

~~Text~~ of North Vietnamese statement, as given by Jan Austen and Andy Troscear of the Asia Information Group.

an Austen: Hanoi's Vietnam News Agency today broadcast a lengthy statement on the course of the recent private negotiations between Le Duc Tho and Henry Kissinger in Paris, and on the nine points already agreed to by the two sides.

The statement begins by saying that on October 8th the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, in full concurrence with the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, presented a draft plan to the United States in Paris. This plan, Vietnam News Agency said, provided, quote, "That the Vietnam problem will be settled in two stages, in accordance with the often expressed desire of the American side. The first stage will include a cessation of the war in Vietnam, a cease-fire in South Vietnam, a cessation of the U.S. military involvement in South Vietnam, and an agreement on the principles to be exercised of the South Vietnam people's right to self-determination. In the second stage the two South Vietnamese parties will settle together the internal matters of South Vietnam."

According to Vietnam News Agency, this draft plan presented in Paris by North Vietnam on October 8th, also specified that between the enforcement of a cease-fire and the installation of ~~xxxx~~ the new government after elections, the two administrations in South Vietnam, meaning the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the Saigon Government, will remain in existence, with their respective ~~external~~ ^{domestic} and ~~domestic~~ ^{external} functions. These two administrations will hold consultations to set up a joint administrative structure that can guarantee democratic liberties and hold general elections in South Vietnam.

The United States, the Vietnam News Agency broadcast said, agreed that this draft opened the way to an early settlement of the war and that the two sides came to agreement on almost all problems. Despite problems raised by the United States, by October 22nd ~~the Democratic~~ the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States had reached agreement on nine points. Vietnam News Agency outlined these ^{of agreement} points, as follows.

First ~~ly~~, The U.S. must respect the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Vietnam, as recognized by the 1954 Geneva agreements.

Second
oint Regarding the question of a cease-fire, withdrawal of U.S. forces and the release of prisoners, the following points were agreed upon: Twenty-four hours after the signing of an agreement, a cease-fire shall be observed throughout South Vietnam. The United States will stop all its military activities, and end the bombing and mining of North Vietnam. Within 60 days there will be a total withdrawal from South Vietnam of troops and military personnel of the United States and ^{of} those of foreign countries allied with the United States and the Republic of South Vietnam. The agreement rules out the introduction of new troops, military advisers, military armaments, munitions and war materiel into South Vietnam. The United States will discontinue its military involvement and stop intervention in the internal affairs of South Vietnam.

The third point states that the return of all captured and detained personnel of the parties shall be carried out simultaneously with the U.S. troop withdrawal.

The North Vietnamese statement makes it clear that these steps can be taken so long as there is ^{an} agreement about the principles for allowing self-determination in South Vietnam, even before these principles are actually carried out in practice.

The fourth point agreed to by the two sides spells out these principles. The South Vietnamese people, it says, shall decide themselves the political future of South Vietnam through genuinely free and democratic elections, held under international supervision. The United States is not committed to any political tendency or any personalities in South Vietnam, and does not seek to impose a pro-American regime in Saigon. An administrative structure called the National Council for/Reconciliation will be set up, to promote the implementation of the agreement and to organize general elections. The question of the Vietnamese armed forces in South Vietnam shall be decided by the two South Vietnamese parties without foreign interference. The two parties shall sign an agreement on the internal matters in South Vietnam as soon as possible, and will do their utmost to accomplish this within three months after the cease-fire comes into effect.

The fifth point states that the reunification of Vietnam shall be carried out step by step through peaceful means.

Sixth, it says, there shall be formed a four-party joint military commission, and a joint military commission of the two South Vietnamese parties, as well as an international commission of control and supervision.

Point seven pertains to the future of Cambodia and Laos. The four parties respect the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Indochina and the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos, the statement said. All sides agree to refrain from using the territory of Laos and Cambodia to encroach on the ~~sovereignty~~ sovereignty and security of other countries, and put an end to all military activities in Laos and Cambodia. The internal affairs of Cambodia and Laos will be settled by the people of each of these countries without foreign interference, and the problems between the ~~two~~ ^{three} Indochinese countries will be settled by the Indochinese parties, on the basis of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and mutual non-interference.

The eighth point states that the ending of the war and restoration of peace in Vietnam will create conditions for establishing a new, equal and mutually beneficial relationship between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States. The United States will contribute to healing the wounds of war and to post-war reconstruction in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and throughout Indochina.

Finally, the last point states that this agreement shall come into force as of its signing. It will be strictly implemented by all the parties concerned.

Andy Troscear: The North Vietnamese statement also revealed that since October 9th the U.S. has on three occasions postponed the mutually agreed ~~upon~~ time-table through the implementation of the peace agreements.

According to the statement, at the initiative of the United States, agreement on an initial time-table was reached on October 9th. This time-table ^{called} ~~called~~ for the United States to stop the mining and bombing of North Vietnam on October 18th. The next day, October 19th, the text of the peace agreement was to have been initialed by the two parties in Hanoi, and on October 26th the agreement was to have been formally signed in Paris by the foreign ministers of the two countries.

However, on October 10th, the Vietnamese News Agency statement said, the U.S. side proposed a change in this schedule, to which the North Vietnamese agreed. The stopping of ^{and bombing} mining of North Vietnam was moved back to October 21st, the initialing of the agreement in Hanoi to October 22nd, and the formal signing in Paris was moved back to October 30th.

But on October 20th, just one day before the mining and bombing of North Vietnam was to have been stopped, the U.S. proposed yet another delay in the time-table. Claiming that there were still a number of unagreed points, the U.S. proposed the following revision: On October 23rd the bombing and mining of North Vietnam would stop, on October 24th the two parties would initial the text of the agreement in Hanoi, and on October 31st the peace agreement would be formally signed in Paris. Once again the North Vietnamese side agreed to this revision of the time-table. In agreeing to this second delay in the schedule, they stressed that the U.S. should ~~under~~ not under any pretext change this agreed-upon schedule.

But on October 23rd, the statement said, the U.S. side once again hedged on an agreed-on schedule. Instead of halting the mining and bombing of North Vietnam as the agreed-on time-table called for, the U.S. referred to difficulties in Saigon and demanded ^{that} ~~the~~ negotiations be continued for resolving new problems. The U.S. statement did not say anything about implementing its commitments according to the agreed-on time schedule.

These U.S. actions, the statement said, have brought about a very serious situation which jeopardizes the signing of an agreement to end the war and restore peace in Vietnam. Since it is public knowledge that the Saigon administration has been rigged up and fostered by the United States, the so-called difficulties in Saigon represent a mere pretext to delay the implementation of the U.S. commitments, the statement said.

In explaining why the government of North Vietnam has disclosed the content and schedules of the peace settlement being negotiated, the statement went on to say, "The government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam deems it its duty to bring the present situation with respect to the private meeting between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States to the notice of our countrymen and fighters throughout the country

and the people of the world and the United States, so that the truth may be known. This information is in the interests of peace and will in no way affect the negotiations, the two parties having agreed upon ~~the~~^a text of the agreement and the schedule for its signing."

In a concluding paragraph the statement said, "The Nixon Administration must bear before the people of the United States and the world responsibility for delaying the signing the agreement and thus prolonging the war in Vietnam."

This is Andy Troscear and Jan Austen, of the Asia Information Group.

(Chronology by Time Magazine 1 Jan 73, filed POWs.)