

4 Parties to Peace Talks Agree to Meeting Today

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BY HENRY GINIGER APR 27 1972

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PARIS, April 26—The four parties to the Vietnam peace conference agreed today to hold the first full session in more than a month tomorrow.

At the same time, North Vietnam announced that it was "very possible" that Le Duc Tho, the Politburo member who last year held secret meetings with Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon's national security adviser, would return to Paris shortly.

North Vietnam and the Vietcong, reaffirming their desire to settle the conflict peacefully, quickly accepted a proposal put to them this morning by the United States and South Vietnam. Agreement was easy because the Communist side in statements last week had itself proposed tomorrow's date.

Polemical Session Seen

But on the basis of statements on both sides, the session threatened to be highly polemical.

The American delegation put forward no conditions for agreeing to hold the 148th session in the old Hotel Majestic on the Avenue Kléber. But the delegation chief, William J. Porter, will speak first and his side has served notice that the first order of business would be discussion of measures to put an end "to the flagrant North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam."

In a statement announcing their willingness to join the Americans at the table, the North Vietnamese rejected "all lying assertions about what the United States calls 'The invasion of South Vietnam by North Vietnam' and about 'a tacit understanding,' etc." The United States insists that there was a tacit understanding in 1968 that, among other things, North Vietnam would not cross the demilitarized zone, in re-

turn for a halt in the American bombing. Hanoi insists that the halt in bombing was unconditional.

As reports continued to arrive here of the effectiveness of the Communist military pressure on the South, neither North Vietnam nor the Vietcong gave any indication of a compromising attitude. The talks were suspended March 23 by the United States on the ground that the Communists were not negotiating seriously and were using the sessions only for propaganda. Later the United States said it would not negotiate "at gunpoint."

Weekly Meetings Useful

The weekly sessions have been valuable to both Communist delegations as a convenient place to get their views across to the public. During the long break in the talks the two delegations resorted to repeated news conferences in their Paris headquarters and to frequent statements distributed to newspapers and agencies by teletype.

Last week, Xuan Thuy, head of the North Vietnamese delegation, officially raised the possibility that Mr. Tho, who outranks Mr. Thuy, may return to take part in negotiations on the condition that Washington agreed to rejoin the regular talks and halt the bombing of the North. Consequently, the implication of Mr. Thuy's virtual announcement of Mr. Tho's imminent arrival was that the two conditions had been met and there would be a halt in the bombing.

"We will not be difficult about the form of the negotiation, whether public or private," Mr. Thuy said. "The essential thing is to settle peacefully the Vietnamese problem but naturally we can speak of private meetings only after the resumption of plenary sessions."