

## News Analysis

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## Hanoi's New Attitude

By Milt Freudnheim

PARIS — (CDN) — Hanoi is making new offers to try to get a peace agreement in the next 15 days before the American elections.

But it was learned authoritatively that dramatic new North Vietnamese proposals do not yet meet American and South Vietnamese peace requirements.

Therefore, unless there are further, basic concessions either by Hanoi or the United States, the war will continue into 1973.

## False Rumors

Reports in some magazines and elsewhere that agreement has been reached are exaggerated and in some instances wrong.

For example, France has not been asked to supervise new South Vietnamese elections, despite all reports of this from Paris and Saigon, it was learned authoritatively.

Hanoi still is holding out for American agreement to a three-part coalition government in Saigon. Secondly, and even more important, Hanoi so far has refused to discuss withdrawal of its forces from South Vietnam.

President Nixon will not agree to a Vietnam settlement that leaves 180,000 North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

## Thieu Can Stay

The major North Vietnamese changes are: first, dropping insistence that President Nguyen van Thieu must resign immediately, and second, willingness to agree to a cease-fire as a first step in a settlement.

North Vietnamese Premier Pham Van Dong confirmed these moves in an interview published by Newsweek magazine.

Dong also said a cease-fire should be followed by withdrawal of American forces and direct negotiations between the Saigon regime and the Viet Cong's Provisional Revolutionary Government.

The Hanoi leader said six months after the cease-fire general elections should be held.

## POWs

American prisoners would be released "when the general agreement has been reached" and before completion of U.S. withdrawal, Dong added.

But the Hanoi premier said nothing about his own forces in the south. They have been spread thin in recent weeks apparently in order to exert influence over maximum territory after a cease-fire.

Disclosure by Hanoi of details of its negotiation position indicates that Henry Kissinger's private talks with North Vietnam officials have reached a new impasse, observers here said.

The Dong interview is timed to push American public opinion toward new U.S. concessions before the Nov. 7 election.

## Tie-In

Of special interest is his statement about release of prisoners. Earlier Communist proposals have linked this release to their political demands for a coalition government.

The Newsweek interview leaves unclear whether this link remains. Removal of

the link would be an important change.

The change regarding President Thieu is not so important. He is a symbol of the present Saigon government. Hanoi now says it will include him in the interim coalition.

But the coalition remains unacceptable to Thieu and the U.S. Communist negotiators have refused to be specific about membership of the third, neutral part of the coalition.

## Red Dominance

Washington and Saigon reject the idea, so far, because it looks like a setup that would either be under Communist control or would be so weak it couldn't prevent a Communist takeover in the countryside.

When asked about Thieu, Dong replied, "Thieu has been overtaken by events." He didn't specify that Thieu would be allowed to remain in power, a concession bitterly opposed by Hanoi's PRG allies.

The Hanoi push for agreement prior to Nov. 7 responds to American warnings that after the elections they would be punished militarily if the war continues.

## N. Viet Landing

President Nixon has said he will continue bombing North Vietnam and blockading its coast as long as U.S. war prisoners remain in Hanoi custody.

A further post-election escalation, which would be likely to bring home Hanoi forces from the south, could be a South Vietnamese landing in North Vietnam, like the Inchon landing in the Korean War.

A short-term incentive for Hanoi to seek quick settlement is the vulnerable deployment of Communist forces in anticipation of a cease-fire.

Saigon forces have exploited this spread-out deployment to strike hard against Viet Cong and North Vietnamese strongholds over the last two weeks.