Comment from Moscow's allies in East Europe has pervasively linked the revelation of the U.S. peace plan to domestic political motivations. An early dispatch in the Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU quoted Washington "observers" as noting that the President "has not slammed the doors on further negotiation," but the bulk of the comment and reportage has been unrelieved in its critical treatment of the eight-point plan. The media of Moscow's hard-core allies--their leaders fresh from the Warsaw Pact coordinating session in Prague--have also played

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the theme that the President's speech laid propaganda groundwork for Sino-U.S. "collusion" at Hanoi's expense during President Nixon's talks in Peking. Romania, of course, has shunned this theme, but Bucharest's reportage on the U.S. plan is more than usually slanted and negative.

YUGOSLAVIA: Freewheeling Yugoslav comment has included a suggestion that the U.S. peace plan includes points on which the Vietnamese communists might conceivably negotiate. But more authoritative Belgrade comment has been more critical, along the lines of the Soviet bloc reactions, on the issues of Vietnamization and guarantees of free elections.

ALBANIA: Not for the first time, Tirana has betrayed fear that Peking may put its relations with Washington ahead of its support for the Vietnamese communists. In a shrill commentary decrying the President's "treacherous plot" to induce the South Vietnamese communists to sign "a humiliating agreement" at gunpoint, the Albanian party organ made plain its view of what Peking's role should be: The Indochinese people, it said, enjoy "the aid and powerful and continuous support" of the Chinese in a cause that will be won "on the battlefield."

CUBA: Havana media played the theme that the President publicized the U.S. plan in an "insidious and sly maneuver" to "deceive" the American voters into believing the Administration is ready to solve the Indochina problem through peaceful negotiations.

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## NONCOMMUNIST COUNTRIES

WEST EUROPE: Most official spokesmen, newspaper editorialists, and radio commentators in West Europe regarded the President's initiative with a measure of approval, although few saw much hope for an early end to the conflict. Some observers alleged that the release was timed for domestic political effect, while others commented that the timing was keyed to the President's forthcoming visits to Peking and Moscow. Only a handful, however, argued that the proposal has no significance outside such contexts, and a number of commentators perceived serious concessions in the cause of peace. The principal distinction is between those who saw an advance, however small, on the road to peace, and those who felt that the conflict is no nearer an end than before.

ASIA: Most Japanese commentators described the plan as representing a considerable U.S. concession, and there has been some criticism of Hanoi's failure to react in a positive way. Indian comment was largely critical of the plan for not going far enough, especially in regard to the total withdrawal of air and naval forces. The only available Pakistani comment was also critical. Saigon press comment has been mostly favorable, although it includes complaints that the plan yields too much to the communist side. Some Thai commentators also expressed the view that the plan concedes too much to Hanoi, and one paper called for a realignment of Bangkok's position on world affairs.

MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA: The only monitored Arab comment, from Cairo and Baghdad, has been sharply denunciatory. Cairo declared that the U.S. position is like that of Israel toward its Arab neighbors--no withdrawal until a complete agreement is signed. Algerian papers have condemned the proposal as a propaganda exercise, while Tunisian commentators credited the United States with a serious quest for peace. Other press and radio media have provided news coverage but almost no comment.

LATIN AMERICA: The press and radio of Latin American countries have reported the President's proposal fairly extensively, but comment has been slight.

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## I. COMMUNIST MEDIA

## NORTH VIETNAM AND THE FRONT

Hanoi was quick to react to the President's 25 January speech, with a radio commentary--broadcast a few hours after the speech was delivered--dismissing the eight points as a plan designed to "hoodwink" the public and help the President in the U.S. elections next fall. However, Hanoi was slow to acknowledge the details of the President's revelations about the series of private meetings between Dr. Kissinger and DRV representatives Le Duc Tho and Xuan Thuy. And it was not until the 31st that Hanoi supplied its version of what had caused the breakdown of the talks and acknowledged that the DRV had introduced a nine-point proposal privately, five days before the PRG introduced its seven-point proposal at Paris on 1 July. On 31 January, the DRV delegation in Paris called a press conference and issued a communique explaining that it was releasing relevant documents so as "not to permit the United States to mislead public opinion." VNA in its English-language transmission at 1732 GMT on the 31st carried a report of the communique; the communique and the other documents were carried by VNA in French on the 31st beginning at 1752 GMT, but VNA English did not carry the nine points until 1 February.\*

Despite the rapid reaction to the President's speech by Hanoi radio, press comment came only belatedly on the 29th in an article signed Commentator in the party daily NHAN DAN--Hanoi's standard vehicle for responding to Presidential pronouncements. There was even greater delay in comment in the army organ QUAN DOI NHAN DAN, with a Commentator article published in that

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\* VNA's Paris office transmitted the documents--the DRV nine-point plan, the U.S. eight-point plan, and the exchange of messages between the two sides regarding a November meeting--to Hanoi in French and Vietnamese in its service channel on the 31st. The transmission of the DRV's nine-point proposal concluded with the sentence: "We are not sending you the PRG seven-point proposal, since you already have this at home." It is puzzling that the other documents would not be available to VNA in Hanoi. A message sent in VNA's service channel from Hanoi to Paris at 0413 GMT on 1 February, addressed to VNA's Paris and Moscow offices, said: "We suggest that you immediately send us the documents released on 31 January in English. We hope to receive them soon in order to transmit them."

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paper on the 31st. Both articles were sharply critical of the President for having unilaterally revealed information on the secret talks, and both questioned his motives and ridiculed his sincerity regarding a political settlement. But both were notable for the absence of the personal abuse that is a normal staple of Hanoi propaganda; abusive epithets had appeared as recently as 23 January in articles in both NHAN DAN and QUAN DOI NHAN DAN pegged to the State of the Union message. Hanoi presumably felt that a personal attack now would be inconsistent with the acknowledgment that secret talks had been going on with the President's emissary.

While VNA's transmission in French on the 31st carried the text of the eight points, Hanoi propagandists have not acknowledged many of the points. The only substantial comment has been on the proposals for U.S. troop withdrawal and the holding of presidential elections in South Vietnam within six months of an agreement. Of the other points, Hanoi has mentioned only the release of POW's and a cease-fire throughout Indochina. The NHAN DAN Commentator article on the 29th, after a lengthy attack on the issues of the U.S. troops and the holding of elections in South Vietnam, implied that aid was one of the eight points when it said: "Other questions like the exchange of prisoners, cease-fire, aid, and so on are but roundabout and deceitful offers which the United States has tried to sell many times before."

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PRIVATE MEETINGS      The initial Hanoi radio commentary on the 26th ignored the President's disclosures about the private U.S.-DRV meetings.

Cryptic acknowledgment of private meetings did appear in the statement on the President's speech issued by the DRV spokesman in Paris on the 26th--though not released in the media until the next day--and by Xuan Thuy at the Paris session on the 27th. The spokesman referred vaguely to private meetings as well as to the Paris talks in saying that the DRV has always shown its wish to reach a political settlement, that many proposals were put forward, but that the United States in both forums has always refused to respond to the two "basic points" of the communist proposals. The spokesman set the line for subsequent comment when he said that the fact that the President unilaterally made public the private meetings which his representative proposed and promised to keep secret is another proof of "foul play" on the part of the Nixon Administration.

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Xuan Thuy took the same tack at the Paris session on the 27th. After reporting Thuy's criticism of the proposals in the eight-point plan on U.S. withdrawal and South Vietnamese presidential elections, the VNA account of the session quoted him only as saying "Nixon has once again divulged the tenure of the meetings which the U.S. delegate himself had requested be kept secret. Since he has not kept such a promise, how can his other statements be trusted?" But Hanoi radio broadcast the full text\* of Thuy's formal statement, in which he also remarked that the communist side's assertions that the Nixon Administration talked one way and acted another had been illustrated in 1969: "We held private meetings with Ambassador Lodge, and the U.S. delegate proposed to keep these private meetings secret. Yet on 3 November 1969 Mr. Nixon made them all public."

The NHAN DAN Commentator article also pictured the President's revelations about the private meetings as casting doubt on any U.S. commitment. Repeating the line used in the past, Commentator said the DRV "holds that what matters is to reach a correct settlement, not the form of the meeting, public or private," and that with "good will and the full approval of the PRG," the DRV delegation has held meetings with the United States. It went on to say that while the two sides agreed not to make public the private meetings, "now Nixon himself and Kissinger have grossly reneged on their promise by unilaterally divulging the tenure of those private meetings." The QUAN DOI NHAN DAN Commentator article of the 31st, initially broadcast at 0330 GMT that day, referred to the issue of private talks more cryptically, saying only that "the fact that Nixon deceitfully announced the secret talks is more proof that he is trying every means possible to undermine the Paris conference and to impede its progress."

It was not until later on the 31st, after the DRV delegation in Paris released the documents relevant to the private talks, that Hanoi media acknowledged any of the dates of the meetings or the fact that the DRV had presented a nine-point proposal at a secret meeting on 26 June. The delegation's communique complained that the President in his TV speech on the 25th and Kissinger in his press conference the next day not

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\* Vietnamese communist media also carried the full text of the DRV delegate's statements at Paris, as well as those of the PRG, at the sessions of 8 May 1969, 17 September 1970, and 1 July 1971 when PRG proposals were formally introduced.

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only leaked information about the meetings but "distorted the facts." The communique said it was the United States which cancelled the meeting on 20 November.\* And Hanoi sought to document this claim by releasing the exchange of U.S.-DRV letters beginning with the 11 October U.S. message and culminating with the 19 November U.S. message which, as reported by VNA, said that in view of the DRV's message announcing that Le Duc Tho was ill there was no point in meeting on the 20th as previously agreed.

HANOI PRESS COMMENT      The NHAN DAN Commentator article on the 29th-- which atypically was carried in full text by VNA as well as by Hanoi radio--seemed at pains to gloss over the fact that private talks had been going on with the United States. Taking the offensive regarding the U.S. eight-point proposal, Commentator proceeded to deliver a diatribe against the Nixon Administration's Vietnamization policy. The article began by ridiculing the President's description of the U.S. proposal, asking: "Is this really a 'generous, far-reaching, and most comprehensive offer' as Nixon claimed?" It added that the circumstances under which the plan was put forward and its aims must be clarified, and it recalled that the President took office three years ago with a promise to end the war.

As evidence that the President has not stilled his critics, Commentator quoted Congressman McCloskey as criticizing the U.S. proposal for presidential elections in South Vietnam six months after an agreement is reached. McCloskey was quoted as asking: "How could free elections be possible in South Vietnam when the police there were dedicated to the elimination of the NFLSV infrastructure in the 'Phoenix' program? This factor makes it impossible to consider free and full elections going forward." NHAN DAN's Commentator also quoted Senator Alan Cranston as saying that the President's proposal was not a plan for peace but was intended to prepare American public opinion for a war escalation.

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\* In the post-session briefing at Paris on the 27th, DRV press spokesman Nguyen Thanh Le similarly charged the United States with calling off the meeting; consistent with general practice, Hanoi media did not report the press briefings.

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QUAN DOI NHAN DAN's Commentator on the 31st followed NHAN DAN's lead and said the Administration has been unable to overcome the Vietnam problem. The army paper claimed that the Vietnam situation is the principal cause of "all U.S. difficulties and deadlocks in the political, military, economic, financial, and social fields."

The article went on to say that

the initiative on Vietnam which Nixon has exhibited early in 1972--a year when the United States will see its incumbent President end his term and when Nixon's political future will be decided--is a deceitful trick that was premeditated as regards timing and methods in order to be able to cope with his worsening situation and to divert the attention of public opinion that is demanding that Nixon end the war of aggression and the Vietnamization policy.

The army paper seemed to obliquely acknowledge the President's explanation that one reason for his disclosure of the fact of the secret talks was that U.S. citizens had been misled by Hanoi's attacks on U.S. policy. It said cryptically that "Nixon also hopes to be able to cope with opposition factions that are criticizing him." Going on to claim that the U.S. troop withdrawal plan is solely aimed at continuing the war through Vietnamization, the paper quoted Senator Kennedy as saying that "the United States does not need an eight-point peace plan, but rather needs a one-point peace plan--that is, that all U.S. infantry, air, and naval forces must be withdrawn."

In claiming that the Administration is still "plotting to perpetuate the existence of U.S. military bases, U.S. supply and command system, and particularly the U.S. air and naval forces," the QUAN DOI NHAN DAN Commentator article claimed that "while elaborating on the troop withdrawal proposal, Ambassador Porter at the 27 January Paris session bluntly said: 'no provisions therein deal with military personnel and equipment or with the use of military bases in South Vietnam.'" (In additional remarks at the session, aimed at clarifying a point raised by the communists, Ambassador Porter said that "concerning which forces are to be withdrawn, our proposal contains a provision for total withdrawal. Total is not a word which requires much explanation. There is no provision for military personnel, military equipment, or the use of bases in South Vietnam after that withdrawal is complete.)

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## PATHET LAO

The Pathet Lao has reacted with routine-level radio and press agency comment and thus far has issued no official statement. The first reaction, a 27 January Pathet Lao radio commentary, a shorter version of which was disseminated by the Pathet Lao news agency on the 30th, said that the President's plan is "no different" from past "shopworn proposals" and is "full of warmongering, obstinate, and arrogant statements." It observed that the publicity for the plan was aimed at countering the Democratic Party's criticisms of the President's "crimes" in Indochina, and it added that the President hopes to use the "Vietnam issue" to defeat the Democrats in the forthcoming Presidential elections.

Scoring President Nixon as a "warmongering and cunning person," the commentary seemed to exhibit concern that "one might be misled into believing his propaganda." It took issue specifically with the points on U.S. troop withdrawal and exchange of prisoners, the cease-fire throughout Indochina, and the South Vietnamese election. Complaining that the cease-fire proposal is surrounded by numerous conditions for the total withdrawal of troops, it scored President Nixon's "threats" that he will maintain troops in South Vietnam and continue the bombing of the DRV and it decried the continued stationing of army and air forces in other Indochinese countries and Thailand.

The commentary also asked how a just election can be held in South Vietnam under these conditions and while Thieu's "lackeys from the top down to the local levels are still in power." The Pathet Lao commentary did not mention the points on respect for the Geneva agreements or on international guarantees and an international conference. It concluded by insisting that peace can be achieved in the Indochinese countries through the PRG's seven points, the NLHS' five points, and Sihanouk's "various peace solutions," and that to restore peace President Nixon does not have to make any more proposals: "He can discuss any problems at the Paris talks." The commentary did not acknowledge the disclosure of the secret DRV-U.S. talks.

A 30 January weekly "conversation" broadcast by Pathet Lao radio was at pains to emphasize that the eight-point proposal is nothing new and that four of the points "may have misled some people." It took issue with the points on U.S. troop withdrawal and prisoner exchange, the cease-fire, and the

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South Vietnam elections in terms similar to the first commentary, and it dismissed the other points as "no different from previous proposals"--again avoiding mention of the Geneva agreements, international guarantees, and an international conference. It concluded with the assertion that the Pathet Lao will continue to adhere to its five-point proposal and will continue its military defeats of the "puppet troops" in Laos. "The only way to bring peace and independence to our country," it declared, "is to fight and defeat the enemy."

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## SIHANOUK'S "GOVERNMENT"

A 28 January statement by the Information and Propaganda Ministry of Sihanouk's Royal Government of National Union (RGNU), broadcast by the radio of Sihanouk's front, the FUNK, on the 31st, denounced the speech by "international gangster Nixon" as aimed at "a sham Indochina peace in order to continue U.S. imperialist aggression and its colonialist yoke in Indochina."

The statement commented specifically only on the proposals on a cease-fire and elections in South Vietnam and on the U.S. undertaking to remain neutral in the elections. The points on the cease-fire and the elections, it said, were merely an effort to "gain time" to improve the situation of the U.S. "puppet" regimes in Indochina. As for U.S. neutrality in the elections, the statement observed that the United States has never been neutral in Cambodia since the days of John Foster Dulles and the 1954 Geneva conference. That agreement, which indicated that no big power should interfere in Indochina, has been "trampled" by the United States, the statement said. It did not directly acknowledge the points in the President's statement regarding respect for the Geneva agreements and international guarantees and an international conference.

The RGNU statement accused the President of repeating the "tricks" he had used in the 1968 election to prolong "aggression" in Indochina for another four years. He publicized the peace plan, it said, because the United States and its "lackeys" are being "heavily defeated" in Indochina, "especially in Cambodia," and in the hope that he could strengthen the position of the "puppet" regimes and at the same time continue his "reactionary rule" over the American people. The RGNU went on to charge President Nixon with attempting to mislead world opinion by "exerting pressure" on Washington's "henchmen"--pressure that is especially obvious in Phnom Penh, where Ambassador Swank "makes everything available" to the "clique" and where he "ordered" Minister of Information Long Boret to make a statement supporting the President's speech. The statement concluded with a pledge to launch "greater offensives" in the military, political, economic, and diplomatic fields, force the United States and its "lackeys" to withdraw from Cambodia, and "crush" the "clique" in Phnom Penh.

A brief statement by Sihanouk reported by AKI, the press agency of Sihanouk's government and front, on the 31st said the U.S.

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proposals have been "unanimously" rejected by the DRV, PRG, RGNU, and NLHS. Complaining that they are not aimed at ending the Indochina war, he specified that there is "no satisfactory provision" concerning the air raids; that Thailand will continue as a base for attacks on Indochina; and that President Nixon reserves the possibility of insuring the survival of the Indochinese "renegade" regimes. (AFP on the 27th reported that Sihanouk told its Peking correspondent he was "shocked" that President Nixon seems to be addressing only the Vietnamese when he talks about Cambodia and all of Indochina. Stressing that the President cannot settle the problem of Cambodia with Hanoi or Peking, he reportedly insisted that solutions must be reached with the Indochinese countries individually.)

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## THE PRC

Responding to the President's TV address with a 29 January PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator article and a companion NCNA commentary dated the 28th, Peking has denounced the President's peace proposal as an attempt to impose "truculent and unreasonable conditions" for U.S. troop withdrawal and as "a new strategem" for "prolonging and intensifying" the war. Beginning on the 27th, Peking had first acknowledged the President's proposal by carrying the 26 January statements by the DRV and PRG Paris delegations' spokesmen and other foreign comment. Peking's reaction to the President's previous major peace proposal, delivered on 7 October 1970, took a similar form of publicity for critical foreign reaction followed by Chinese comment on the level of a Commentator article.

The PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator article interpreted the President's eight-point proposal as providing that the United States will withdraw its troops "on condition" that the POWs be released, the Saigon "puppet regime" be maintained, and a cease-fire be realized, which "means that the Indochinese people have to lay down their arms and stop their war." Both the Commentator article and NCNA came down hard on the issue of conditions for a troop withdrawal, declaring that the United States has no right to impose any conditions. As for the election proposal, Commentator argued that the result of such an election could only be the same as "the fake election" held in South Vietnam last October and that the United States is trying to impose "a puppet regime" on the South Vietnamese. The NCNA commentary added the complaint that the President's proposal on an election made no mention of the PRG.

According to the PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator, the President's eight-point proposal means that he actually wants to pursue his Vietnamization plan. Explaining the timing of the proposal, Commentator said the President offered the plan in order to deceive the American people and world opinion at a time when the United States has suffered heavy defeat on the battlefield and has encountered strong opposition at home and abroad. NCNA made the additional point that the United States has been "exposed repeatedly at the conference table" and that the President's proposal reflects the bankruptcy of the U.S. "counterrevolutionary dual tactics."

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The NCNA commentary, but not the Commentator article, took note of the reference to the Geneva agreements in the President's proposal. Repeating Peking's standard formulation, NCNA claimed that the Geneva agreements "have long been torn to pieces" by the United States. There was no reference by either NCNA or the PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator to the President's proposals on international supervision of an agreement and an international conference on Indochina--matters on which Peking presumably would not wish to move ahead of its Indochinese allies.

Peking has not mentioned the secret meetings held in Paris or the nine-point plan submitted by Hanoi. According to the PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator, the PRC Government and people firmly support the PRG's seven-point proposal as "the correct way" to solve the Vietnam question. Taking Peking's standard line, Commentator said the Vietnam and Indochina questions can only be settled by their peoples themselves. Commentator expressed confidence that the Vietnamese people, uniting and fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Laotians and Cambodians, will certainly achieve victory. A similar prescription in the 13 October 1970 PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator article on the President's Indochina proposal then had included a call for the Indochinese to persist in "protracted people's war," a formula that dropped out of Chinese propaganda after Peking judged the situation in Indochina to be "unprecedentedly fine" following the Lam Son 719 operation.

Concern over a possible deterioration of the situation seems reflected in a passage in the NCNA commentary containing the sharpest retort to the President's proposal and the most direct reference to Chinese interests. Taking exception to the President's assertion that he would take action to protect the remaining American forces if the enemy responded to his peace proposal by stepping up military attacks, NCNA accused the President of "naked war blackmail and intimidation" against the Vietnamese. Reiterating Chinese determination to support the Vietnamese in a fight to the end, NCNA claimed that the "war blackmail of U.S. imperialism" is a "provocation" not only against the Indochinese peoples but also against the Chinese. This represents the first such charge by Peking since the time of Lam Son 719 last winter. The more authoritative Commentator article did not, however, contain the charge of a provocation against the Chinese.

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Peking's concern over an intensification of hostilities in Indochina is one of the aspects of its reaction to the President's proposal that seems related to his impending visit to the PRC. In addition to increased fighting in Indochina around the time of the visit, another possible source of embarrassment to the Chinese may be speculation over the timing of the President's initiatives. Thus, unlike Hanoi and in contrast to its own reaction to the President's October 1970 peace plan, Peking has not cited this year's U.S. elections as a factor in the timing of the President's proposal--a reticence suggesting sensitivity to speculation linking the President's Vietnam proposal and his China trip to the electoral campaign.

In keeping with its treatment of the President since plans got underway for his visit, Peking's reaction to his Vietnam peace proposal has avoided personal abuse. This circumspection was evident even in Peking's account of a harsh Albanian denunciation of the President: NCNA sanitized an Albanian article to delete references to the "blood-stained hands" of "the chieftain of U.S. imperialism." The 13 October 1970 PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator article on the President's peace plan that month called "the chieftain of U.S. imperialism" a "god of plague of war."

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## NORTH KOREA

Pyongyang attacked the President's proposals in the customary intemperate terms in a domestic radio commentary on 28 January. The radio talk described the President's speech as "replete with hypocrisy, deception, political tricks, threats, and blackmail from beginning to end." It has "nothing to do with a genuine peace" in Indochina, said the commentary, but only unmasks U.S. "aggressive ambitions." The radio did not discuss the content of the U.S. plan in any detail, simply complaining that the President set no date for a final troop withdrawal and remarking that this shows that the United States is unwilling to commit itself to withdraw its troops--a "prerequisite" for an end to the war. It added that he also made no guarantee of an end to U.S. military operations in Vietnam or in the rest of Indochina. Instead, the commentary said, the President expressed his intention to protect the South Vietnamese "puppet clique," even putting forward a "heinous" plan for elections to attain his "criminal objectives" in Indochina. The proposal was also publicized, the broadcast charged, with an eye to the U.S. elections in November.

Pyongyang concluded its commentary with the demand that the United States withdraw its troops and those of its "satellites and mercenaries," dismantle its bases, stop all acts of support for the South Vietnamese "puppets," and end all aggression against the Vietnamese people so that they can solve their problems themselves.

A brief KCNA summary of an article in the party organ NODONG SINMUN the next day indicates that the paper's comment was in the same vein.

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## THE USSR

Soviet media reacted to the President's speech belatedly and only after the DRV and PRG Paris spokesmen had placed the Vietnamese communist reaction on record in their 26 January statements. The first Soviet mention came in Moscow radio's domestic service broadcast at 1900 GMT on the 26th--the main evening news show--some 14 hours after Hanoi's initial radio commentary on the speech. TASS' transmission in Russian carried a brief report on the DRV statement in Paris about a quarter of an hour after the radio broadcast, and followed up with an account of the PRG statement. TASS subsequently carried both statements in English--the DRV statement at 2116 GMT on the 26th and the PRG's at 0726 on the 27th. Only at 2005 GMT on the 26th, after it had transmitted the accounts of the Vietnamese communist statements in Paris, did TASS Russian carry a commentary on the lines of the Radio Moscow broadcast; no such commentary appeared in TASS' English transmission at all. The TASS Russian commentary appeared in PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA on the 27th, and subsequent press comment included a commentary by Matveyev in IZVESTIYA on the 28th.

TASS' notable failure to carry its normal, prompt news report of a major speech by the President suggests indecision on how to react even on a reportorial level, at least until Hanoi's reaction became known. It may have also been related to the absence from Moscow of Brezhnev and Kosygin, who were in Prague for the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee session. The session issued a statement on Indochina--coincidentally carried by TASS at the same time as the domestic radio broadcast reporting the President's speech--which complained that "Washington continues to bid not on a political but on a military solution of the problems" of Indochina. The statement did not mention the President's speech. Some subsequent radio comment, however, did cite the President's address as bearing out the Warsaw Pact statement's claim and invoked the statement's promise of continued support for the Indochinese.

The initial Moscow domestic service broadcast and TASS commentary set the tone of Moscow's reaction in complaining that the President's plan for the withdrawal of U.S. and allied troops from South Vietnam and exchange of all prisoners of war within six months of an agreement failed to fix an exact date for total U.S. withdrawal or to mention U.S. readiness to withdraw armed forces from other Indochinese countries and to remove air and naval forces. Noting that

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the President said the United States would never agree to the overthrow of its Saigon ally, the commentaries said the speech indicates that the United States intends to preserve "a pro-American regime" in Saigon while professing readiness to hold new elections there. The commentaries noted that the President said "in essence" that the United States intends to conduct the Paris talks "from a position of strength" and insists on "the unqualified acceptance" of its plan, citing him as stating that if the opponent rejects the proposal Washington will proceed with the Vietnamization policy.

Subsequent Soviet comment has dismissed the President's proposal as an election-year maneuver and played up critical remarks by Democratic Presidential candidates and other Congressman. A Washington-dated dispatch in PRAVDA on the 28th, for example, reported that the speech "is being assessed" as an attempt to pull the rug out from under the President's political opponents and that the President hopes to stifle criticism of his Vietnam policies.

In reporting DRV reaction to the proposal, Moscow has cited "authoritative circles in Hanoi" as pointing out the "unacceptability" of the proposals. A Serbin dispatch from Hanoi, published in PRAVDA on 28 January, said that "outwardly these proposals might seem to be something new," but that in "Hanoi political circles their real content is being thoroughly analyzed and that which is concealed behind this new cover is being noted." A participant in the 30 January domestic service roundtable discussion similarly noted that, "as reported from Hanoi," the proposals are "being carefully studied by our Vietnamese comrades," but he cautioned that the proposals are "crafty" and "have drawn criticism from the beginning." A foreign-language radio commentary on the 29th went so far as to say that the DRV and PRG "unequivocally reject" the plan.

While responding to the provisions in the President's plan relating to troop withdrawal and prisoner exchange, the holding of an election in South Vietnam, and a cease-fire throughout Indochina, Moscow has ignored the points regarding international guarantees and an international conference on Indochina. There has, however, been a passing reference to the provision on international supervision of the proposed election. IZVESTIYA's Matveyev, in the course of an attack on the President for intending to preserve the "pro-U.S. puppet regime," observed that although the proposal "speaks hazily" about international

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supervision of the election it would still be the Thieu regime that would prepare the election, U.S. troops would remain, and the Saigon army would continue to implement Vietnamization, thus resulting in an election "at the point of guns."

SECRET TALKS        Moscow was the first communist source to mention the secret talks and the DRV's nine-point plan.

A TASS dispatch on 27 January reporting that day's post-session press conference in Paris by Nguyen Thanh Le--as usual, not publicized in Hanoi's media--quoted him as complaining that "neither at plenary meetings nor at private meetings between representatives of the DRV and the United States" had the United States clearly stated an intention to withdraw troops and liquidate bases in South Vietnam. TASS also quoted him as mentioning a 26 July 1971 private meeting with Kissinger as showing that the United States uses the POW issue only for "propaganda purposes." According to the TASS account, Kissinger asserted that the DRV should not expect the United States to agree to a settlement solely for the purpose of solving the POW question. TASS also cited Le as having "flatly rejected" allegations that the PRG had had contacts with representatives of the Saigon regime.

The dispatch from Hanoi in PRAVDA on 28 January alluded to the secret talks in criticizing the United States for having ignored the PRG's seven points. The dispatch noted that the President only now has announced counterproposals that were made "secretly" about three months ago.

On 31 January TASS promptly reported the Paris press conference at which the DRV delegation circulated a communique censuring the U.S. Government for unilaterally revealing the contents of the secret meetings. While reporting the DRV's nine-point plan and noting that the delegation had decided to publish the documents turned over during the private meetings, TASS did not mention either the U.S. eight points or the exchange of letters regarding the canceled November secret meeting.

ATTACKS ON        In its reaction to the President's proposal  
PEKING            Moscow has again taken the occasion to attack Peking's "collaborationist" policies. Several commentaries, including a Washington dispatch in PRAVDA on 28 January, have cited a Karnow article in the Washington POST as noting that the President disclosed his peace plan shortly before his trip to Peking and that the Chinese have revealed a tolerant attitude toward the President's policies--such as toward the bombing attacks on North Vietnam.

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It has been left to the purportedly unofficial Radio Peace and Progress to carry this line on Sino-U.S. collusion the furthest. In broadcasts to the Chinese on 29 and 31 January, Radio Peace and Progress went so far as to charge that Washington gave the Peking leaders "advance notice" not only of the bombings but also of the eight-point plan.

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## EAST EUROPE

SOVIET BLOC Reactions from the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe have been limited and negative, with most comment characterizing the President's disclosure of the secret negotiations and the peace plan as a propaganda ploy designed to assuage domestic public opinion in an election year. Sustaining their proxy role in the Sino-Soviet conflict, Moscow's orthodox allies--with the notable exception of East Germany--have linked the timing of the President's revelations with his impending trip to Peking and suggested that a Sino-American "conspiracy" is unfolding to the detriment of North Vietnam's interests. Specific censure of the peace plan has focused on the President's alleged failure to renounce Vietnamization and to set a date for total U.S. troop withdrawal and on the alleged inadequacy of the proposed guarantees of democratic elections in South Vietnam. The tone of most of the criticism has been relatively restrained; but here again East German media diverged from the general pattern, airing vitriolic comment replete with personal attacks on the President.

An article in the Hungarian party organ NEPSZABADSAG on 27 January typified comment on the recurring theme that the President's speech represented an election gambit to neutralize domestic critics of the Administration's Indochina policy. NEPSZABADSAG said the speech "was a step integrally connected with the President's election maneuvers," specifically designed to defuse domestic opposition. In a similar vein, a Radio Warsaw commentator concluded that the President's peace package is directed solely at American voters inasmuch as it fails to provide a specific date for troop withdrawals and posits continued U.S. military support for the Saigon regime. A Bulgarian news agency commentator described the President's proposals as devised chiefly to influence the "politically uninformed" American voters.

The specifics of Mr. Nixon's eight-point plan have been broached for the most part in piecemeal fashion in the comment, with the emphasis generally on what was "left out." A commentary in the Czechoslovak RUDE PRAVO on the 28th, in addition to criticizing the President for not setting a date for withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam, said another "grave" omission was the "bypassing of the question of withdrawal of the U.S. air force from Thailand and withdrawal of the Sixth Fleet"--a theme echoed in other comment. The paper interpreted such omissions as evidence that "Nixon wants to continue the air war and has not renounced the policy of Vietnamization."

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A direct reference to possible flexibility in the U.S. negotiating position came in a Washington-dated PAP dispatch carried in the Polish party daily TRYBUNA LUDU on the 27th. While ridiculing the proposed free elections plan, the paper said "observers" have noted that the secret talks in Paris have shown "some indications of progress" and that President Nixon "has not slammed the doors on further negotiations should his proposals not withstand the confrontation with the course of developments." The balance was weighted more heavily on the negative side in a dispatch from Budapest's MTI correspondent in Hanoi, who said "it is strongly stressed in the DRV capital that although Nixon's proposals have certain points that may form the basis of a discussion, complete settlement is possible only on the basis of the seven-point proposal of the PRG."

On the recurring theme that the President's speech was designed in part to lay groundwork for his visit to Peking, the NEPSZABADSAG article of the 27th cited the paper's Washington correspondent as reporting that Dr. Kissinger had consulted the Chinese leaders on the U.S. peace plan. The article quoted unnamed Washington sources to the effect that the United States hopes, on the basis of recent "cooperation" with Peking on the India-Pakistan situation, that the PRC "will assert its influence to gain a diplomatic settlement based on partial acceptance of the U.S. conditions." Radio Sofia, describing the President's plan as first and foremost a "cunning maneuver" aimed at U.S. domestic opinion, commented that it is also addressed to Peking as "the basis on which the U.S. ruling circles are hoping to build their conspiracy with the Maoists." The Bulgarian news agency BTA remarked in the same vein that this Sino-U.S. "conspiracy" would evolve "at the expense of the Indochinese peoples."

The exceptionally vituperative East German comment has come largely from the East Berlin radio, with the GDR press confining itself largely to reports of critical reaction from the DRV and from selected noncommunist sources. In the only available GDR press comment to date, a BERLINER ZEITUNG article of 27 January said the President reiterated his "well-known blackmailing attempts" in attempting to "dictate conditions" and keep Thieu in power. The most abusive personal treatment of the President appeared in an East Berlin radio talk, also on the 27th, which stated that the disclosures of the Pentagon papers and other U.S. Government documents in recent months had exposed the President "as a liar unmasked before the world." This record, plus the "massive B-52 raids" on North and South Vietnam, the broadcast said, "can hardly strengthen confidence in the American peace plan."

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Romania has been characteristically circumspect, withholding commentaries on the peace plan to date. Its reportage in the press and radio, however, has been unusually slanted and negative. On the 28th the party organ SCINTEIA carried a short AGERPRES report on President Nixon's statement beneath a longer treatment of the North Vietnamese dismissal of the President's plan at Paris. Selectively and negatively reporting the President's eight-point plan, the SCINTEIA account said his formulation "avoids setting a precise date for withdrawal," reveals the determination of the United States to continue its support for the Saigon regime, and brings up Vietnamization in an "attempt to justify maintaining the U.S. military presence in South Vietnam." The paper also carried critical comments by Norodom Sihanouk and statements by political "observers" in Washington.

**YUGOSLAVIA** Yugoslav reaction to President Nixon's speech has also been largely negative. A Belgrade radio commentary viewed the eight-point proposal as "a very cleverly tuned plan" deliberately presented on the eve of the President's trip to Peking and coincident with "the heating up of the U.S. election campaign." Atypically, the commentary added that judging by the first reaction, Hanoi and the NFLSV "could perhaps--underline perhaps--be prepared to negotiate on some points of the Nixon proposal." A more authoritative view expressed in the semiofficial daily BORBA on the 27th, however, took a more negative line in noting that though the President's plan is "a small step forward," "it is hard to see just how these overtures could help end the war." In line with other East European comment, BORBA observed that the plan does not really provide guarantees for a free election and does not renounce the Vietnamization policy.

**ALBANIA** The Albanian party organ ZERI I POPULLIT assailed the President's proposals in characteristically hostile terms, replete with invective about the "blood-stained hands" of "the chieftain of U.S. imperialism." The U.S. peace plan, it said, represents "a treacherous plot" to induce the South Vietnamese communists to lay down their arms and sign a "dangerous and humiliating agreement" at gunpoint.

Not for the first time, Tirana conveyed dismay at the shift in Peking's public position away from its once implacable opposition to any solution short of a communist military victory. Pressing the consistent Albanian line, the paper insisted that Indochina's fate will be decided "on the battlefield" with the expulsion of U.S. and allied troops. And it lectured, by implication, on

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the proper role of the Chinese in adding pointedly that the Indochinese peoples "have the aid and powerful and continuous support of their great neighbor, the Chinese people." ATA's lengthy account of the article contains no reference to a Vietnamese communist peace plan, and other Albanian comment censures the U.S. plan without mentioning a DRV/PRG alternative.

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## CUBA

Declaring that President Nixon's "so-called plan" revealed no "real concession" and simply "reasserted his war policy in South-east Asia," Cuban media have characterized the proposal as "hypocritical political maneuvering" designed for domestic consumption because the President "needs to end the Vietnam war" in order to be reelected. Apart from passing references to the fact that the plan had been submitted in secret--in the context of allegations that it was unveiled by the President for domestic political reasons--Havana has ignored the President's disclosures of secret negotiations. Cuban commentators have expounded on the allegedly unreasonable and unacceptable nature of several of the eight points, publicized the statements on the plan by the Vietnamese communist delegates in Paris, and reiterated Cuba's endorsement of the PRG's seven-point proposal of 1 July 1971.

Leading television commentator Luis Gomez Wanguemert, who frequently sets the Cuban line on major international developments, authored the first authoritative Havana commentary on the eight-point plan on 27 January. Stating that this "most insidious and sly maneuver of the White House" was contrived by the President to "deceive the American people by making them believe his government is ready to solve the Indochina problem by peaceful negotiations," Gomez Wanguemert observed that under the U.S. plan "democratic elections would be held in a South Vietnam occupied by Yankee troops, under a puppet regime always subservient to the U.S. Embassy and controlled by the power of armed forces at the orders of Thieu and his Washington masters." Other commentators echoed this line, and a commentary on 28 January pointed to another alleged deception: While the proposal to withdraw U.S. troops in six months was an "attractive publicity cliché" and a "clever political maneuver" with the November elections in view, "this withdrawal is dependent on an agreement which could take a long time to conclude."

A number of Cuban commentaries contrasted alleged shortcomings of the eight-point proposal with "the full validity of the seven-point proposal as the base for a negotiated solution." Thus Gomez Wanguemert suggested that the President's plan, far from being a response to the PRG's 1 July 1971 proposal, was designed "to lay a smokescreen over Washington's negative attitude" toward the PRG plan. Charging that the U.S. proposal

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"openly contradicts the overall solution of the Vietnamese conflict proposed by the PRG and the DRV," a commentary in the domestic service contended that the eight-point plan "ignores the real aspirations of the Vietnamese people," particularly since it "intentionally separates the military problems from the political ones, thus setting it apart from the overall solution proposed by the PRG and the DRV." The commentary concluded that "Nixon's plan is a virtual declaration by the present American President of the failure of his Indochina policy."

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## II. NONCOMMUNIST COUNTRIES

## WEST EUROPE

BRITAIN On 26 January the leading morning papers frontpaged the President's eight-point proposal in news dispatches, with initial reaction appearing in the evening papers the same day. The EVENING STANDARD's Washington correspondent viewed the proposal within the context of the President's "special flair for the theatrical" and said that during his television presentation President Nixon "showed signs of losing patience with Hanoi." The EVENING NEWS said Mr. Nixon had gone on the offensive both to disarm his U.S. critics and to show up Hanoi's lack of sincerity.

On the following day the TIMES wrote editorially of the President's "serious search for an agreement" and outlined the history of the 30 months of secret negotiations and the growing frustration of the U.S. Administration. "Mr. Nixon now presents himself in a much more favorable light," the paper commented. The GUARDIAN's editorial said that "the revelation of the plan appears to be more important than the plan itself." Asserting that the President has been imprecise on such "critical points" as Thieu's association with the proposed elections, the lack of faith in international commissions, the ease with which elections can be fixed, and concern that Thieu's machinery will dominate, the GUARDIAN concluded that the Nixon plan "does not bring the Indochina problem nearer solution." The TELEGRAPH's editorial said Mr. Nixon's plan has caught his opponents off balance "en bloc"; "South Vietnamization has worked" and the President is convincing American public opinion that it is succeeding.

The FINANCIAL TIMES carried an article by Far East correspondent Charles Smith on the "fine print of Nixon's offer" which reviewed the main objections to the proposals voiced elsewhere. Smith said the plan was presented with "expert timing," and, expressing a common viewpoint, he added that the announcement was also aimed at Peking. Smith concluded by suggesting that the plan could lead to a general Indochina conference that would include Peking and Moscow.

The communist MORNING STAR said the plan was "theatrical" and signified continued Vietnamization. The paper attacked the eight points as "hiding the policy of prolonging and extending the war of aggression."

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A SUNDAY OBSERVER editorial on 30 January expressed the view that although the President's revelation of secret peace talks with Hanoi "may be a shrewd political move at home," it "seems unlikely to bring a negotiated settlement of the war any nearer." But the paper saw some grounds for optimism: Although the obstacles in the talks remain essentially the same, "the political gap between the two sides is no longer so wide" and the closing of this gap may now be a suitable subject for a new international conference on Indochina, something the President "might try to discuss in Peking."

FRANCE Official French reaction was limited to remarks by President Pompidou at a 28 January press conference in Fort Lamy on the conclusion of his visit to Chad. Asked for his view of the U.S. peace plan, Pompidou, as reported by the Paris radio, said he did not think any plan made public could be characterized as practical, because "a further stage is always necessary to achieve peace." The French president nevertheless noted "with satisfaction" certain points in President Nixon's speech which could be considered "of fundamental importance": withdrawal within a fixed time limit, "an indication" that the present Saigon government would stand down to permit free elections, direct consultation between North and South Vietnam concerning their future relations, and "the idea that the United States would pledge to stand strictly aside for this consultation." Two days earlier the Paris radio had said France was passing "no judgment" on the peace plan but was stressing two ideas which had "always guided" the country's attitude: only a political solution could end the Vietnam conflict, and such a solution must result from free elections without outside interference.

The role played by the French Government in arranging the secret negotiations was duly noted by French officials. It is well known that France has discreetly played its part in seeking a solution, Pompidou said at his press conference, and officials accompanying him on his Africa trip were quoted earlier by the Paris radio as having said that the French Government "is always ready for this sort of initiative." However, Roger Massip commented in LE FIGARO that "our colleagues are somewhat peeved at not having smelled a rat during these 30 months and also at not knowing that Mr. Kissinger was negotiating in the Paris suburbs with the French Government's help."

The French papers referred to Dr. Kissinger as "Mr. Invisible" (LE FIGARO) and "the American diplomat," a contraction of

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diplomat and technocrat (LE DAUPHINE LIBERE). The latter's editorialist, perceiving "some disadvantages" in the apparent demise of traditional diplomacy, asserted that Kissinger, despite warnings from the U.S. ambassador to India about threatening developments on the subcontinent, "threw all caution to the winds and revealed brilliant misunderstanding of the situation."

French editorialists, according to the Paris radio, showed a measure of agreement in assessing the President's motives in publicizing his proposals, the merits of the plan, and the chances for peace in Vietnam. The radio's initial analysis of the speech suggested that President Nixon had perhaps sought "only one thing in this affair"--his reelection in November--and its Washington correspondent lauded the President's political skill in disarming his domestic opposition and presenting himself to the electorate as a leader who had done everything possible to achieve peace.

Radio Paris at first also saw in the speech a "threat" to renew the war. But a day later the radio was reporting that French press commentators "in general believe in Nixon's sincere desire to end the Indochina war, but not at any price--there is no question of Nixon capitulating. Of course, his peace plan is not without an ulterior motive; it is of considerable electoral importance in the United States."

Favorable assessments of the peace proposals were offered by the financial organ LES ECHOS and the conservative L'AURORE. The former said the President had driven the adversary in Vietnam into a corner, since Hanoi's continued intransigence would weaken its moral position, and that he had "annihilated" the criticism of his Democratic opponents and had brought about the most favorable circumstances for a dialog with China. L'AURORE, stating that Dr. Kissinger had revealed the "duplicity" of the North Vietnamese, who know only force can impose communism on South Vietnam, added that President Nixon "could go no further in his concessions" without bringing about complete capitulation, which most Americans would consider dishonorable.

LE MONDE's frontpage editorial said the proposals were at least worthy of evoking a response from Hanoi, but "every step toward peace . . . by the United States leads to an increasingly rigid attitude on the part of North Vietnam." Michel Tatu wrote in the same paper that the President had made an "important

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concession," in agreeing to new elections, but Tatu felt that the "spectacular" plan marked the failure of previous negotiations, not a beginning. "Years of negotiations may be needed for a settlement," Tatu forecast, given Hanoi's rigidity, verging on "nondiplomacy," plus the fact that it will certainly not call off the offensive it is now preparing for the sake of negotiations. But Tatu saw a faint sign of hope in Hanoi's new dependence on its suppliers for more sophisticated weaponry: "As we have seen in the Middle East, the more technological the war, the more it becomes the prerogative of the big powers," and thus Moscow may in time have both the desire and the capability to force an end to the conflict.

The major French press criticism of the peace plan, according to the Paris radio, focused on the "contradiction" inherent in the President's public position that the South Vietnamese must decide their own future while the United States simultaneously maintains "terrific" military pressure through air raids and deployment of the Seventh Fleet. "Nixon wants to disentangle himself without disengaging himself," wrote the Gaullist daily LA NATION, adding that the President's "silence" about American air strikes "is eloquent." The leading independent LE FIGARO viewed the recent massive air raids not only as a preventive move but as a warning, since it was known in advance that the U.S. plan would be rejected.

French editorialists in general--again according to the Paris radio--felt that the DRV and the PRG were "not fully justified in refusing this peace plan pointblank," but some provincial papers reviewed by the radio would not concede total failure. SUD-OUEST and OUEST-FRANCE believed the two sides' points of view would gradually draw closer, the latter observing that "much more effort of this kind is needed."

The general conclusion of the French press, Radio Paris said, was that a step has been made but "unfortunately, peace will not come tomorrow." For the independent COMBAT this was all the more true because President Nixon "only appears to be weak." COMBAT said "the two greatest delusions of this year are the American withdrawal from Vietnam and the weakness of the dollar."

WEST GERMANY      The FRG Government welcomed President Nixon's initiative and viewed it as a "concrete effort" to bring about a peaceful solution, according to a statement by a Foreign Office spokesman reported by DPA. Recalling that Bonn

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has repeatedly and emphatically advocated a political solution of the war, the spokesman added: "It has anxiously observed the escalation of military confrontation in recent weeks and the stagnation of the Paris negotiations."

West German media fully reported the President's peace plan and provided extensive comment. Although the attitudes of those assessing the plan varied widely, there was widespread agreement that the plan per se has little chance of success. Several commentators saw the peace plan as a political maneuver designed to bolster the President's chances of reelection in November by convincing the American voter that he has done everything possible to end the war. Others could see "no essentially new elements" in the U.S. proposal.

MUENCHNER MERKUR called the peace plan "a political maneuver which at this time must necessarily be fully adapted to the presidential elections." The paper expressed concern about Washington's loyalty to its allies and asked whether the promises of a U.S. president can still be taken at face value if he might go as far as to sacrifice an ally "if this sacrifice would guarantee him reelection." FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU commented that every point in the plan is preceded by an "if," which in turn is followed by "the threat of the bomb, just as in all the years before." In this paper's view, the plan came too late in that "what might have been acceptable to the adversary years ago has perhaps become unacceptable today." A commentary carried on Mainz TV asserted that Washington raises military conditions "which Hanoi can hardly accept in this form, and probably will not accept, and combines them with political preconditions which sound better than they would really be in practice."

Freiburg's BADISCHE ZEITUNG also felt that the plan, "had it been advanced earlier, might have turned the tide." As matters stand, President Nixon has "not made one inch of headway in this matter," the paper said, yet psychologically his position has improved since his opponents can no longer charge him with bypassing possibilities for a peace settlement that would also free the POWs. Moreover, the paper added, he will be able to "reply more freely when asked difficult questions in Peking next month."

BERLINER MORGENPOST, in an editorial entitled "A Plan Without a Chance," argued that the U.S. proposal "simply cannot be implemented because it fully ignores Hanoi's interests." Contrary to what is claimed in Washington, the paper continued, "Hanoi has time, much time; all it needs to do is remain

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adamant in its demands and wait patiently for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces, which will come sooner or later and nearly unconditionally."

A KOELNER STADTANZEIGER editorial was mildly optimistic, commenting that the communists' "negative reaction must not necessarily be a final one" since if they were not prepared to talk about "this or that, they surely would have rejected secret talks with the Americans in Paris." A Washington-dated dispatch broadcast over Munich domestic service notes that President Nixon "with his dramatic action surely temporarily pushed onto the defensive both the communists at the Paris negotiating table and his rivals at home"; yet this is "all that he was able to achieve at the moment," the dispatch said, and it is unlikely that he will achieve more. Commentator Wolfgang Weise, in a talk broadcast three times to Asia by Deutsche Welle, stated that "Nixon's eight-point plan and its rejection by North Vietnam, which must be expected, are only the visible part of the secret negotiations sure to follow. The contact point at Paris, around which things had become so quiet, becomes interesting once more."

ITALY Limited Italian press comment, as reviewed by the Rome radio, generally viewed the President's proposals as timely and far-reaching, with dissent from the leftwing PAESE SERA. Milan's rightwing CORRIERE BELLA SERA, asserting that the U.S. offer on a withdrawal date "should in essence remove the main obstacle to a solution," declared that the President has a plan for Vietnam "which is programmed, elaborated, strategic, and precise." Describing the President's initiative as "something new" which "goes far in the way of concessions," the center-right IL TEMPO said Hanoi's rejection of the plan is a "propaganda embarrassment" for the DRV Government and its supporters, since they will find it difficult to raise more than "the usual commonplace arguments" against it. For the independent IL GIORNO of Milan, rejection of the U.S. proposal will mean an indefinite extension of the war at a time when the DRV is showing signs of tiring and the international situation is "not favorable" for Hanoi. "The United States has committed enormous errors in Indochina," IL GIORNO observed, "but Hanoi is probably making a no less serious mistake if it tries to humiliate the United States, barring to it an honorable way out of Vietnam."

PAESE SERA, in contrast, said the President's proposals contained "no surprise" for Washington political circles. Seeing little merit in the withdrawal proposal, the paper argued that it is

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linked with no less important "secondary measures" and that the President is committed to continuing aid to the Saigon regime even after withdrawal, a condition Hanoi and the PRG have already rejected. Two days later, however, PAESE SERA granted that the Nixon plan, while of "debatable" worth, represented "a modification of the previous rigid American position." The plan's "most controversial point," the paper said, is the attempt to "use" an agreement on Vietnam to "save the collaborationist regimes" of Laos and Cambodia without offering any pledges concerning U.S. military bases in the regions from which air strikes on Indochina are launched. The paper also found fundamental objections in the President's "wish to protect" the Saigon regime.

The view of the communist daily L'UNITA was reflected in its headlines. "The Nixon Scheme Does Not Offer a Serious Answer on Vietnam" headed a dispatch from Paris citing DRV-PRG reaction and quoting from a commentary in LE MONDE. A report on the proposals themselves was headlined "The White House's Ambiguous Plan," although this report did note that the plan "offers positive aspects as well as unacceptable proposals."

SCANDINAVIA      The Helsinki radio gave prominent and extensive coverage to the President's speech and to reaction to the U.S. proposals. On 26 January the radio reported the "unanimous opinion" of observers in Helsinki that the President had clearly issued a challenge for peace to Hanoi and the NFLSV and had even more clearly withdrawn the Vietnam war as a U.S. election issue. It said the timing of the President's disclosure showed "a considerable amount of political calculation" as to its effect on his domestic opposition, the American public, and the Vietnamese adversary. Helsinki radio described the President's proposals as meeting some of the communist demands, including "abandonment" of the Saigon leadership, but the radio's correspondent in Paris concluded that although the United States intends to continue withdrawing "with as few political losses as possible," the communist objective is total expulsion of the Americans from Indochina, militarily and politically.

The Stockholm radio covered the speech and attendant developments reportorially, noting on the 27th that the peace talks session in Paris that day was "one of the most fruitful for a long time" and that the initial rejections of the U.S. proposal were "not as complete" as they had seemed before. Hanoi's two basic objections,

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the reporter said, were the "vagueness" of the plan on the question of troop withdrawals and the absence of a clear statement from the Nixon Administration that it will end its support for President Thieu.

OTHER COUNTRIES      The Swiss paper NEUE ZUERCHER NACHRICHTEN, according to DPA, commented that the President would not have made his proposals public and divulged the secret negotiations if there had been any chance for peace on the basis of his plan. Mr. Nixon's "slight accommodation" to the other side by his commitment to a six-month troop withdrawal deadline "was, like the entire plan, too long in coming," the paper said, since Hanoi now feels itself in such a strong position that substantial compromise is no longer necessary.

The Madrid radio's New York correspondent reported that the President's message was announced as an important foreign policy initiative and delivered with "all the trappings usually reserved for great occasions," but that the Administration's critics found the speech neither new nor decisive. Reviewing what was new and what "not so new" in the peace plan, the correspondent placed in the former category the proposed South Vietnamese elections and relegated the points concerning a U.S. military withdrawal, release of prisoners, and a cease-fire to the "not so new" category. The correspondent also noted an apparent absence of political solutions for the other countries of Indochina. The chances of success, the correspondent concluded, will be known when Hanoi speaks, "not by her first words but by her considered opinions."

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## ASIA

JAPAN The Japanese Foreign Ministry welcomed the President's proposal as a "quite positive offer" for peace in Indochina, in an official statement issued soon after the President's broadcast. The ministry said it respected the "courageous decision" of the U.S. and South Vietnamese governments and pledged that the Japanese Government would do its utmost to help realize peace in Indochina, according to KYODO. Unidentified Foreign Ministry sources said it would be difficult for North Vietnam to reject the plan because both the United States and South Vietnam had made some important concessions, the JAPAN TIMES reported on 27 January. "The sources said Nixon's announcement gave the impression that his forthcoming talks with Chinese leaders have every chance of success," the paper added.

The main opposition party, the Japan Socialist Party, said the fact that President Nixon advanced the plan while continuing the bombing indicated that the Administration was being driven into a corner by domestic and foreign pressures, according to KYODO. The JSP believes it was "arrogant" to attach so many conditions to peace and feels that the United States has no alternative but to withdraw unconditionally, KYODO reported.

Most major Tokyo newspapers, which furnished frontpage accounts of both the peace plan and Kissinger's role, shared the view that the plan offers significant concessions, but some argued that more are required. President Nixon's disclosure of the offer was frequently related, with varying degrees of directness, to his planned trips to Peking and Moscow as well as the November U.S. elections.

The English-language JAPAN TIMES on 28 January focused its editorial on the apparent rejection of the President's "fair and logical" peace plan. "This regrettable communist action, however, makes it exceedingly clear once again that it is Hanoi and the Viet Cong which are desirous of prolonging the war in Vietnam and which have no interest in bringing peace to the embattled peninsula," the paper said. It called the offer on elections "a major step forward," and it added: "The communist rejection of this compromise proposal can only mean that the North Vietnamese want the complete repudiation of Mr. Thieu so that the reins of governmental power will be given to them on a silver platter."

The ASAHI newspapers, in Japanese and English, claimed in a 27 January editorial that the United States failed to reply

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directly to the 1 July 1971 plan offered by the South Vietnamese PRG. "Now that the war situation in Laos and Cambodia has worsened and President Nixon's visit to China is imminent, the United States has finally submitted a comprehensive counterproposal," ASAHI said, and "realistic" elements have been added to the U.S. proposal. But it added that "there are not a few points which are ambiguous and which make us suspect the true intentions" behind the plan. These points concern the question of a date for the completion of troop withdrawal, the provisions for an election situation "which would not assure the will of the people," and the failure to make clear whether U.S. bases in Thailand and the U.S. Seventh Fleet will continue their activities. ASAHI's correspondent in Paris, in a report on the 27 January session of the Paris talks, commented; "The new Nixon proposal can be said to have brought into the Paris talks the question of creating a postwar Saigon government--the central issue in achieving a Vietnam settlement."

The YOMIURI newspapers, in Japanese and English, in a 27 January editorial called the plan "the most advanced and promising offer yet made by the U.S. Government." Although there is little doubt that the President chose this time to reveal the contents of the peace package because of his upcoming visit to China and the November election, YOMIURI said, the proposal is "well worth considering." However, YOMIURI also said the President should be prepared to make further concessions and should now "prove his sincerity" by stopping all bombing of North Vietnam.

The MAINICHI newspapers, also in both Japanese and English, asserted editorially that the plan indicates a "considerable concession." "There is no doubt that the gap between the contentions of the two sides has been greatly narrowed," the editorial said, and it concluded with an expression of hope for a positive response from Hanoi.

The Japanese-language TOKYO SHIMBUN commented editorially: "This is a positive proposal in that it has revealed the time of U.S. military withdrawal." Calling President Nixon's bid to have Thieu step down "a maximum compromise" by the United States, the paper concluded: "We hope that the North Vietnamese Government will take a farsighted view of the situation and prudently examine President Nixon's new proposal." On 26 January, a Tokyo television newscaster similarly declared that the proposal for Thieu's resignation prior to an election can be regarded as the ultimate U.S. concession to Hanoi on the issue of the Thieu regime.

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AKAHATA, organ of the Japan Communist Party, denounced the plan in a 27 January editorial as an obvious political gambit concocted by the President in the face of domestic and international pressure and in light of his forthcoming trip to China and the U.S. presidential election. Noting that the proposal was submitted at a secret meeting in October, the editorial said that "without waiting for a reply from the Vietnamese side, Nixon announced the proposal in a resort to sensational means." The proposal represents "a U.S. plot to maintain the puppet regime in a different form through Vietnamization," AKAHATA asserted.

INDIA,           The President's proposals have been the subject of  
PAKISTAN       widespread comment in the Indian press, according  
                  to All-India Radio, and most of it appears to have  
been unfavorable. The STATESMAN of New Delhi and Calcutta said the proposal "makes some obvious concessions"--U.S. withdrawal within six months of an agreement and a general cease-fire tied to the agreement--but stressed that for the communists a cease-fire "would mean that the present governments in Vientiane and Phnom Penh would be without any effective challenge to their authority." Echoing the same line, the TIMES OF INDIA remarked that the President "has been pursuing contradictory goals in South Vietnam," ending direct U.S. involvement but avoiding the impression of a total defeat. The proposals might have had a different effect if "Hanoi and the Provisional Revolutionary Government were not within sight of their goal," the paper concluded.

The HINDUSTAN TIMES and the MOTHERLAND of New Delhi both expressed the view that Hanoi thinks it would have more to lose at the conference table. The MOTHERLAND observed: "Obviously Hanoi has come to the conclusion that time is on its side . . . , and it can afford to wait until the Nixon Administration is prepared for a settlement on its terms." The NATIONAL HERALD of New Delhi and Lucknow and the INDIAN EXPRESS said the plan does not go far enough in that no mention is made of withdrawing air or naval forces.

In a lengthy commentary on All-India Radio on 28 January, PRESS TRUST OF INDIA diplomatic correspondent Wilfred Lazarus said world reaction indicates that "the proposals have failed to carry conviction regarding the sincerity of American intentions." He contended that American sincerity in regard to Vietnam "hit a new low when President Nixon a few weeks ago ordered the resumption of bombing of North Vietnam." Lazarus

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observed that "India has fully accepted the realities in Vietnam, and it raised its diplomatic mission in Hanoi to ambassadorial level a fortnight ago because, unlike the situation in Saigon, there is a stable government in North Vietnam." India wants the Indochinese states to be left alone, free from outside interference, he said, and concluded: "If America fails to see the desire of the people of Indochina to be free and to be left alone, President Nixon will not only be ignoring the handwriting on the wall, but will incur the loss of more innocent lives by prolonging the war."

The only Pakistani reaction monitored so far is a news commentary by the editor of the MORNING NEWS broadcast by Karachi radio on 26 January. The editor asserted that Hanoi "has good reasons" for rejecting the proposals: "To begin with, Hanoi sees no basic change in the U.S. attitude, and the support of the Saigon junta for the proposals makes them even more suspect." The release of the proposals was timed to help smooth the way for the President's trip to Peking and his reelection campaign, the editor claimed, "but Hanoi does not want to help the President by agreeing to a cease-fire or a peace agreement." He concluded that Washington's desire to keep Southeast Asia wholly neutral is impractical: "This was possible in the earlier years when leaders like President de Gaulle used to plead for it. But now when the North Vietnamese are sure they can have the whole cake, they are not willing to bargain for only half of it."

**SOUTH VIETNAM** The Saigon radio broadcast the speeches of Presidents Nixon and Thieu, but so far no radio commentaries have been monitored. Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam, in a radio interview reported by many Saigon papers, explained that Thieu has sacrificed his own interests in endorsing the eight-point proposal.

Saigon press comment has been generally favorable, although there are complaints that the proposals tend to overly favor the communist side. In a typical comment, the editor of THOI DAI MOI declared on 28 January: "By comparing the allied peace proposal to the seven points of the communists, we can see that the Republic of Vietnam and the United States have made a rather long step--on the road of concessions . . . . Now the road to peace has been opened wide unless out of stubbornness the Hanoi communists demand more--for example, complete victory or unconditional surrender, things they are not likely to obtain for a long time."

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A somewhat more critical stance was taken by CHINH LUAN. It explained that while President Nixon's speech had "somewhat disconcerted the U.S. opposition faction" and perhaps caused Hanoi to reconsider its "reckless plans for attack in South Vietnam," nonetheless "a not very sweet taste remains--the taste of the legal South Vietnamese regime being used as 'stake money' in a game on the bargaining table."

On 27 January CONG LUAN carried an article by former General Ton That Dinh declaring that the two presidential speeches had opened a "big turning point for peace in Vietnam." Noting that Thieu had said he was willing to make great sacrifices to gain a lasting peace, Dinh concluded: "That is the cherished hope of the whole nation because only peace can end the unhappy tragedy of the Vietnamese people." In CONG LUAN on the 28th, however, the same author spoke harshly of the peace proposals as "only political and diplomatic tricks Mr. Nixon played to secure his personal position in the United States and in the international forum."

CAMBODIA, A Cambodian Government statement broadcast by  
LAOS Phnom Penh radio on 29 January lauded President Nixon's "sincere, noble, and constant effort to restore peace through negotiations," expressed "profound admiration and complete support for this peace initiative," and congratulated President Thieu on "his courageous attitude for the sake of peace." Affirming that the Cambodian Government's stand remains unchanged, the statement said "the Khmer Republic approves and encourages any initiative or proposal that can bring about peace in Indochina through negotiation."

The Vientiane radio, in a 27 January report on an interview with Souvanna Phouma, quoted the prince as terming President Nixon's proposal "correct and very appropriate" and as expressing hope that Hanoi and the Liberation Front will give it careful consideration. Reporting the weekly cabinet meeting held on 26 January, at which Souvanna Phouma informed the cabinet of the new U.S. proposal, the radio said that "the Government of the Kingdom of Laos maintains that this is a constructive proposal and hopes the other side will pay attention and consider it in order to bring about peace in this region of the world."

THAILAND Although some Thai newspapers were critical, the official view as offered by the assistant chairman of the National Executive Council, Pote Sarasin, is that the President's proposals "seem to be a reasonable solution to the

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conflict in Vietnam." However, Pote Sarasin warned that the cease-fire must be coupled with noninterference in the affairs of all Southeast Asian countries. He also stated that "if there should be a conference on a peaceful settlement among the countries in this area which would affect their interests and security, naturally Thailand would see no reason not to consider participating in such a conference."

The leading Thai-language paper, the DAILY NEWS, commented less favorably on the proposals: "It is now clear that the hope of countries in Indochina to lean on the United States in fighting the communists must end. The United States has left the problem it has created to the countries there to solve by themselves. There is nothing for these countries to do but help themselves by turning to each other and creating better understanding."

The English-language paper THE NATION depicted a "tragic" situation wherein "the President of the mightiest nation in the world says he has tried all the military power and all the secret diplomacy possible while a pipsqueak of a country like North Vietnam could spurn both." Forecasting that the proposal will surely be rejected, THE NATION said: "To us in Thailand, the latest peace offer is extremely important because it is made out of desperation rather than from constructive diplomacy, which Nixon admits has failed." The editorial concluded: "It is time for us to reorient our policies to fit the realities of the situation."

By contrast, the English-language BANGKOK POST, in a 27 January editorial, saw considerable merit in the new plan and said that "for once the American politicians should renounce politics and back their Administration." The POST foresaw further conflict in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia should the communists triumph in Indochina, and it called on Hanoi to negotiate sincerely on the basis of the President's proposal.

**OTHER COUNTRIES** The ROK Foreign Minister, speaking at a press conference on 27 January, said his government would support the proposal advanced by President Nixon and sincerely hoped for the restoration of peace in Indochina. A spokesman for the Nationalist China Foreign Ministry on 28 January took note of the United States' urgent desire to achieve peace in Indochina, but he stressed that "one must not overlook the basic objective of the communists and the unscrupulous means they use to employ to achieve their goal." Two Taipei radio news analyses on 26 and 28 January belittled the U.S. attempts at negotiation, alleging that past negotiations with the communists have proven the futility of this approach and arguing that negotiation cannot be a substitute for confrontation.

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Reaction from Malaysia was highlighted by a statement by Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak carried over Kuala Lumpur radio on 27 January. He said the peace plan could form a basis for negotiations to resolve the Vietnam problem, and he explained that the proposals are "in line with Malaysia's proposal for the neutralization of Southeast Asia." The STRAITS TIMES, in a 27 January editorial, supported the new plan and predicted that it will strengthen the President's stand both at home and with the Chinese. The editorial stressed: "These are honorable terms for both sides, and they are not the last word; they are terms for negotiation."

Indonesian Foreign Minister Malik termed the new proposal "very heartening" and expressed the belief that "the efforts will bear fruit in the near future." He said it represents America's sincere desire to end the war and hopes it will be given consideration by the parties concerned, and he concluded: "When the proposal becomes a reality, Indonesia is willing to contribute to the attainment of peace in Vietnam." On 8 January the Djakarta radio carried a lengthy commentary stressing that the proposal is aimed at changing the attitude of the opposition in America, since Hanoi has already rejected it long ago. In a similar vein, an editorial in the English-language Djakarta TIMES on 28 January foresaw little chance that President Nixon's initiative would end the war. Nonetheless, the paper said, the President's move "is commendable"; he has done all he could, and "if he fails to achieve the goal, it is only because of the attitude of his enemy, who wants him to accept humiliating peace terms--a price he is certainly not expected to pay."

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## MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

ARAB COUNTRIES Arab reaction has been scanty, with radio comment only from Cairo and Baghdad and no news items even on the transmissions of the Arab news agencies. The coincidence of Egyptian President as-Sadat's major foreign policy speech on the 25th and the Moslem Id al-Adha holiday on 26-29 January contributed to the minimal reaction.

A Cairo radio commentary on the 27th said the President's new plan came as no surprise to those aware of the Nixon Administration's method of adopting "measures which incite the U.S. and world public," then adopting other measures to diminish public interest. Comparing the South Vietnamese and Middle East situations, Cairo asserted that just as Secretary Rogers presented plans on the Middle East issue "devoid of any practical content," so the President presented a similar eight-point plan on Vietnam. In a commentary on the 30th, Cairo radio compared the President's most recent Vietnam initiative to Israel's attitude toward its Arab neighbors--neither will agree to withdraw until the other side signs an agreement "covering all the points and issues disputed." Commenting on the "peculiar" U.S. offer of economic assistance to Indochina after the war, the Cairo broadcast speculated that the eight-point proposal and then the offer to rebuild, coming "at a time when the aggressive war . . . is continuing with no evidence of nearing an end, means that the U.S. Government is scheming at something." The commentator concluded that Washington's purpose is to "mask further aggression." Only "imperialist and American logic," the radio contended, "could be so contradictory as to propose to rebuild" what it is trying to destroy "by all weapons of total destruction and massacre."

On the 27th, Baghdad radio criticized the "new U.S. trick" as an attempt to deceive world opinion "by making America appear to be working for peace." The commentator declared that the only thing that "will put America in its proper place" is "the alliance of the popular forces engaged in the war against the United States in Vietnam and Indochina."

Cairo radio also broadcast a number of news items on the U.S. proposals, mostly citing unfavorable foreign reaction and emphasizing the reaction from Hanoi and Peking. Monitored Damascus radio coverage was limited to two news reports on Hanoi's reaction. Baghdad radio broadcast news reports and gave them more prominence in its newcasts than other Arab radios did; the reports have been uniformly critical, usually citing DRV or PRG sources. Amman and

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Beirut radios, while carrying reports on the proposals and foreign reaction far down in their newscasts, have presented more balanced news coverage, including details of the proposals as well as Hanoi and Peking criticism of them.

ISRAEL The Israeli radio has broadcast extensive and balanced news reports, prominently featured. It has made no comment except for a press review reference which quotes the Jerusalem POST asking "why Hanoi should make Nixon's election campaign easier by accepting his plan."

GREECE, TURKEY, IRAN The Athens radio carried only minimal news coverage of the proposals and of Hanoi's and Peking's reactions. The Greek press provided more coverage, although virtually all of it was confined to factual reporting. The 27 January NEA POLITIA, in the only available comment from a Greek source, said the proposal "is noteworthy not only because it contains so many constructive elements . . . but also because it proves the U.S. President's devotion to the idea of peace and the relaxation of world tensions."

Ankara radio devoted fairly extensive news coverage to the proposals and to reactions from both communist and noncommunist capitals, but it furnished no comment of its own. The Turkish press through the 27th followed suit, with the Istanbul CUMHURIYET the only paper to report the plan fully to the extent of including all eight points.

In Cyprus, the Nicosia radio and press also carried factual reports on the plan and its provisions, but otherwise concentrated chiefly on the negative reactions from Hanoi, the Vietnamese communist delegates in Paris, and Peking.

The Teheran radio, after lengthy initial reviews of world reaction to the proposals, carried only brief and infrequent followup reports on rejection of the plan from Hanoi, Peking, the Pathet Lao, and the DRV delegate in Paris.

NORTH AFRICA The President's peace plan encountered a mixed response, generally along the lines of standard country attitudes toward U.S. foreign policy. Thus Algeria reacted negatively, Tunisia positively, and Morocco noncommittally. The official Algerian press service and Algiers newspapers have characterized the plan as one devoid of new initiatives and publicized it as a propaganda exercise for internal consumption.

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While Algiers radio initially noted that "all observers see it as a bold plan," some 12 hours later it reported the communist side's "categorical no" and from then on highlighted such negative communist reaction, citing also "certain observers" who noted the timing of the announcement a few weeks before the President's departure for Peking. On its own, the official Algerian Press Service dismissed the plan as failing to meet "the Vietnamese people's" two basic demands: a precise date for unconditional withdrawal and the setting up of a coalition government.

The Tunisian radio has carried balanced reports of the plan, noting "some embarrassment" among antiwar critics in the United States; it also cited diverse opinions expressed by members of Congress and reported Radio Hanoi's "total rejection" of the proposals. The government party daily L'ACTION commented that the plan shows a "patent desire for peace." L'ACTION said Secretary Rogers' assurances that the United States is prepared to accept a government in Saigon chosen by the South Vietnamese people "confirm the impression that Washington is seriously determined" to speed the process of achieving an honorable peace. The Tunis news agency TAP, observing that the communist side seems to take the plan seriously, counseled "honorable concessions" and the avoidance of "unconditionalism" by both sides in the war.

The Moroccan radio has carried limited, factual reportage on the President's peace plan. The relatively new Moroccan daily LE MATIN on 27 and 28 January publicized negative reactions from Hanoi, the PRG, and the NFLSV.

AFRICA Reportage on the President's peace plan has been monitored from Ghana, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Senegal, with comment only from Nigerian media. The Lagos radio on the 31st reviewed a comment in that day's Lagos POST manifesting impatience with both sides in the Vietnam conflict. The POST reportedly complained that "whatever plan the Americans and the North Vietnamese may have, the world is getting fed up with gun sounds in Southeast Asia." The paper called on "the superpowers" to make "honest" proposals for peace and to heed such suggestions as "neutralization of the area."

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## LATIN AMERICA

President Nixon's proposals, along with the reaction of Hanoi and other world capitals, have been fairly extensively reported by the Latin American radio and press. Comment available so far is very sparse, however.

A Panama City Radio Union commentator saw peace in Vietnam as feasible, "but it should be Vietnam's peace, not Nixon's peace or a U.S.-style peace." The commentator said that unifying Vietnam is the only means of assuring peace. The Panama City paper LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA of 28 January observed in an editorial that neither Peking nor Moscow would be happy to have the other control Vietnam. The editorialist predicted that President Nixon will discuss this situation in his coming meetings with the major communist leaders in Peking and Moscow.

The San Jose Radio Reloj reported that a Costa Rican deputy denounced President Nixon's proposals as a "political maneuver." The President knows that the DRV will not accept them because it is fighting to set up a socialist republic, not a democratic regime, the deputy said. The same station quoted Costa Rican President Figueres as remarking that he is more amazed each day by President Nixon's skill in conducting his policy and taking the United States out of the war. "Each day I am more convinced of Nixon's desire to take the United States out of a war which is disadvantageous and totally unpopular in his country," Figueres declared.

The Caracas paper EL MUNDO on 26 January published a Madrid EFE dispatch quoting Washington observers as commenting that President Nixon, by revealing the secret peace negotiations, has closed the door to a negotiated peace in Vietnam but assured his reelection. The same newspaper carried a cartoon portraying the President as a dove on the wing bearing an olive branch.

Chile's Communist Party paper EL SIGLO in its 28 January editorial describes President Nixon's plan as a "demagogic and electoral expedient intended solely to serve his propaganda purposes in the coming U.S. presidential elections." The paper said "there can be no conciliation in matters regarding the independence and liberty of Vietnam."

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