

U.S.- Hanoi Deadlock; Peace Talks Recess

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Kissinger Flies Back To Report

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PARIS — A serious deadlock over stiffened American and North Vietnamese terms for a Vietnam peace settlement led yesterday to a nine-day interruption of the Paris talks between U.S. negotiator Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho, Hanoi's chief negotiator.

Both the White House and the North Vietnamese delegation in Paris announced that the talks were being suspended until Monday, Dec. 4.

Kissinger flew to New York last night to report to President Nixon, who is spending the weekend there.

But Tho is remaining in Paris, a spokesman for his delegation said, adding that it was Kissinger who sought the recess.

The resumed Paris negotiations virtually collapsed at the end of one week of daily sessions because the U.S. supported South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu's demands for greater concessions from North Vietnam, especially concerning the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops from South Vietnam after a cease-fire becomes effective.

Tho retaliated by demanding major revisions in the draft agreement concluded with Kissinger last month.

He also revived demands for the immediate resignation of President Thieu and otherwise raised the ante for Hanoi's agreement for an end to the war.

Hanoi's willingness to resume the talks on Dec. 4 led American officials in Paris to believe that North Vietnam still wants an agree-

ment but not at the price Thieu is demanding.

There now seems little like-

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lihood that a peace agreement will be signed before mid-December, if then.

South Vietnamese diplomats expressed the belief that a ceasefire was not likely to be proclaimed before January.

While there seems no doubt that the North Vietnamese were shocked by the strong support Kissinger gave at the start of the resumed talks to some of President Thieu's demands, especially the withdrawal of all North Vietnamese forces from South Vietnam, it would be a classical diplomatic tactic for them to adopt a tough attitude at the beginning of a new phase of bargaining.

Hanoi made some very important concessions in the political aspects of the draft agreement. It dropped its previous insistence on the removal of Thieu and the formation of a coalition government with Viet Cong participation before new elections were held in South Vietnam.

It apparently did so in the belief that President Nixon was so eager to have a peace settlement before the election that he would impose the draft agreement on Thieu under threat of cutting off all American military and economic aid to South Vietnam.

When it became apparent that Nixon, to the contrary, was trying to get some satisfaction for Saigon's demands, Hanoi immediately stiffened its own position.

It not only rejected Thieu's demand that it commit itself to the total withdrawal of all North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam before new elections are held in the South, but it called for a revision of some of the basic terms in the draft agreement.

Tho also demanded the release of political prisoners in South Vietnam, which Hanoi estimates at 200,000 but Sai-

gon sources claim is no more than 40,000.

At the time the draft agreement was negotiated, Hanoi did not insist on the release of political prisoners immediately.

Although official secrecy was maintained on the details of the talks between Kissinger and Tho, and no spokesman for either side even admitted publicly that a crisis existed, North Vietnamese sources Friday began to leak their version of what happened. (24 Nov)

They sought to blame Thieu for refusing to accept the draft agreement and on the United States, for supporting him.

According to these North Vietnamese sources, Tho called for major changes in the draft agreement only after Kissinger had presented Thieu's demands and strongly defended them.

Thieu's demands, these sources added, also sought the elimination of the neutralist third segment from the proposed National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord that is supposed to promote implementation of the peace agreement and organize new elections.

Troop Withdrawal

Thieu also demanded that Hanoi reaffirm its recognition of the demilitarized zone between North and South Vietnam and agree to stricter international control of it.

Kissinger's continued support of these demands as the week wore on so angered Tho, the North Vietnamese sources said, that at Thursday's meeting he shouted and pounded the table in asserting that he would never accept them.

Kissinger also was said to have proposed that the with-

drawal of North Vietnamese troops from the South coincide with the withdrawal of American troops.

The draft agreement made no mention of the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops. It did provide for a mutual and gradual reduction of the South Vietnamese and Vietnamese Communist forces after the cease-fire went into effect. The number to be reduced, or "demobilized," and the timing was to be arranged after the cease-fire by a mixed South Vietnamese and Viet Cong commission.

Hanoi's negotiators now apparently fear that the U.S. is backing away from its previous promise to withdraw all American forces from Vietnam within 60 days after a ceasefire.

American sources deny that, but point out that Nixon's offer to withdraw American forces within 60 days depended on the proclamation of a ceasefire and the release of American war prisoners.