

Gains Seen on Key Issues

Hanoi's Tactics Paying Off

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By Thomas W. Lippman

Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, March 3—North Vietnam's blunt tactics in delaying the release of some American prisoners and yanking its delegates from two regional inspection sites in the South to enforce its demands over implementation of the cease-fire have begun to bring results, informed sources said, today.

With the next batch of American prisoners of war set to be freed in Hanoi on Sunday and Monday, the North Vietnamese appear to have gained, at least on paper, some of the objectives they were seeing in exchange.

The first planeload of POWs is expected to leave Hanoi's Gialam airport Sunday about 3 a.m. EST and to arrive at Clark Air Base in the Philippines about 5:30 a.m. EST.

Agreement on "a number of points providing for freedom of movement" and security of Communist delegates to the four-party Joint Military Com-

mission is to be "finalized on Monday," according to an informed American source.

In addition, Maj. Gen. Gilbert H. Woodward, chief U.S. delegate to the commission, introduced today a new resolution calling on all parties to the Paris agreement to respect the terms of the cease-fire.

That resolution is also to be taken up at a meeting of the heads of the four delegations on Monday, reliable sources said. The commission approved a similar resolution two weeks ago, with no major impact on the situation in South Vietnam. But the latest American move is apparently

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an attempt to satisfy one of North Vietnam's key demands in negotiations over the past week—that the United States assume some responsibility for implementing all the terms of the Paris cease-fire agreement, rather than devoting all its energies to the release of American prisoners.

"Things are going well by comparison with previous weeks," a spokesman for the North Vietnamese said today. "Things are starting to move. We mustn't lose patience."

Few Accomplishments

As he and other sources pointed out, however, the four-party military commission is scheduled to go out of existence in a little more than three weeks and very little has actually been accomplished, except for the question of American prisoners.

After a cliff-hanging week in which even that was in doubt, three planeloads of 106 Americans held captive in North Vietnam are to be flown out of Hanoi to Clark Air Base in the Philippines on Sunday.

Another 34 prisoners who have been held by the Vietcong in the South—27 American military personnel and seven civilians, of whom three are American—are to be released in Hanoi on Monday.

By delaying their release for several days, North Vietnam has won at least the appearance of actions on its demands that Communist delegates to regional and local inspection teams around South Vietnam be accorded the diplomatic status and security from attack and harassment to which they are entitled under the Paris agreement.

The North Vietnamese spokesman said his delegation had raised 18 specific demands on this matter, and that six had been cleared by a subcommission for action by the four delegation chiefs on Monday. These are apparently the same points on which the U.S. side reported agreement, but their contents were not made public.

Delegation in Saigon

Meantime, weeks after the four-party peacekeeping teams were to have gone into action around the country, the North

Vietnamese delegations from Da Nang and Hue remained in Saigon. They had been withdrawn from those cities Friday because of rock-throwing demonstrations.

"We trust that movement back to Saigon will be only temporary," said a spokesman for the Americans, who until now have done little if anything to force the South Vietnamese to accord the Communists either more freedom of contact with the world outside their billets or more protection from angry demonstrators.

Even if the North Vietnamese go back to Da Nang and Hue, however, that will still be a long step from full deployment of the Joint Military Commission's inspection teams at 26 local sites around the country, a move for which there is at present no immediate prospect. It is not inconceivable that the entire 60-day life span of the four-party commission could elapse without full deployment of those teams.

The impasse over release of Vietnamese prisoners of war is also continuing, as is the dispute over the dismantling of former U.S. military bases.

Informed sources say the Americans are holding fast to their position that all former U.S. bases in South Vietnam, including major installations like Tansonnhut Air Base, were turned over to South Vietnam before the cease-fire and do not have to be dismantled, as they would if they were still under U.S. control.

The Communists refuse just as adamantly to accept the validity of that argument—"We come out of our quarters here at Tansonnhut every day and we see nothing but Americans at 7th Air Force Headquarters, and it's a cynical argument to say it's a Vietnamese base," one delegate said today. But at least for the moment, the Communists appear to be doing nothing to enforce their demands.

An official South Vietnamese spokesman said today: "We will release all prisoners of war within 60 days of the cease-fire," as required by the agreement. But disputes between North and South over the numbers of prisoners held and the sites for their release continued to block any movement.