

PACT INITIALED IN PARIS

Kissinger, Tho Initial Pact in Paris

Washington Post Service

Paris

The initialing of a Vietnam cease-fire agreement yesterday ended three months of hard bargaining to work out problems in the original draft accord, which Hanoi charged the United States had agreed to sign in late October.

The final details were worked out in a 13-hour meeting Monday of American and North Vietnamese technical experts.

White House adviser Henry A. Kissinger and chief Hanoi negotiator Le Duc Tho put their initials to the agreement yesterday morning during a three hour and 45 minute meeting at the Hotel Majestic, where the formal weekly peace conference met fruitlessly for four years while the real negotiating went on in secret sessions.

Kissinger and Tho emerged from the meeting smiling broadly and waving

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to cameramen. For the first time since the last December bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong, the two principal negotiators not only shook hands warmly, but went around shaking hands with each other's deputies.

"Now it's really over," a North Vietnamese said.

As happened January 13 when Kissinger and Tho made the final breakthrough on major points, a team of photographers was called into the meeting room yesterday to record the event.

North Vietnamese sources let it be known that Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh will fly from Hanoi to Paris soon to attend the formal signing ceremony, planned for Saturday.

Nguyen Thi Binh, foreign minister of the Viet Cong's Provisional Revolutionary Government, returned to Paris Sunday night, and South Vietnamese Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam arrived Monday morning.

Only Secretary of State William P. Rogers is neither here nor on the way, but the flight from Washington is only seven hours and Rogers is expected to arrive Friday morning.

The fact that the agreement would be initialed yes-

terday was telegraphed Monday when the North Vietnamese announced that yesterday morning's meeting would take place at the Hotel Majestic. In the past, the secret sessions have been held in various suburban villas in an effort by both sides to escape the pursuit of the media.

The importance of the Hotel Majestic is that it was the first forum in which the U.S. and South Vietnam were obliged to talk with the Viet Cong as equals.

It is being suggested here that the formal signing by the four foreign ministers at the Hotel Majestic may follow the formula that was finally arrived at to bring the Viet Cong into Paris talks.

The order of signatures would involve accepting the allied view that there are "two sides" rather than "four delegations." Thus the U.S. and Saigon could sign the document first, followed by North Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

BREAK

The final breakthrough on major points became apparent January 13 when, for the first time since October, the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong delegations said that "progress" had been made in the talks.

From North Vietnam's angry charges October 26 that the U.S. had reneged on an agreement until January 13, there was apparently little movement toward a cease-fire.

Kissinger's claim that "peace is at hand," made on October 26 just before the U.S. presidential election, seemed to haunt the U.S. negotiator as weeks passed and he failed to extract the desired modifications in the original draft agreement.

REVISIONS

Sources close to the Communist delegations charged that on November 20, when the secret talks resumed at American insistence, Kissinger has presented a Saigon-inspired compendium of major revisions in the draft agreement.

On November 25, the talks broke up after Tho rejected the new demands, increased his own demands and, most unusually, raised his voice and pounded on the table.

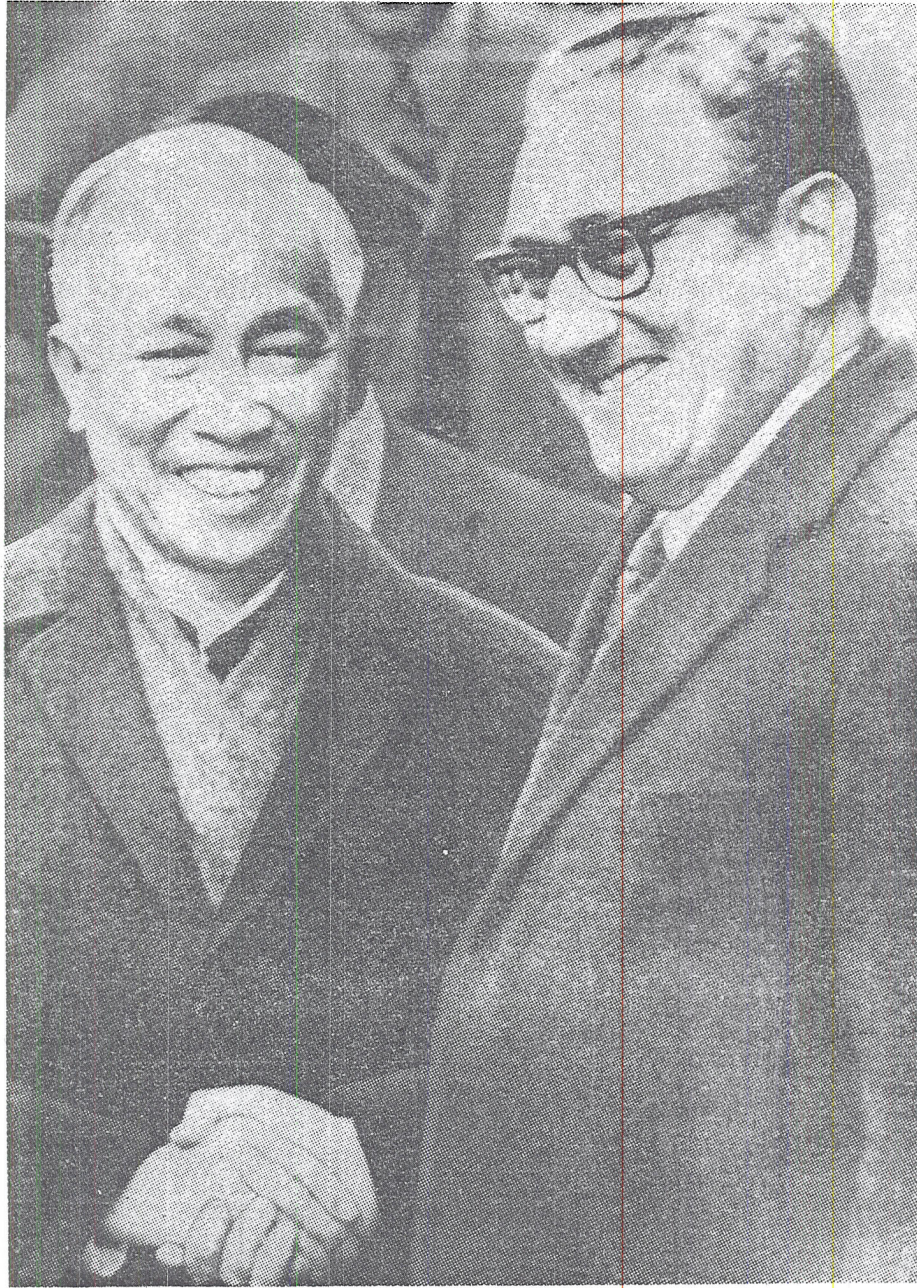
After a nine-day interval, the negotiating began again for nine days from December 4 to December 13.

Five days after those talks collapsed, President Nixon ordered the start of 12 days of massive bombing of North Vietnam's heartland, but refused to explain his reasons.

On December 30, the White House announced that bombing north of the 20th parallel had been stopped and that Kissinger and Tho would meet again January 8. Technical experts began their marathon meetings January 2.

★★★ Wed., Jan. 24, 1973

E-FIRE ON SATURDAY



AP Wirephoto

North Vietnamese negotiator Le Duc Tho and presidential adviser Henry Kissinger smiled and shook hands after formally initialing the peace accord in Paris