

JAN 28 1973
**American
Presence
To End**

**U.S., Three
Viet Groups
Sign in Paris**

By Jonathan C. Randal
Washington Post Foreign Service

PARIS, Jan. 27—The United States, South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the Vietcong's Provisional Revolutionary Government signed today the documents officially proclaiming a cease-fire and ending the American military involvement in Vietnam.

The Saigon government, in a final negative gesture toward the Vietcong, refused to submit for signature two English-language copies of the agreement and its associated protocols. The Saigon delegation was apparently expressing its annoyance over a pro-Communist demonstration tolerated by the French authorities near the site of the signing ceremonies.

The Saigon gesture has no effect on the validity of the agreement, which is formally titled "The Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring the Peace in Vietnam."

Only an hour after the last of a total of 188 signatures was affixed to the documents, U.S., South Vietnamese, Vietcong and North Vietnamese military officers met to exchange lists of prisoners of war and foreign civilians in their custody.

This was the first activity of the four-power military commission, which has the task of obtaining the phased release of all POWs within 60 days, as the American forces are withdrawn from South Vietnam.

At 2:13 p.m. Washington time, a U.S. officer began dictating to the Pentagon

PARIS, From A1

from Paris the list of American prisoners. The Pentagon immediately began notifying next of kin, even before the officer had completed his dictation. The Defense Department tentatively planned to make the list public on Sunday, when it hopes to complete the notification.

In keeping with the allied contention that the Paris conference consisted of "two sides" rather than "four parties"—a stratagem designed to get around the mutual non-recognition of both South Vietnamese adversaries—South Vietnamese Foreign Minister Than Van Lam and U.S. Secretary of State William P. Rodgers entered the ballroom almost shoulder to shoulder.

Aides Rise

As if by remote control, the other members of the two allied delegations—some 50 persons in all—rose, while their Hanoi and Vietcong counterparts remained glued to their modern brown leather chairs.

Seconds later first PRG Foreign Minister Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh arrived, followed after a short interval by North Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Duý Trinh. The spacing out of their entrance was designed to lend support to the legitimacy of the PRG. As they entered, the members of their delegations rose, while the allied delegations remained seated.

Then, for the next 15 minutes, the only sound in the room was the whirring of newsmen's cameras. The only movement was the generally frozen-faced ministers signing copies which were carried from delegation to delegation by French government ushers resplendent in white ties, tails, white gloves and silver chains.

With a solemn dignity which contrasted with the ill-concealed edginess of all the ministers except Rogers, the ushers moved counterclockwise around the green-baize table with the documents. Those of the United States were bound in blue leather, those of the Vietcong in green; brown was Saigon's color, and red that of North Vietnam.

The four ministers carefully removed the blotting paper stuck into the documents to indicate the place for signature and signed and signed again like so



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Vietcong Foreign Minister Mrs. Binh signs truce pact.

many ordinary citizens making out a bundles of travelers' checks.

Rogers signed his name 62 times before the day was over, using a new nibbed pen each time.

Both Trinh and Mrs. Binh also changed pens frequently, apparently following the American tradition of handing out ceremonial pens as mementoes. Only Saigon's Lam signed his name throughout with his own pen.

In four chairs set on either side of Rogers were Marshall Green, assistant secretary of state for East-Asian Affairs; his assistant, William T. Sullivan, who has headed the experts' negotiations here; William J. Porter, the ambassador to the formal peace talks who has been named under secretary for political affairs; and Heyward Isham, the acting U.S. delegation chief.

Seated around Trinh were Deputy Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach, Sullivan's counterpart at the experts' talks; Vo Van Sung, Hanoi's top-ranking diplomat in France; Foreign Ministry press chief Ngo Dien

and Xuan Thuy, Hanoi's delegate to the formal talks.

Thuy was the only ranking participant present among the top American and North Vietnamese negotiators who hammered out the agreements in the secret talks.

Principals Gone

Presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger left Paris Tuesday after initialing the agreement in the same room. His counterpart, Hanoi's Le Duc Tho, returned to Hanoi yesterday.

Perhaps symbolic of the 175 "two-sided" sessions of the formal peace conference was the presence of press spokesman Ly Van Sau alongside Mrs. Binh. The Communists always considered the formal talks as a propaganda battleground.

At two rectangular tables, separating the "two sides" today as they had during four years of stalemated negotiations, were seated the Polish, Hungarian, Canadian and Indonesian ambassadors. They represented the four countries sending troops to serve on the international cease-fire supervisory commission.

After the morning signing was complete, the four ministers and their delegations rose from the table and walked to a small room, where the French government had provided champagne. Only Trinh waved, a weak wave at best.

Witnesses saw Rogers touch glasses with Thuy, Lam and Mrs. Binh. Others said that, for the first time since the conflict began, Saigon's Lam and the Vietcong's Mrs. Binh did likewise and even engaged in "cordial" if "diplomatically correct" conversation.

By withholding the two English-language copies of the documents this afternoon, Saigon's Lam was once again refusing to recognize the legitimacy of the PRG. The only practical effect of the gesture was to deprive both the Saigon and PRG delegations of a signed English-language copy of the documents.

Neither Rogers nor Hanoi's Trinh displayed any surprise at the maneuver when, in a second, 11-minute afternoon ceremony they signed four red-bound Vietnamese-language versions of the documents and two other blue-bound English versions, which had remained in U.S. custody throughout.

Aside from a purely bilateral protocol dealing with American responsibility for demining North Vietnamese ports, the documents themselves were the same as those signed by the four ministers in the 15-minute morning ceremony.

But, in the glacial morning ceremony, the signatory governments were simply listed as the "parties participating in the Paris conference on Vietnam."

Refusal to Recognize

By deliberately not naming the PRG or Saigon by their official titles, diplomats had sought to overcome the rival regimes' reciprocal refusal to recognize each other's legitimacy. A further compromise involved the United States and North Vietnam alone signing the same documents in the afternoon, but this time accepting the official titles of all four governments.

Right from the start of the ceremony there were tensions and suspicions which seemed to go with the overcast weather and occasional rain.

Upon arriving at and leaving the six-story Hotel Maj-



Associated Press

Pro-Communist demonstrators wave North Vietnamese and Vietcong flags near the cease-fire signing in Paris.

estic, the international conference center, where the formalities dragged on for more than four years, Rogers and Lam were jeered, booed and whistled at by several hundred French and Vietnamese Communists and Communist sympathizers. From behind metal police barriers, the demonstrators sang the "Internationale," waved a forest of red North Vietnamese and blue and red Vietcong flags and shouted slogans such as "Thieu—Puppet, Traitor and Assassin" and "Nixon Murderer." They greeted Tinh and Mrs. Binh with cheers, sustained applause and wild flag-waving.

The Saigon foreign minister was so annoyed that he called on French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann at midday to register his "deep surprise and disappointment" for tolerating the pro-Communist gathering, especially since his delegation had been assured that France had promised that "no gathering or demonstrations would be allowed" near the Majestic. South Vietnamese sources later reported that Schumann had apologized.

Despite the demonstration, the morning ceremony got under way only five minutes behind its 11 a.m. schedule in the ornate Bell Epoque ballroom decorated with Gobelin tapestries, gilt Corinthian columns, three crystal chandeliers and an enormous Savonnerie carpet.

Although lacking in any real warmth, the afternoon ceremony seemed more relaxed.

The demonstrators were forced to move almost a half mile away from the conference center — although Rogers took no chances of further humiliation and arrived for the signing by a back street.

With nods between Trinh and Rogers, the two men began the signing ceremony.

Even the French security officials were in a better mood, although between the morning and afternoon sessions they made sure to sew up a curtain through which reporters had glimpsed the

delegates drinking champagne.

Once again, there was a brief sipping of champagne, but without toasts or speeches.

Rogers was driven to Orly Airport and flew back to Washington. In a brief airport statement, he said he was "particularly pleased about how smoothly the signing went," indicating that he may well have expected even greater trouble.

Rogers called the agreement a "milestone" in achieving President Nixon's

generation of peace and said he had "every reason to expect that it will take hold and remain in effect." He also said that "we have every hope that the cease-fire will extend to all Indochina. Then, there will be no fighting in any part of the world."

"When I arrive in Washington," Rogers said, "the cease-fire will be in effect."

U.S. Proposes Feb. 26 For 12-Nation Meeting

The United States formally proposed yesterday that a 12-nation conference on guaranteeing peace in Indochina start on Feb. 26.

The proposal follows through on one of the provisions of the cease-fire pact. It stipulates that the United States and North Vietnam will propose the conference within 30 days of the signing.

China, the Soviet Union, Britain, France, the four parties to the Vietnam agreement and the four nations of the new Vietnam cease-fire supervisory commission are scheduled to attend. United Nations' Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim was also invited.

State Department spokesman Charles Bray said the site for the meeting has not yet been set.

Secretary of State William P. Rogers asked France to attend during a call in Paris on President Georges Pompidou, Bray said.

Canada, Indonesia, Poland and Hungary are the members of the four-nation commission to supervise the cease-fire.

Last GI Casualty: 'All-American Boy'

From News Dispatches

The Defense Department said yesterday that the last American serviceman to die in the Vietnam war probably would be Air Force Sgt. John O'Neal Rucker of Linden, Texas. He was killed early yesterday during a Vietcong shelling of the Danang air base.

Rucker, who would be the final combat casualty in the war that has taken almost 46,000 American lives, died of multiple fragmentation wounds, the Pentagon said.

He was the third American serviceman to die since the announcement Tuesday that there would be a cease-fire.

At Rucker's home in Linden, his sister said he had asked to be assigned to Southeast Asia and wanted to make the Air Force a career.

Margie Manning, 26, described her 21-year-old brother as "just an all-American boy."

"He was doing what he wanted to do," she said in a telephone interview. He was assigned to Thailand before going to South Vietnam last April, she said.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Rucker of Linden, informed of their son's death by the Defense Department, declined to speak immediately.

Sgt. Rucker was home for Christmas.

"When he came home he had a good time," said Mrs. Manning. "He wasn't too enthused about leaving—he'd rather have stayed home. But he would have come home in March on rotation."