

Hanoi Asks U.S. to Open Talks Now on Pullout Date

By JOHN L. HESS APR 30 1971

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, April 29 — The Vietnamese Communists invited the United States today to open immediate negotiations on setting a date for an American withdrawal and renewed their offer not to shoot at American troops who avoided attacking them.

The American representative at the talks, David K. E. Bruce, repeated that the United States was prepared to discuss the withdrawal of all external forces, including those of North Vietnam.

Mr. Bruce told reporters later that he saw nothing new in the North Vietnamese proposal and nothing to discuss in a Vietcong offer to cease firing on American troops who do not fire on them.

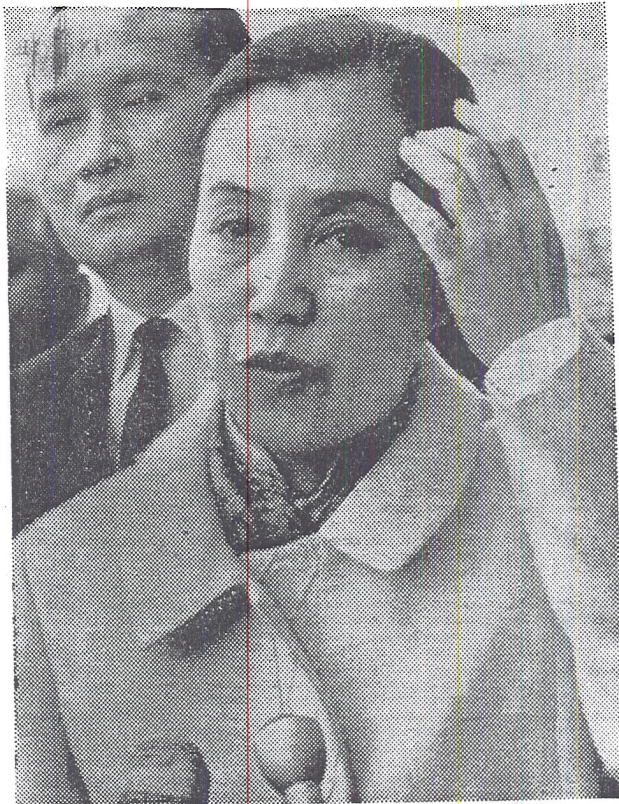
[In Washington, the Administration dismissed the Communist proposals as "propaganda" geared to antiwar activities in the United States.]

Xuan Thuy, the North Vietnamese delegate, appeared to go a shade farther than before in implying that the setting of a withdrawal date would lead to the early repatriation of all prisoners.

"I propose that at this conference," he said, "this very day, or tomorrow, or another day of your choice, we discuss the question of fixing the date for the withdrawal from South Vietnam of United States forces and of those of other foreign countries in the American camp, so as to be able then to take up the question of the guarantee of the security of the United States soldiers during their withdrawal, and the question of the release of the captured troops.

"We think that if the discus-

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Associated Press

VIETCONG REPRESENTATIVE: Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh, delegate to Paris peace talks, with reporters. She said troops were disposed not to fire on nonhostile Americans.

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sions on these questions arrive at positive results, all the troops participating in the war can then rapidly regain their homes."

Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh, representative for the so-called provisional revolutionary government, said today that "the South Vietnamese people and its armed forces are disposed to cease fire on American soldiers who do not undertake hostile actions toward them."

A spokesman later reported that this was a shorter version of the "order of the day" announced on Monday, which was directed to American troops opposed to the war and in effect invited them to negotiate local cease-fires with opposing forces. An observer close to the Communist side said such truces had been almost commonplace among opposing Vietnamese in many areas throughout the war.

The Communists made no mention of proposals by the allied side covering prisoners: the naming of a neutral protective power to observe camp conditions and an offer by Saigon to repatriate 570 disabled North Vietnamese and to send 1,200 more prisoners, held four years or more, to a neutral country or internment. *

The news briefings that followed today's session drew three or four times their recent attendance and were unusually animated, apparently in response to the "order of the day" suggesting a cease-fire and to the demonstrations in the United States.

Under repeated and sharp questioning, Stephen Ledogar, the American spokesman, declined to say whether the United States would negotiate a final withdrawal date if it received advance assurance that all the prisoners would be released. Under similar questioning the Communist side declined to clarify its position any further.

For the first time, no questions were put to the spokesmen of the Saigon government. After reading a summary of their offer on prisoners, they waited in a deepening silence, then left.

Offer 'Not Credible'

By TAD SZULC

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 29 — The Nixon Administration suggested today that the Communist proposals at the Paris peace talks were "propaganda" geared to the current antiwar activities in the United States.

Commenting on the North

* Offer by Saigon to return prisoners to North Vietnam was apparently made in Paris 8 Apr 71, coupled with offer to negotiate repatriation or internment in neutral country of "able-bodied prisoners of war who have undergone a long period of captivity." See John L. Hess, Paris, NYTimes 9 Apr (filed Indochina) and 30 Apr 71 (filed POW's). Internment would involve prisoners of both sides. (SPEXaminer 3 May 71, filed POW's.)

Vietnamese proposal for discussions on the withdrawal of American troops, the White House press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, said that the Communists had been "unwilling to discuss or negotiate a cease-fire" as proposed by Mr. Nixon last autumn.

Other senior officials emphasized that the United States was prepared to discuss at any time a "standstill cease-fire" in Indochina, but, in line with the Presidential policy, it would not negotiate troop withdrawal dates as long as the fighting was in progress.

Likewise, senior officials said that the statement by Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh that the Vietcong forces would refrain from

who are not hostile to the guerrillas is "not credible."

Addressing himself to both the North Vietnamese and Vietcong statements in Paris, Charles W. Bray 3d, the State Department's spokesman, said that "our judgment is that there is nothing new in this."

He said that Mrs. Binh's announcement "has nothing to do" with earlier American cease-fire proposals.

"Madame Binh's proposal is in the category of propaganda and we attach no particular significance to it," Mr. Bray said.

United States officials noted that Hanoi had greatly increased its "propaganda effort" — aimed both at the North Vietnamese population and world public opinion — since the antiwar activities resumed in the United States last week.