

Morgan Gandy

SAIGON, April 23/70, (UPI)--Powerful militant Buddhist leaders are planning to propose aye neutralist political settlement for the key northern provinces where the majority of American and Korean combat troops are based.

High-placed sources close to the Buddhist hierarchy said under this proposed plan--called the "Three Vietnams" plan--the five northernmost provinces would become aye pilot case and transitional buffer zone of aye neutralist settlement involving the Communists, the Americans, the French and the South Vietnamese. These five provinces during the past crisis were in open state of rebellion against both Saigon and the ~~the~~ Communists. Historically, Vietnam was cut into thirds--the North called Tonkin, the Central provinces called Annam and the rich Southern region of the Mekong Delta called Cochinchine. ^{AF}

American sources, speaking both privately and officially, said the militant Buddhist plan had notrptnot been presented to them and they were would be unwilling to comment on it until "the shape of the proposal is announced."

"If the Americans like the plan, all they have to do is to quote Dean Rusk." one Western diplomat said. "Rusk says a neutralist settlement is alright. It's clear that Washington have ^{JOHN UP} ~~forseen~~ their original rationale of stemming the tide of Communism in South East Asia."

(more - MILLER - BD)

1st add--morgan gandy--saigon (SGN)

x x x south east asia.

The reaction of the Communists and the French is still unknown. However, diplomatic sources predicted the Communists would reject such a plan--they are shooting for neutrality of the entire country. Possibly, the French would support it.

If the future proposal succeeds, it would become only a transitional pilot case to be applied to other provinces throughout the southern republic--as well as towards strengthening diplomatic and economic ties with Cambodia, Laos--and perhaps Thailand.

The political cement for tightening relations with neutralist Cambodia and Laos would possibly involve the return to Vietnam of a member of former royal family to serve as symbolic chief of state, as well as promoting the Buddhist religion on the regional level. Both Cambodia and Laos retain monarchies and Buddhism is the dominant religion.

These well-informed Buddhist sources said that the ^{IN THE FUTURE NORTH VIETNAM REGION} forty eight thousand American Marines based ~~there~~ would not be asked to withdraw in the short-range future, but they would be used to maintain a balance of forces with the North Vietnamese units and local Viet Cong guerrillas in the area.

However, it was considered likely that the American Marines would be asked, under this proposed plan, to maintain a static defensive posture within designated enclaves instead of an offensive stance to "search and destroy" Communist forces outside of the enclaves. Military experts viewed this change of tactics as both "containment and isolation" of American military power within the South.

(More--Miller--BD)

2ND

~~First~~ add--morgan gandy--saigon

South
x x x the enclaves ~~in the~~

The ^{ones} ~~of~~ five northern provinces, ^{which include} among the ~~per~~ most economically depleted in the country, form the Vietnamese army first military corps, which is already, for practical purposes, under the ^{militant} ~~nominal~~ actual control of the ~~military~~ Buddhist politico-priests who are now attempting to restore order there following five weeks of anti-government demonstrations and strikes. These five northern provinces stretch from the seventeenth parallel--bordering Communist North Vietnam--to the fifteenth parallel on the south.

If the ~~the~~ Buddhists' experimental plan ² ~~since~~ succeeds in establishing a state of neutrality in the five northern provinces, the plan would be instituted southwards, at least to the thirteenth parallel, which is roughly half the ~~length~~ length of the anti-Communist southern republic.

³ Hence, these neutralist provinces ^{would} ~~would~~ divide Vietnam ^{Trans. 7/1/62} ~~into three parts~~ serve as a buffer zone between ~~North~~

the Communist ~~nor~~ North and the anti-Communist south, hence

severing the country into thirds. [The American First Air Cavalry Division, one hundred first airborne brigade and more division of Korean troops are based ~~in the area~~ between the ~~15~~ fifteenth and thirteenth parallel.

(More--Miller--BD)

3RD

~~second add--morgan gandy--saigon (SON)~~

~~THIRTEENTH PARALLEL~~
~~XXX INTO THIRDS~~

The militant Buddhist leadership is scheduled to ~~x~~ unveil ~~the~~ and slowly move towards this plan of action following the national elections for a constitutional assembly, which are slated to be held in three to five months, ~~as~~ sometime between July and September. These Buddhist sources said that the ~~Buddhist~~ militant Buddhist leadership would move towards this ~~plan~~ implementing this plan ~~irrespective~~ irrespective of whether or not ~~the~~ pro-Buddhist laymen ~~held~~ held the majority of ~~a~~ votes in the ~~a~~ constitutional-drafting assembly.

"The militant Buddhist leaders are determined to go ahead with their plan to neutralize the northern provinces ^{Region} and have given this priority over ~~the~~ to the upcoming national elections," one informed Buddhist source ~~explained~~ explained.

(More--Miller--RD)

472

~~third add--morgan gandy--saigon (SGN~~

)

xxx source explained.

These Buddhist sources disclosed this outline of the pilot case proposal:

1. On the military side, the militant Buddhist leaders would attempt to arrange a ceasefire between the Communists on one side and the South Vietnamese-- allied forces on the other side. ^{in the Northern Province} During this time period, the American Marines would serve as a counter-balance to the Communist forces. The Buddhists leaders want the North Vietnamese units to withdraw--either back to North Vietnam or Laos or further south. The local Communist guerrillas should lay down their arms and return to ~~civilian~~ non-violent civilian life in their villages.

Then in return, the South Vietnamese armed forces in these provinces--now loyal to the anti-Communist Saigon regime--would be asked ^{Also} ~~to also~~ to lay down their arms and return to civilian life or else move their units further south where the anti-Communist war would still be fought. Also, ^{Also} the American Marines ~~would be withdrawn in a slow-motion phase-out~~ ^{AS} ~~once~~ the North Vietnamese units had ~~departed~~ departed. ^{North} ~~North~~ military alliances with either bloc would be then allowed in the buffer. "Obviously, all the higgelty-piggelty discussions on all this might take three years," one Western diplomat shuttered. "But, this might give the Americans an half-way honorable ~~ex~~ military exit from Vietnam, which is what they appear to want."

(More--Miller--BD)

5th

fourth add--morgan gandy--saigon (SCN)

To WANT
x x x diplomat shuttered.

(Recently captured Communist documents indicate they a the Communists are already attempting to establish aye vague sort of neutrality with the ~~Et~~ South Vietnamese armed forces, according to diplomatic sources. These documents revealed orders from Communist commanders not to attack South Vietnamese units ~~current~~ during the ~~current~~ turbulent political crisis, and to attack ~~American~~ ^{UN STATES} units only when they are certain of inflicting heavy ~~UN STATES~~ ^{AMERICAN} casualties.)

2. On the political side, aye neutralist local government, ^{militant} pivoting a round the Buddhist leadership, would be established ^{implement + Aye} to administer and govern the area and to attempt to fulfill the Buddhist social revolution.

At the national level within South Vietnam, the Buddhist leadership would reportedly attempt to bring back to Vietnam and to re-install in power former Emperor Bao Dai, or his ~~son~~ eldest son and former crown prince, Bao Long. Both are now in Europe. Aye representative of ~~the~~ ex-emperor Bao Dai recently arrived in Saigon and is known to be consulting political leaders. The return of the royal family here, to serve as aye ~~sum~~ symbolic chief of state, gained credence ~~here~~ ~~recently~~ when the former Emperor issued aye call for peace along the lines of General Charles De Gaulle previously had advocated.

(More--Miller--ED)

6th

~~fifth~~ add--morgan gandy--saigon (SGN)

x x x had advocated.

militant

At the international level, the Buddhist leadership would request Unistates, France, Cambodia and Laos, in particular, to ~~para~~ support this plan and to guarantee the peace. The return to political prominence within South Vietnam of the royal family would serve as a link and common basis for closer diplomatic and political and economic ties with Laos and Cambodia, both of whom also have symbolic monarchies. This ~~was~~ could lay the foundation for a vague federation of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, all of whom which were once united under French colonial rule.

Regarding North Vietnam, the Buddhist leadership would seek the "normalization" of relations between the Communist North Vietnamese and the Vietnamese living in the buffer zone. This would include free movement between the two zones, and common postal arrangements.

3. On the economic side, the Buddhist leadership would request foreign aid from the Communist bloc, the ~~French~~ non-aligned bloc, of which the French would be most significant, and the free world, ~~para~~ particularly Unistates. Trade with ~~North~~ North Vietnam would be re-established.

Since this buffer zone area is the most economically depleted region of the country--the militant Buddhist leadership would seek to profit from the economic competition between the Communist bloc, the Western bloc and the non-aligned nations.

Buddhist sources first began to mention ^{non-specific} in vague terms this 'end-the-war' plan in nineteen sixty four, after student demonstrations had toppled General Nguyen Khanh from the Presidency. Even then there were undercurrents of discussion about the ~~the~~ return of the Vietnamese Emperor ~~xxx~~ from Europe, ^{And} but these discussions mounted ~~and xxx~~ since the beginning of this year.

It was ~~not until now~~ not until now however, that the ^{OPENLY} details of the plan had crystallized and been ^{WITHIN} discussion discussed. The plan is the ² liveliest topic of ² discussion among the highest-ranking Vietnamese political and business circles here.

Diplomatic sources have long believed that the ~~Buddhist~~ militant Buddhist leadership could and would serve as a link between the anti-Communists and the Communists in the event of future negotiations. ~~However,~~ the militant Buddhist leaders are known to have privately ~~W~~ said they also believed that ~~they~~ they could and should serve as a medium ~~for negotiation~~ for negotiation between the ~~xxx~~ Communist and the anti-Communist side. The crucial problem of ~~recognizat reconl~~ recognition of the Communist-led National Liberation Front could then be sidestepped by and "under the table" agreement.