

U.S. BID ON TALKS

APR 14 1972

Envoy Reports Offer by Nixon on April 1 but Cites Invasion

NYTimes

By JOHN L. HESS

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, April 13—William J. Porter, the United States delegate to the Vietnam peace talks, said today that President Nixon had offered to resume the talks with a session today but that the only reply of the Communists had been "a mushrooming invasion" of South Vietnam by North Vietnamese troops.

This disclosure was contained in a brief statement that Mr. Porter read at Orly Airport on returning from Washington after consultations with the President.

[In Washington, the State Department said that Mr. Nixon had made it clear to the North Vietnamese that the United States would not resume the talks under military pressure. This was taken to mean that the President's offer included the condition that Hanoi suspend its offensive in South Vietnam. However, some officials expressed the view that the offer was intended to provide a defense against criticism of his decision to suspend the Paris talks and to intensify American bombing in Vietnam.]

In response to a question at Orly Airport, Mr. Porter said that Mr. Nixon's offer had been made in a message sent through a private channel on April 1 and received "by the other side" on the next day. The Communist offensive, now in its

Continued on Page 14, Column 6

Continued From Page 1, Col. 2

third week, was then already under way.

Meanwhile, the Communist delegations here demanded today, as they did last week, that the peace talks, which were suspended by the United States at the session on March 23, be resumed immediately.

In another development, an official French delegation returning from Hanoi reported that Le Duc Tho, a key figure in past negotiations, declared in an interview last Friday that he would leave immediately for Paris as soon as the United States showed a willingness to negotiate.

The key passage in the statement Mr. Porter read at the airport said:

"I can reveal here for the first time that after a thorough review of the situation, President Nixon personally directed that a message be sent through a private channel to the other side stating our willingness to resume the Paris talks on April 13. The only response to this overture came in the form of a mushrooming invasion of the Republic of South Vietnam by North Vietnamese troops, and a classic example of prevarication in the Vietcong statement that no North Vietnamese troops were involved in that military operation.

"We have heard statements that the other side wishes to have meetings. We do not doubt it. But no one who is familiar with the history of the Paris talks can claim that the fact of having meetings is equivalent to the fact of negotiation.

"If there is a real desire to negotiate, the other side, as we have told them, can communicate that to us through any channel of their choosing. And they will find us ready and willing to begin on that basis. Too much time has been wasted here, and that is bad enough, but the thought of meetings at gunpoint which would also waste time is even less acceptable."

Mr. Porter refused to answer questions except to say the Presidential message was sent April 1.

Siagon Team Slighted

Newsmen were told by his delegation, that any clarification would have to come from the White House.

Speculation in informed diplomatic quarters was that President Nixon's offer to resume the weekly sessions included the condition that secret talks be held also to assure that the regular meetings would be fruitful from Washington's point of view.

The Communists have refused to permit any conditions to be set on the agenda of the regular sessions. They have repeatedly indicated their readiness to meet privately with the Americans—though not with the Saigon delegation.

The last known private sessions between the North Vietnamese and Americans were those of Henry A. Kissinger, the President's adviser on national security. Those ended last fall, when Le Duc Tho left for Hanoi. Communist sources insist that Zuan Thuy, head of the North Vietnamese delegation, was ready to meet Mr. Kissinger but that the latter refused, holding that only Le Duc Tho had the authority required.

Mr. Tho's view were relayed by three officers of the Association for Franco-Vietnamese Friendship, who had visited Hanoi to discuss a health and school-aid program. They emphasized that they were reporting from memory, aided by notes.

Mrs. Marcelle Devaud, a Gaullist who is former vice president of the Senate, said Mr. Tho had given the impression that if the Paris talks resumed, he would leave for Paris immediately. "He even said when

we left, 'Maybe next month in Paris,'" she added.

The three said that Mr. Tho appeared calm and confident about the situation, but pessimistic and even confused about American aims. The Rev. Maurice Voge, an elderly Protestant minister, quoted Mr. Tho having said that the Americans "want peace, but peace in their own way."

According to Mr. Voge, Mr. Tho said President Nixon had gone to Peking "obsessed" about Vietnam, but it was not in Peking or Moscow that the war would be settled. Mr. Tho was said to have insisted that the Communist offer to negotiate a coalition government in Saigon remained the only serious basis for a settlement.

The Communist delegations here issued statements today recalling their requests, dated April 4 and 12, for a resumption of the Thursday sessions, and the rejections by the Americans. They said the United States must take full responsibility for the impasse.

U. S. Condition Reported

By TERENCE SMITH

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 13 — President Nixon's secret April 1 offer to resume negotiations with the North Vietnamese reportedly included a major condition: that Hanoi suspend its new offensive against South Vietnam.



United Press International
William J. Porter, U.S. delegate to talks, speaking to reporters in Paris.

This was confirmed indirectly today by the State Department, which said that the message contained a warning that "continued enlargement" of the Communist offensive "would not be conducive to serious negotiations" in Paris.

The department spokesman, Robert J. McCloskey, said that the note made it clear to the North Vietnamese that while the United States was willing to reactivate the suspended talks as of today, it would not do so under military pressure.

He said it was an "allowable conclusion" that the United States hoped that the North Vietnamese would call off their drive, then under way one day, in response to the note.

Other officials expressed the view, however, that the note was designed more to provide President Nixon with an advance defense against criticism of his decision to suspend the Paris negotiations and intensify American bombing in the war zone.

These officials, who declined to be identified, said they privately doubted that anyone in the Administration seriously expected the North Vietnamese to abandon their attack in exchange for the President's offer to reopen the talks.

They noted that Hanoi had been reported moving heavy equipment and personnel for months in advance of the drive. "This was not something they were about to call off at the last minute," one State Department official observed.