

Lodge: U.S. Couldn't Make Hanoi Budge

BOSTON — (UPI) — Henry Cabot Lodge says there was no "golden opportunity" in the 1969 Paris peace talks because North Vietnam never budged from its stand demanding that the United States unilaterally withdraw from South Vietnam and depose the Saigon regime.

Lodge, the U.S. negotiator in Paris starting in 1969, said yesterday that Sargent Shriver, the Democratic vice presidential nominee, never mentioned that there was such an opportunity until last week.

"I was in touch with Shriver during the period after I went to Paris, and there was no talk of a change in the North Vietnam position," Lodge said in his Beverly, Mass., home.

'Veto Power'

"I don't understand why the people in power in 1968, if they had such information, waited until 1972 to tell us about it."

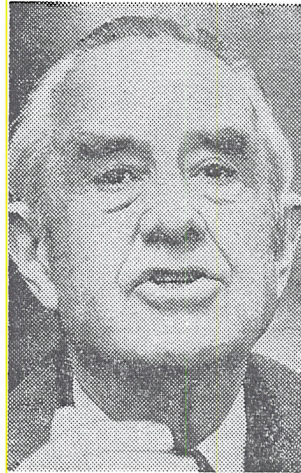
Lodge said that in "a little more than a year that I was in Paris, there were perhaps five or six secret negotiations."

But he said no breakthrough of the type described by Shriver appeared in prospect, on the basis of his consultations with the White House and State Department.

Shriver, former ambassador to France, said President Nixon missed "a golden opportunity" for fruitful ne-



HENRY CABOT LODGE
Denies Shriver charge



AVERELL HARRIMAN
Blames Thieu

gotiations after he took office in January 1969, letting it elude him by giving South Vietnam President Thieu virtual veto power over the U.S. position.

Condition

When he arrived in Paris, Lodge said, the enemy established these conditions as necessary to end the conflict:

"The United States would have to withdraw unilaterally from South Vietnam.

"The United States would have to overthrow the government and put a Communist government in power."

The North Vietnamese negotiators, he said, never changed these positions while he was in Paris.

Lodge said he did not believe the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops north of the

demilitarized zone in October 1968 could be interpreted as any kind of signal.

Praises Vance

In 1969, the U.S. government was "grasping at straws" looking for any possible avenue to extricate the nation from the Vietnam war, Lodge said. Any indication there was such a possibility—from Shriver or anyone else—would have been relayed immediately to President Nixon.

Lodge credited Cyrus Vance, deputy negotiator, with being "helpful" to him. But he said Vance gave no indication of any shift in the North Vietnamese position.

Both Vance and Averell Harriman, Lodge's predecessor as the U.S. negotiator, supported Shriver's claim.