

NORTH, SOUTH SHARE  
HOPE PACT IS NEAR

**Hanoi Suspicious**

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HANOI, Jan. 19 (Delayed) — The Vietnamese capital remains officially very vigilant on the eve of President Nixon's second inauguration, but its diplomatic sights are set on a cease-fire accord near the end of January.

It is hoped that a halt to hostilities will come in time to be celebrated at Tet, the lunar new year, on Feb. 3, an expectation reportedly shared in Saigon. But the similarity of outlooks in the two warring capitals just about begins and ends with that shared hope.

On this side of the shattered Demilitarized Zone, officials refuse to indulge themselves in anything that could be labeled buoyant optimism about the prospect ahead. On the contrary, they have steeled themselves and their disciplined people to a psychology of suspicion before and especially after a cease-fire is signed.

First, they are wary about what new obstacles might suddenly be injected into the talks that are to resume in Paris Tuesday between

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presidential envoy Henry A. Kissinger and North Vietnamese Politburo member Le Duc Tho for the mutually declared purpose of completing the elusive cease-fire accord.

**Suspicious of Thieu**

North Vietnam, as always, is deeply suspicious that South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu will try to raise barriers to any accord based on sharing political power in the South with Communist elements, as the pending agreement would do. Therefore, Hanoi's officials warily eye the statement of South Vietnamese Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam, reported today from Saigon, to the effect that a cease-fire is "very close" but "clarification" is needed on some issues.

**American Intentions**

Secondly, they will watch closely to see precisely what President Nixon says in his inaugural address about immediate and future American intentions in Vietnam.

Then, even if all does go well in Paris next week and in

the consultations afterward to complete the accord, North Vietnamese officials say their guard will be up for the challenge of the struggle for political control of the South after a cease-fire.

At the moment, they don't want to talk about that struggle or the prospect that either side will punch holes in the cease-fire. But in an interview, Hoang Tung, an alternate member of North Vietnam's Central Committee and the editor of the Communist Party newspaper Nhan Dan, said wryly, "We have experienced many agreements which have been signed." He cited the 1945 agreement with France, which became the prelude for the French Indochina War, and the 1954, Geneva Accords, which became the prelude for direct American military involvement in Vietnam.

**"All Up to The U.S."**

The test is not what is signed, said Tung, but "the correct implementation of an agreement." Indicating virtual certainty that Hanoi and Saigon will disagree over that interpretation, Tung said: "It is all up to the United States."

The most meaningful news out of Hanoi at this delicate point in the search for an accord is its relative official silence. Intensive propagandizing is one of this nation's admittedly most important weapons in attempting to balance off the disproportionately huge power of the United States in the Vietnam war.

If the pattern were being

followed now, North Vietnam would be goading President Nixon—especially on the eve of his second inaugural—as it often has done in the past, on his failure to fulfill his pledge to end the war during his first four years in office. Instead, officialdom here is relatively mute on any polemics that might inflame or jeopardize the talks due next week.

Privately, North Vietnamese officials are reported to believe that there is nothing they can see that could prevent conclusion of an agreement in time for the Tet holiday. But their wariness remains because of possible new obstacles.

Publicly, no hopes at all have been built up—in contrast to the expectations that surged here in October and then collapsed with even greater exposure to American bombing than ever before.

Continued American reconnaissance flights over North

Vietnam still brings some shooting and officials said there are standing orders to fire at all reconnaissance aircraft. One was shot down Tuesday, they said, and another Wednesday, although the United States reportedly is now using more drone reconnaissance aircraft and high-flying planes to limit action reaction encounters in the air.

This capital is as normal as it ever appears in wartime. The government radio has notified the population of Hanoi that loud detonations occasionally heard across the capital are reconstruction work on the bombed Longbien Bridge across the Red River.

The greatest physical hazard in Hanoi is the risk of stepping into one of the omnipresent one-man, concrete, culvert-style bomb shelters in the sidewalk, likely to be partially filled with stagnant water, or threading a path across a street through a steam of bicyclists.

There is by no means, however, any feeling in this city that the war has abated because the American bombing of North Vietnam has stopped. North Vietnamese are acutely conscious that the American bombers have shifted their attacks to South Vietnam, where North Vietnamese in great numbers are fighting as "volunteers" as the official line describes them.