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WALDHEIM ENVOY IN HANOI FOR TALK

The Frenchman's Mission Is to Discuss the 'Whole Vietnamese Situation'

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UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., April 17 — Secretary General Waldheim has sent a representative to Hanoi who is conducting talks with North Vietnamese and Vietcong authorities.

The special envoy is Raymond Aubrac, a French engineer on the staff of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, who has over the years served as a channel to top Vietnamese leaders for both the Johnson and Nixon Administrations.

After the identity of the special envoy was learned elsewhere, Mr. Waldheim confirmed that his representative had reached Hanoi in the last few days and that his mission was to talk with Communist leaders about the "whole Vietnamese situation."

This clearly suggested the Aubrac mission would range beyond the relatively restricted issue of the humanitarian assistance that the United Nations is now providing to Vietnamese civilians on both sides.

The North Vietnamese always have maintained that the conflict was an internal matter and that the United Nations had no authority to intervene.

Mr. Waldheim, while reluctant to discuss his envoy's mission, conceded in reply to a question that he had no basis so far for believing that the

Communists had now dropped their opposition to any United Nations political involvement, such as an effort to end the fighting.

One of the few officials here willing to discuss the matter said Mr. Waldheim had been in touch with Mr. Aubrac two weeks ago while attending a United Nations meeting in Rome, and that the Hanoi-trip was agreed to by Vietcong and Hanoi officials in Paris.

That Mr. Aubrac was received in Hanoi was some source of encouragement, the official said, but he discouraged speculation that this action meant the Communists were willing to talk about their terms for a cease-fire or to discuss the issue of the evacuation of Vietnamese refugees from combat zones.

Mr. Waldheim has been criticized by some United States Congressmen and by some Washington officials for rejecting a United States request that he appeal to the Communists not to interfere with the refugee evacuation. He has explained that knowing Hanoi's opposition, he feared that a public plea would jeopardize the United Nations's humanitarian assistance program.

The impression was left that Mr. Waldheim wanted to make it clear that he was taking initiatives but at the same time was worried that Hanoi authorities would be angered by any disclosure of the talks.

Mr. Aubrac's acceptability to the Vietnamese Communists springs from a friendship struck up almost 30 years ago with Ho Chi Minh when the Vietnamese leader traveled to Paris in 1946 in an effort to negotiate his country's independence from France.