

TELEGRAM

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

UNCLASSIFIED

Classification

Q 051629Z JUL 71
 FM WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM
 TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
 BT
 UNCLAS WH10600
 TO HAK NO. 18
 DAVID HALPERIN FOR DR. KISSINGER
 MEETING 7-5
 1ST LD 051A

CONTROL: 372

RECD: 7/6/71//0129

BY KIM WILLENSON

SAIGON (UPI)-- PRESIDENT NIXON HAS TOLD SOUTH VIETNAMESE PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN THIEU THAT THE UNITED STATES IS "NOT GOING TO BE STAMPEDED" OUT OF VIETNAM, DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID TONIGHT. IT WILL TEST THE LATEST COMMUNIST PEACE PLAN FOR A SIMULTANEOUS RELEASE OF AMERICAN POWS AND WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN TROOPS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

THE DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID THAT U.S. PRESIDENTIAL AIDE HENRY KISSINGER BROUGHT THIEU PERSONAL ASSURANCES FROM NIXON THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT. KISSINGER FLEW TO THAILAND TODAY AFTER A THREE DAY VISIT HERE.

KISSINGER TOLD THIEU THAT THE COMMUNIST PEACE PLAN PRESENTED AT THE PARIS TALKS LAST WEEK WAS "ENTICING" BUT ALSO FULL OF TRAPS, THE SOURCES SAID. AS IT STANDS, THE SOURCES QUOTED KISSINGER AS SAYING, THE PLAN IS NOT ACCEPTABLE, BUT THAT NIXON WILL MAKE A REASONABLE COUNTER-OFFER TO SEE WHETHER THE COMMUNISTS ARE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE.

KISSINGER DID RAISE THE POSSIBILITY OF A GREATLY SPEEDED UP RATE OF AMERICAN TROOP WITHDRAWALS, THE SOURCES SAID--NOT ONLY WITH THIEU BUT WITH U.S. AMBASSADOR ELLSWORTH BUNKER AND U.S. VIETNAM COMMANDER GEN. CREIGHTON W. ABRAMS.

THE SOURCES SAID THAT NO DEFINITE CONCLUSIONS WERE REACHED DURING KISSINGER'S VISIT, BUT THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE THE WITHDRAWAL RATE WOULD INCREASE TO AS MANY AS 20,000 MEN A MONTH DURING THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS.

THE WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE U.S. COMMAND HERE SAID 2,200 TROOPS WERE WITHDRAWN LAST WEEK, REDUCING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF U.S. TROOPS HERE TO 239,500, THE LOWEST SINCE MARCH 31, 1966.

THE SOURCES SAID THE INCREASED RATE OF WITHDRAWALS NOW BEING DISCUSSED WOULD CONTINUE UNTIL A "RESIDUAL FORCE LEVEL" WAS REACHED IN VIETNAM, ALTHOUGH THAT LEVEL ITSELF HAS NOT YET BEEN FIXED. SOME SOURCES HERE SAY THE "RESIDUAL FORCE" WOULD BE ABOUT 25,000 MEN, WHILE REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON RECENTLY HAVE INDICATED IT COULD BE AS LITTLE AS 4,000 TO 5,000 MEN MAINLY INVOLVED IN LOGISTICS.

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THE SOURCES SAID THE SWIFT PULLOUTS WERE BEING CONTEMPLATED PARTLY IN RESPONSE TO THE COMMUNIST OFFER, PARTLY TO REDUCE POLITICAL PRESSURE AT HOME, AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF GROWING FEARS OF THE DRUG AND GENERAL MORALE PROBLEMS IN THE U.S. MILITARY HERE.

WHATEVER THE PULLOUT RATE BECOMES, HOWEVER, KISSINGER ASSURED THIEU THAT THERE WOULD BE STRONG CONTINUED LOGISTICAL HELP TO THE VIETNAMESE WAR EFFORT AS WELL AS INCREASED U.S. AID TO OFFSET ECONOMIC LOSSES CAUSED BY THE DEPARTURES, THE SOURCES SAID.

KISSINGER SPENT THE LAST DAY OF HIS VISIT MEETING WITH OPPOSITION FIGURES, SOME OF WHOM ARE EXPECTED TO RUN AGAINST THIEU IN OCTOBER'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. HE HAD EARLIER MET WITH THIEU AND OTHER GOVERNMENT FIGURES.

PICKUP 2ND PGH 051A; TODAY'S MEETINGS

JB

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