

Hanoi Hints It's Willing

To Talk SFChronicle

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Ambassador Xuan Thuy, the leader of North Vietnam's delegation to the peace talks here, has signaled willingness for another session of negotiations for a cease-fire, provided the United States is "serious."

In an interview Saturday, Thuy said:

"At present, we are demanding that the Americans

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honor the agreement and sign."

"But," he continued, "we do not have a rigid attitude about another meeting. The question is seriousness."

He also said that if, after another "final" round of talks requested by Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon's national security adviser, "the U.S. agrees and then proposes more changes, it would be very difficult to settle things."

TEXT

Thuy read passages from an English-language text that he said was the message sent by President Nixon to Premier Pham Van Dong on October 20. One excerpt said, "The U.S. side appreciates the good will and serious attitude of the DRVN (North Vietnam). The text of the agreement can now be considered complete."

The second passage set the date of October 31 for signing the agreement in Paris. Thuy also gave the text of a passage from the reply of Pham Van Dong, sent on October 22, acknowledging the U.S. message and accepting formal signature "exactly on Oct. 31, 1972."

"We don't believe in difficulties (raised) by Saigon," Thuy said, evidently referring to Mr. Nixon's statement that the agreement required "clarification" and to reports that some points in

the document drawn up by Kissinger and Hanoi's chief negotiator, Le Duc Tho, required clearance with President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam.

STATEMENT

In the beginning section of the unsigned agreement, Thuy said, there is an explicit statement that "the U.S. side acts with the concurrence of the Saigon administration."

In the private meetings, according to Thuy, the U.S. "always said it was negotiating on behalf of Saigon, too." Washington's willingness to accept the agreement, Thuy said, meant to the North Vietnamese that "it was fully authorized to do so," and that the U.S. acceptance of the timetable for signature to be followed by a cease-fire 24 hours later meant "that the U.S. got the agreement of Saigon."

The North Vietnamese delegate avoided saying precisely what Hanoi would take as a sign that the U.S. is now "serious" about an agreement. But he made a number of points that appeared to respond to the issues that Washington has raised publicly or provided as background to the news media.

WITHDRAWAL

On the issue of North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam, Thuy said that "the U.S. has agreed to drop the question." Pressed on whether that was an explicit agreement or whether Kissinger simply stopped talking about these forces, Thuy avoided a direct answer.

But he made it clear that an essential factor in making agreement possible was American abandonment of any demands for North Vietnamese withdrawal. Subtly and allusively, however, he hinted that this could take place as a result of negotiations on "reductions of forces" between Saigon and the Viet Cong.

Thuy called attention to the section of the agreement providing for these negotiations "in a spirit of national concord, compatible with the post-war situation."

"The agreement says that the international commission will be established immediately after signature,

so the Americans have to sign first. And then it will take office immediately."

The outline of the agreements, as published by Hanoi, had appeared to indicate that a control commission could not begin functioning until it had been set up by an international conference, to be convoked 30 days after the cease-fire.

Thuy's remarks indicated that the full agreement provided for the commission to start installing itself in South Vietnam as soon as there was a formal signature.

DMZ

On the demilitarized zone, a question raised urgently by Saigon but so far not raised publicly by Washington: Thuy confirmed Saigon's statements that the agreement did not mention the zone.

He said, however, that there was provision for the zone in a passage in which the parties "agreed to abide by the fundamental principles of the 1954 Geneva Accords."

He pointed out that the 1954 accords set up the zone as a "military demarcation line" for the purpose of regrouping forces after the French IndoChina War. They state explicitly that the line "is not to become a political boundary."

Saigon representatives here have pointed out that this provision opens the question of South Vietnam's right to sovereignty and to the conversion of its border with North Vietnam into an international frontier.

Thuy made no further comment, but it seemed likely that this was a major drafting "ambiguity" to which Mr. Nixon was referring. Hanoi has long accepted that the reunification provided for in the Geneva pacts was for the relatively distant future, and that independent regimes will continue in North and South Vietnam for a number of years.

He listed the major changes in the U.S. position reflected in the agreement. "If the U.S. had accepted those points in 1969," he said, "we would have accepted conditions like the present ones."

"Peace could have come in 1969," Thuy said, contradicting Kissinger's recent statement that until October 8 of this year, Hanoi had been unwilling to accept a cease-fire and leave details of a political settlement for later negotiations among Vietnamese.

CHANGES

The changes, he said, were these: "In 1969, Nixon insisted on withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops and refused to withdraw all U.S. troops, advisers, and military personnel. He refused to recognize the National Liberation Front and demanded that it submit to the Saigon administration. That (the Thieu government) is a creation of the U.S., but Nixon said it was the only legitimate regime in South Vietnam. That constituted an obstacle to settlement."

Now, in the unsigned agreement, Thuy said the U.S. had accepted:

- To withdraw all American troops, advisers and military personnel.

- "To recognize the realities of two administrations and two armies" in South Vietnam.

To recognize "the existence of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (in South Vietnam) as well as of the Republic of Vietnam."

uPRINCIPLE

He made clear that, for Hanoi, the question of what is called "the allegations about North Vietnamese forces" in the South is a matter of basic principle. "The U.S. is the only aggressor in South Vietnam," he said, "and in bombing the North."

"We have always rejected these allegations and the principle of aggression against South Vietnam by North Vietnamese troops."