

Hanoi Offers Possibility Of New Talks in Secret

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By HENRY GINIGER APR 18 1972

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PARIS, April 17—North Vietnam offered a possibility of new secret peace talks today if the United States would halt its air attacks and resume the regular weekly sessions of the Paris conference.

There was no immediate reaction from the United States delegation.

Xuan Thuy, Hanoi's chief negotiator at the peace talks here, said at a news conference that Le Duc Tho, who held secret meetings last year with Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon's adviser on national security, would return to Paris if the United States agreed to the two conditions he specified.

Mr. Thuy made no formal link between the presence of Mr. Tho, a member of North Vietnam's party Politburo and an "adviser" to the delegation here, and resumption of the secret meetings, which were broken off in October.

End of Bombing Sought

But when he was asked if such talks could resume if the American bombing stopped and the American delegation returned to the conference room on the Avenue Kléber, he answered: "That is correct."

Mr. Thuy also emphasized the point in a negative way.

"If the Paris conference on Vietnam does not resume its work and on the other hand if the United States does not stop its escalation of the war and destruction against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, then there is no basis for private meetings," he said.

The United States delegation, on instructions from President Nixon, suspended the regular Thursday sessions on March 23 on the ground that the Communist side was using them merely for propaganda purposes and would not engage in give-and-take negotiations.

Subsequently the Communists began their military offensive against South Vietnam, and in response to their repeated

demands that the Paris conference continue "as usual," the United States and South Vietnam have answered, as the chief American negotiator, William J. Porter, did last Thursday, that "meeting at gunpoint would not be acceptable."

However, Mr. Porter revealed at the same time that Mr. Nixon had proposed secretly that the meetings resume April 13.

There had been, according to the North Vietnamese, a flurry of secret messages between the two sides through "a private channel" in an effort to get the stalled talks started again. Mr. Nixon's proposal for April 13 was accepted but the offer was withdrawn four days later, Hanoi said. According to the American side, the answer to Mr. Nixon's offer was "a mushrooming invasion" of the South by the North.

Despite the confusion between public statements and private messages, it is believed that what the United States is really after is a resumption of the secret sessions that Washington charged were broken off when Le Duc Tho refused to attend a meeting scheduled for last Nov. 20.

Mr. Thuy thus went to some length today to meet the American desires without making a flat promise. It is rare for Mr. Thuy to hold a news conference, and this added importance to his statements.

Mr. Thuy appeared at the Left Bank offices of his country's diplomatic mission here. He read an appeal by the Central Committee of the North Vietnamese Workers (Communist) party and the Government, calling on the party, the people, and the army "to struggle resolutely for the independence and freedom of our fatherland, to liberate South Vietnam, to defend the socialist North and advance the peaceful reunification of our country."

In response to a question, Mr. Thuy said, "We are ready



United Press International

OFFERS NEW TALKS:
Xuan Thuy, chief North Vietnamese negotiator in Paris, at news session

on all counts to meet an armed invasion by air, sea or land." He made no effort to deny that North Vietnamese forces were in the South, declaring that the aggressor was the United States and that "any Vietnamese patriot has the right to fight against the aggressor."

The diplomat, who holds ministerial rank in the North Vietnamese Government, said that in all the combat zones, including the Saigon area and the Mekong Delta, the "liberation army" and the population were rising up against the Government of President Nguyen Van Thieu.

The removal of Mr. Thieu and the withdrawal by an agreed date of all American military forces and equipment have been the two major Communist demands in both the public and private sessions. The furthest the United States and Saigon have gone to satisfy them is to offer a six-month timetable for withdrawal followed by elections in the South. Mr. Thieu would resign one month before election day.

The Communists, refusing elections held under the Saigon Government, have called for a coalition of Communist and non-Communist elements, which would stage the elections.

* Basically same story, NYTimes Service as carried in SF Chronicle 18 Apr 72, gives date Nixon offer was made as 2 Apr 72. This file. WH says Nixon ordered that message be sent 1 Apr, it was received 2 Apr, accepted 6 Apr. WH Examiner 16 Apr 72, this file.