

**BOMBING HALTED WHEN
HANOI DECIDED TO TALK**

Kissinger, Tho

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To Meet Jan. 8

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WASHINGTON — President Nixon halted the massive bombing of North Vietnam's heartland yesterday after North Vietnam agreed to resume "serious negotiations" with Henry Kissinger on Jan. 8.

The White House announcement came against a backdrop of rising protests at home and abroad against the war's heaviest raids in the Hanoi-Haiphong complex.

And it apparently followed a clear signal from Hanoi's leaders that they are ready to bargain earnestly with Kissinger, Nixon's assistant for national security affairs.

A 12-day blitz inflicted heavy damage in the Hanoi-Haiphong area and caused the loss of at least 27 American planes and left 93 U.S. airmen dead, captured or missing.

"The President has ordered that all bombing will be discontinued above the 20th Parallel as long as serious negotiations are under way," deputy press secretary Gerald Warren told reporters at a hastily called White House briefing. Nixon himself was secluded at Camp David, Md.

Minutes later, a Pentagon spokesman said the bombing stopped "last night Washington time" and said the halt applied both to aerial attacks and naval bombardments.

Warren announced that Kissinger's negotiations with North Vietnam's Le Duc Tho and Xuan Thuy would resume in Paris on Monday, Jan. 8, and that technical talks between experts from both sides would resume next Tuesday.

Warren said that Nixon's order to halt the raids went out "as soon as it was clear that serious negotiations could be resumed at both the technical level and between the principals."

Initial reaction from congressional leaders to the bombing halt was favorable. House Speaker Carl Albert (D-Okla.) said he was "very happy." Senate Republican Leader Hugh Scott said he hoped the talks would now "lead to a lasting peace."

But an end-the-war march to the White House led by Dean Francis B. Sayre of the Washington National Cathedral and the Rt. Rev. John Walker, suffragan bishop of the Episcopal Dio-

cese of Washington, went off as scheduled.

The National Peace Action Coalition announced it would go ahead with plans for massive demonstrations here on Inauguration Day, calling yesterday's announcement a "shabby pretense of seeking peace."

In Paris, the North Vietnamese delegation to the peace talks confirmed that

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negotiations would resume and said the bombing halt had already gone into effect. The Viet Cong issued a statement indicating approval of the resumption of bilateral talks.

Negotiations broke off on Dec. 13, with each side accusing the other of raising new issues to thwart the signing of a peace agreement drafted in October, when the presidential assistant said "peace is at hand."

On Dec. 18, Nixon ordered full-scale bombing resumed above the 20th Parallel. Since then, except for a brief Christmas pause, American B-52 bombers and other warplanes have steadily pounded targets in the Haiphong-Hanoi area with the most massive bombardment of the war.

After the White House news conference, Warren would not say how or when Hanoi signaled its willingness to resume talks.

Kissinger in Contact

But it was understood that Kissinger had been in direct contact with the Communists and had received a clear signal of their readiness to bargain earnestly. There was no sign, however, that Hanoi had agreed to make major concessions to reach a settlement.

Apparently because of this, indications were that Nixon viewed resumption of negotiations with wariness and wants to be shown that Hanoi, indeed, is willing to negotiate seriously.

Officials have said repeatedly that the President is determined to continue military pressure on North Vietnam until a settlement is reached.

Press secretary Ronald Ziegler, in announcing on Dec. 18 that air raids had resumed after a two-month suspension, said the bombing policy "will continue until such time as a settlement is arrived at." ✕

U.S. officials said the air raids were aimed at military targets and were intended to knock out North Vietnam's ability to wage war. Hanoi claimed the bombing was indiscriminate

and caused heavy civilian casualties.

Barrage of Criticism

The intensive raids brought a barrage of criticism. Chinese Premier Chou En-lai said U.S.-Chinese relations could not improve so long as the raids were taking place, and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev reportedly decided to delay his planned spring visit to the United States because of the air attacks.

There were indications that the decision announced yesterday had been reached late in the week. Kissinger has been vacationing in California since Christmas, but had been in daily telephone contact with Nixon at Camp David.

Kissinger will return to Washington for a series of intensive meetings with Nixon and other administration officials before heading for Paris.

In his last news conference Dec. 16, the presidential assistant said the talks broke down when North Vietnam began making "frivolous" demands and raising new issues as soon as others had been settled.

Saigon Blamed

The North Vietnamese, in turn, accused the United States of stalemating the talks by attempting, on behalf of Saigon, to change the peace agreement drafted in October.

Kissinger has said that 99 percent of an accord had been indications that the one broke off. But there have been indications that the one percent is a major stumbling block involving language confirming the Saigon government's sovereignty over all of South Vietnam.

This issue—the major reason behind the 25-year Vietnam war—was couched in terms dealing with whether Vietnam was a single nation

or permanently divided into two sovereign countries.

Both sides apparently attempted to solidify their position in the last round of talks, with Kissinger acting on behalf of South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu to get language recognizing Saigon's sovereignty over all of South Vietnam.

'One Entity'

On the other hand, Hanoi evidently sought wording giving the impression that Vietnam is one entity, leaving North Vietnam with the right to interfere in Southern political matters.

There is no sign from either side of any change in these basic positions and the prospect of continued objections of Thieu seems undiminished. All of this seems to leave the prospect for a settlement soon very uncertain.

This cloudiness is recognized by the United States with all indications pointing to Kissinger returning to Paris to reflect a presidential attitude described as wary and not holding starry-eyed optimism about an agreement.

'Won't Be Fooled'

Nixon, then, appears to have told Hanoi he accepts its return to the talks as indicating a serious purpose to negotiate, but that he will not be fooled by this action alone.

*If a settlement is not reached, he has left open the option of continuing military pressure.

This was underlined by U.S. officials' statements that the policy that led to the bombing and mining of North Vietnam still exists. They reiterated the White House announcement Dec. 18 that the policy which led to the latest air raids "will continue until such time as a settlement is arrived at."