

THO'S STATEMENT IS PLAYED DOWN

MAY 2 1972

State Department Declares
He Said 'Nothing New'
on Arrival in Paris
NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 1—The State Department said today that the Government was "deeply upset and indignant" that while the North Vietnamese were pressing for a negotiated settlement of the Vietnam war "their invasion of the South has not only not slackened, but, if anything, has increased in intensity in recent days."

Yesterday, Le Duc Tho, the North Vietnamese Politburo member charged with the Vietnam negotiations, arrived in Paris, where he is expected to have private talks with either Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon's national security adviser, or some other American diplomat.

Mr. Tho's arrival statement at the Paris airport was termed "something of a disappointment" by the State Department today.

Charles W. Bray 3d, the department spokesman said: "Quite frankly, we did not expect to find anything new in Le Duc Tho's public statement. In that respect, we were not surprised; in our view there was nothing new in it."

Mr. Tho repeated Hanoi's demand that the United States set a definite date for complete withdrawal of American and South Korean troops from Vietnam and stop all raids against North Vietnam. He also repeated Hanoi's demand for the "immediate resignation" of President Nguyen Van Thieu and a change of policy by the administration in Saigon.

Private Talks Awaited

The Nixon Administration had expected Mr. Tho to maintain Hanoi's public posture when he arrived. Officials here said that they were waiting to see what he was ready to discuss in private talks, which have been arranged through intensive diplomatic contact directly with Hanoi and through Mr. Kissinger's secret trip to Moscow from April 20 to 24.

Mr. Bray said that "our deep hope is that serious and productive talks can begin promptly and produce effective and satisfactory results."

"The shoe is very clearly on North Vietnam's foot," he said. "It is up to them."

Mr. Nixon said last Wednesday that halting the North Vietnam invasion must be "the first order of business," at the resumed negotiations. He seemed to be referring to the public sessions, not the private talks.

The United States has refused to state publicly what it will seek specifically in the private talks. Secretary of State William P. Rogers indicated yesterday that all options were being kept open. But from statements by various spokesmen Washington appears to want to give and take with Hanoi on terms for setting up a cease-fire, the withdrawal of American forces, the release of American prisoners and a political solution that will not be interpreted as a "Communist take-over."

The Nixon Administration seems ready to negotiate a military solution separate from a political one, or both together.

The Administration refrained from commenting directly on the reported fall of Quang Tri city, but privately officials acknowledged that the situation was not very good.

One senior official called it "bleak." But at the Pentagon, some officials warned against undue pessimism and predicted that the South Vietnamese would be able to hold out at Hue, the former imperial capital, which is also under attack.

Mr. Nixon, who last night linked future world peace with the ability of the allies to prevent a "Communist take-over" by force of South Vietnam, was reported to be skeptical about the value of the negotiations with Hanoi but persuaded by his advisers to give them one more chance.

South Vietnamese Comment

PARIS, May 1 (UPI)—South Vietnam said today that Le Duc Tho, a member of the North Vietnamese Politburo, gave no hopes of a rapid end to the Indochina conflict when he returned to the Vietnam peace talks.

Mr. Tho, Hanoi's top negotiator, returned to Paris yesterday after a five-month absence and said he was ready to continue discussions with the United States.

"There is nothing in the declarations of Le Duc Tho which permits hope for a rapid end to the conflict," the South

Vietnamese delegation said today.

"He only repeated the absurd and unreasonable demands formulated at the meeting table and repeated by the Communist side at the last session," a spokesman said.

He said Hanoi's aim was to face Saigon with an alternative — "either give satisfaction to all their demands, which would be equivalent to a real capitulation, or to have to support a prolonged war. We are always ready to negotiate but we will never cede to armed pressure."