

# U.S., Vietnam Open Talks On Aid, Missing Americans

Paris

U.S. and Vietnamese diplomats opened talks yesterday on the question of 800 Americans still missing in action from the war in Vietnam and Vietnamese demands for reconstruction aid.

The negotiations also seek to find a basis for normalizing relations between the two countries, but no concrete progress is expected before President-elect Jimmy Carter takes office in January.

Neither the American representative, Samuel Gammon, nor his Vietnamese counterpart, Tran Hoan, spoke to reporters after their two-hour meeting. They are the No. 2 men at their embassies here. They met in a building in suburban Neuilly that is believed to be the residence of the Vietnamese ambassador.

Statements were issued later by the U.S. Embassy, the State Department in Washington and the Vietnamese Embassy.

State Department spokesman Robert Funseth said the initial meeting was a "substantive discussion" in a correct atmosphere, but it produced no change in the U.S. decision to veto Vietnam's application to join the United Nations.

Funseth was asked whether the reaffirmation of the expected veto meant there had been no progress on the question of the Americans missing in action (MIA) and replied, "That's a fair statement."

Vietnam's application for U.N. membership is scheduled to come to a vote next week in the U.N. Security Council, where the U.S., as one of the five permanent members, has the veto power.

The U.S. Embassy statement said issues of interest to both countries were raised at yesterday's meeting, with the question of MIAs "our primary concern."

The Vietnamese declaration said Vietnam is "disposed to an exchange of views on the problems which preoccupy the American side and to completely fulfill its obligations" concerning the MIAs.

It said Vietnam approached the discussions "with a view to normalizing relations" between the two countries. The declaration repeated Hanoi's contention that "the American side is morally obliged also to assume its obligations" to contribute to Vietnam's post-war reconstruction.

Hanoi claims that U.S. aid was promised in the 1973 Paris pact that led to the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam. America has charged that Hanoi violated the agreement when a North Vietnamese offensive overwhelmed South Vietnamese troops in the spring of 1975.

Associated Press