

Text of Statement by North

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, April 20—Following is the text of a statement issued in English here today by the North Vietnamese Government, describing the 1968 negotiations with the United States that led to a halt in American bombing of the North:

Along with the public conversations started on May 13, 1968, there took place the private meetings between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States which led to the cessation of U.S. bombardments against the DRVN and the convening of the Paris conference on Vietnam.

In the private meetings held during the period from June 26 to Sept. 15, 1968, the U.S. side insisted on discussing about "the circumstances following the cessation of the bombing," that is to say, it posed conditions of reciprocity for the U.S. cessation of bombardments. The DRVN side firmly demanded that the United States stop its bombardments completely and unconditionally, and at last the U.S. side accepted that position of the DRVN.

At the Sept. 20, 1968, private meeting, the U.S. side ceased insisting on the aforesaid "circumstances"; it however called for "serious talks" with the participation of the Saigon administration's representatives to find a political solution to the Vietnam problem, as condition for the bombing halt. To show its goodwill, the DRVN side agreed to this requirement, and continuing their discussions, on Oct. 30, 1968, the two sides agreed on the time and date of the U.S. cessation of bombardments, and those for the convening of the four-party conference in Paris.

Following is the essential contents of those private meetings:

The viewpoint of the United States was that it would stop bombing the DRVN, and after the cessation of the bombing the two sides would put in practice a number of questions which the United States called "circumstances":

1 Restoration of the DMZ;
2 No military build-up on both sides;

3 Starting substantive talks, in which each side would be free to raise the problems of its concern, the U.S. side said: "Our side will include repre-

sentatives of the Republic of Vietnam. Your side will include any representatives you will invite";

4 No major attacks against Saigon, Hue and Danang.

The U.S. side demanded that the two sides must discuss and agree on these questions before it would stop bombing the DRVN.

'Conditions' and 'Reciprocity'

The DRVN side pointed out that the U.S. proposal was in fact a cessation of bombardments "with conditions" and on the basis of "reciprocity," because the U.S. bombing halt was contingent on the discussion and agreement on questions arising in a later period. Therefore, the DRVN side firmly demanded that the United States completely and unconditionally stopped its bombardments and all other acts of war against the DRVN.

At the September 12, 1968, private meeting, Mr. Le Duc Tho said: "Before the discussion of the questions aimed at finding a political solution to the Vietnam problems, you must unconditionally stop the bombardments and all other acts of war against the DRVN. After that the two sides will discuss the problems that either side may raise.

"Such is our constructive proposal; such is our consistent position; there is no change at all."

At the same September 12, 1968, private meeting, Ambassador Harriman said: "We both agree that for better talks to begin, all bombings must be stopped. You have called for unconditional stop of the bombing. We accept that." However, the U.S. side still reiterated its military conditions for the bombing halt and considered them very important elements relating to the cessation of bombardment."

After Harriman's Return

At the private meeting on Sept. 15, 1968, Mr. Le Duc Tho reaffirmed: "We demand an unconditional end to the bombing and all other acts of war against the DRVN, without 'reciprocity.' You have accepted that. After you unconditionally stop the bombing and all other acts of war against the DRVN, we will sit down and discuss. You will raise your problems, We will raise ours."

The Sept. 20, 1968, private

meeting took place after Ambassador Harriman's return from the United States. The U.S. side raised the question of the two sides "agreeing on serious talks with the participation of the representatives of the Republic of Vietnam" after the U.S. cessation of the bombing, considering it as a "major factor for the United States to stop bombing North Vietnam." Ambassador Harriman said: "What is new is the statement that my Government authorized me to say that your agreement on this question could be a major factor facilitating the decision to end the bombing."

After being asked by the ARVN side whether the point that the U.S. side had just raised was the only condition, whether the U.S. would stop the bombing only when the two sides had agreed on that question, Ambassador Harriman replied: "We think that our Government will not come to an agreement to stop the bombing unless we agree on this point." Then he added: "I don't think this is a condition in any form. We also take note of your views on stopping the bombing without conditions."

At the private meeting on Oct. 15, 1968, after informing the DRVN side that he had received instructions from Washington, Ambassador Harriman said:

Four-Delegation Meeting

"We are prepared to order the cessation of bombardments and all other acts involving the use of force against the entire territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam if you agree to begin serious talks the next day after the cessation of bombing, and in such discussions, representatives of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam will participate on our side. If your answer on this issue of participation of representatives of the Government of South Vietnam is affirmative, we can tell you that the order to stop all bombardments will be given within the next day or two."

Minister Xuan Thuy replied: "You can report to Washington the following: After the United States unconditionally stops the bombing and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the DRVN side will accept a conference with the participation of four delegations, namely the delegation

Vietnam on 1968 Talks That Led to U.S. Bombing Halt



Associated Press
Xuan Thuy of North Vietnam at news session in Paris

Oct. 24, 1963, Ambassador Harriman said: "We recognize your statement about 'no condition.' Therefore, we are quite ready to assure you that, in any statement on the cessation of the bombing, the U.S. Government will not refer to any word such as the word 'conditional.'"

However, the U.S. side did not want to put it in the minutes. That is why at the private meeting on Oct. 21, 1968, Minister Xuan Thuy asked the U.S. side: "If this is not put down on paper, some days later you might say that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam have accepted U.S. conditions, while in reality we do not accept any condition. Another instance: A few days later, if journalists ask me: 'You Vietnamese, say that the cessation of the bombing is "unconditional" but the United al.' What would we tell them, then?"

"There Is No Question"

Ambassador Harriman: "There is no question that we have told you that we make no condition, that we will stop the bombing without conditions."

On Oct. 30, 1968, the DRV side informed the U.S. side that it accepted the U.S. request for not making minutes.

of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the delegation of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation, the delegation of the United States and the delegation of the Saigon administration, to discuss a political solution to the Vietnam problem."

After the two sides agreed on that point, the contents of the following private meetings were discussions about the date for the U.S. cessation

and artillery bombardments and all other acts involving the use of force against the entire territory of the DRVN. Those orders will be fully effective 12 hours later. The President will make an announcement of this action at about the time the orders are issued. In this connection, I must, of course, emphasize the necessity for absolute secrecy until he makes the announcement.

"The meeting of the type agreed upon will not be held before Nov. 6. We will be in touch with you on the exact time of such a meeting, but it will not be before next Wednesday, Nov. 6.

"This action is being taken on the basis of all the conversations we have had, talking into account what you have said and what we have said."

Recapitulation by Hanoi

Also at this last private meeting, Minister Xuan Thuy concluded:

"For nearly six months now, at the official, conversations between the representatives of the DRVN Government and those of the U.S. Government in Paris, we have been demanding that the United States unconditionally stop the bombing and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Today as well as at the previous meetings, your side stated that the United States would stop air, naval and artillery bombardments and all other acts involving the use of force against the entire territory of the DRVN. We understand that this is an unconditional cessation of the bombing. You also said that in sub-

stance the cessation of the bombing was without any condition of reciprocity, and that in all statements of the U.S. Government on the cessation of the bombing there will be no mention of the word 'conditional.' And thus we say that the U.S. cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam is 'unconditional.'

"As to the conference to find a peaceful solution to the Vietnam problem, the United States says that the Republic of Vietnam would take part in it; the Democratic Republic of Vietnam says that the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation would participate in it. Thus, the participants of the conference are: the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation, the United States and the Republic of South Vietnam. Those are what we have agreed upon."

Minister Xuan Thuy added:

"Now, we have agreed to the proposal you made today. However, I must make it clear that for one month now, during these private meetings, there were certain points we had agreed upon, but then you changed your mind and retracted them; all the changes come from your side. From now on, you should act in accordance with what have been agreed upon. It is necessary to repeat that we have come to Paris with serious intent and goodwill, ready to overcome all difficulties to bring about peace. The same thing is required from your side so that the future questions can be solved properly. We expect you will act correctly."