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'2-Track' Talks On Vietnam War

SFXaminer

PARIS — (AP) — The United States will go back to the Vietnam peace table tomorrow — presumably because of a Communist pledge of parallel secret talks.

Information indicated today that a deal for secret talks apparently enabled the United States to swallow its previous statements it would not return to the semipublic sessions while the enemy offensive in South Vietnam was in progress.

A semipublic plenary session of the conference, demanded for tomorrow, was accepted by the United States and South Vietnam yesterday, without any publicly stated conditions.

.....Propaganda.....

It will be the 148th meeting in a series that began in January 1969. It will be the first since March 23, when President Nixon suspended the conference, accusing the Communists of engaging in propaganda instead of negotiations.

A diplomatic informant said "things of interest not occurring on the surface" would also be happening — an obvious reference to secret talks.

Xuan Thuy, head of the North Vietnamese delegation, told newsmen today that following resumption of the talks with the United States, "it is very possible that Le Duc Tho will be in Paris in the near future."

dt250 Tho is the Politburo

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member who would figure in any new secret talks.

Asked about the possibility of secret talks, Thuy said "we can only discuss this after the United States has returned to the talks." He added that North Vietnam would make no difficulties over the form of the negotiations.

In news conferences last week Xuan Thuy held open the possibility of secret talks if the United States returned to the regular weekly sessions.

Tho had met with DQR. Henry Kissinger, Nixon's ...national security adviser, 12, times in secret talks disclosed last January by the President.

In announcing agreement to return to the conference, White House Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler said: "It is the United States' view that the first item of business in these talks must be the discussion of measures which will put an end to the flailing North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam."

If this happens, the talks will quickly bog down in another fruitless exchange of polemics.

In commenting on the U.S. decision to return to the talks, the North Vietnamese delegation said: "We reject all fallacious allegations on the part of the United States on the so-called invasion of South Vietnam by North Vietnam."

Sterile

Ziegler said "we are not interested in sterile propaganda debate." He added that the United States "will take

a dim view of keeping the Paris forum open if Hanoi seeks to use it for such purposes."

It appeared likely to observers that the United States would put up with a certain amount of invective from the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong delegations at the semipublic conference sessions if at secret talks there is some firm sign of progress toward resolving the conflict.

The North Vietnamese delegation claimed that the United States was forced to resume the talks "in the face of the demand of the Vietnamese people, American people and world public opinion."

Riposte

The Viet Cong said the U.S. "sabotage" of the conference "was met with a riposte by the Vietnamese people" — a reference to the enemy offensive.

After the offensive began, several U.S. officials asserted that there was no hope for resuming the peace talks until enemy forces pulled back.