

# REAL CEASE-FIRE APPEARS ELUSIVE AS U.S. ENDS ROLE

Saigon and Communist Side  
Both Reported to Violate

Terms of Paris Pact

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, March 13—With the final scheduled American withdrawal from Vietnam only two weeks away, there is still little prospect of a true cease-fire as both the Communists and the South Vietnamese continue to violate many of the basic provisions of the Paris peace agreement.

The North Vietnamese, rather than ending their military involvement in the South, as American officials had confidently predicted they would after the accord was signed, are reported to have stepped up their infiltration of men and weapons.

[In Washington, reflecting what was called "a high-level policy decision," spokesmen for the Nixon Administration voiced concern over North Vietnam's actions in the South.]

## 'A Way of Life Here'

At the same time, the South Vietnamese have retaken almost 400 villages that they say the Communists seized in the hours just before or after the cease-fire began, and they have kept truce officials from Communist governments under virtual house arrest in dilapidated military compounds, allowing several of them to be injured by Government-inspired mobs.

"The war is just not going to stop as we had expected," said one authoritative United States official. "Violence is a way of life here, and they are

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going to go on doing what they have always done whether we are here or not."

The one encouraging development, in the eyes of American officials, has been that the fighting has, for the most part, gradually diminished and that an uneasy and unwritten division of territory appears to be emerging in the countryside.

Most of the conflict is now confined to four or five key battlefields, and both Government and Communist troops seem to be leaving their opponents areas of control largely uncontested, knowledgeable officials report.

## Still Not Quiet Enough

But despite this gradual decline, the fighting has still not dropped below "the threshold which would indicate we really have a cease-fire," one American diplomat said. "It's been getting better, but it is not what we want yet."

By Government count, there are 125 to 150 violations of the cease-fire by the Communists every day, and there have been 12,590 Communist soldiers and 2,597 Government soldiers killed since the cease-fire went into effect on Jan. 28.

Almost a thousand Communist soldiers were said by Saigon to have been killed last week, down from the 4,000 reported deaths in the first week of the cease-fire.

American officials proudly point out that the number of artillery rounds fired by the South Vietnamese—always an indicator of military activity—has fallen to 10,000 to 15,000 a day. But that is still a lot of shells landing somewhere.

## Greater Infiltration Reported

Most disturbing to American officials, many of whom believe that the Paris agreement did, in fact, bring "peace with honor," has been the mounting evidence of large-scale open North Vietnamese infiltration, which is said to have been speeded up since the accord was signed.

United States intelligence analysts report that in recent weeks, North Vietnam has infiltrated more than 310 tanks, 150 artillery pieces, 150 anti-aircraft guns and upwards of 60,000 men down the Ho Chi Minh trail into the south.

At least 160 of the tanks and a large number of advanced new mobile anti-aircraft guns have already reached Communist base areas along the Cambodian border northwest of Saigon, these analysts say.

This heavy infiltration does not mean that the Communists have plans "for imminent large-scale hostilities," one ranking analyst said, adding that it might be several years before the North Vietnamese put all this equipment to use.

## Are Not Withering Away

But as the official reluctantly noted, it is a long way from the view expounded by Henry A. Kissinger in January, explaining why the United States had not insisted on North Vietnamese withdrawal from the South. At the time, Mr. Kissinger suggested, the remaining North Vietnamese troops would pose no threat because without reinforcements and fresh supplies they would gradually wither away.

Now, with the cessation of American bombing along the Ho Chi Minh trail, the North Vietnamese are said to be moving their tanks and trucks in broad daylight, making little effort to camouflage them.

Allied intelligence officers say captured Communist documents reveal that the Vietcong fully intend to continue small-scale guerrilla activity. One recent order to a Communist unit in the Mekong Delta outlined plans for the kidnapping of local officials, the seizing of weapons from village militias, the forcible collection of taxes and the use of propaganda to recruit villagers.

## Delegation Size an Issue

American and South Vietnamese officials have also complained that the Vietcong's Provisional Revolutionary Government has violated the cease-fire agreement by failing to produce its full complement of delegates to the Four-Party Joint Military Commission.

Six weeks after the truce took effect and only two weeks before the Four-Party Commission is to pass out of existence, the Provisional Revolutionary Government has brought in fewer than 200 of the 825 truce aides required of it by the Paris agreement.

According to Canadian officials of the International Commission of Control and Supervision, the Vietcong have often resorted to stalling tactics, arguing about who should board a helicopter first and insisting on round rather than square tables for meetings.

## Charges by Communists

The Communists, in turn, have accused Saigon's forces of preventing them from coming into team headquarters by attacking the sites where they had arranged to be picked up. And South Vietnamese officials, encouraged by President Nguyen Van Thieu's vehement opposition to the peace agreement, have often provided inadequate accommodations for the Communist delegates and harassed them with organized, rock-throwing mobs in several cities.

"If you were a P.R.G. officer, would you want to come into the Joint Military Commission?" a Hungarian delegate asked a Western friend.

In the last few days, American and South Vietnamese officials say, President Thieu has issued detailed new instructions to his field commanders and province chiefs ordering them to "cool it," as one American put it.

These orders are said to include warnings against launching sizable operations to retake Communist-held territory and thus provoke an investigation by the international control commission. And they are also reported to include advice to local officials to be more conciliatory toward the Communist truce delegates.

But as at least one American official said, these new orders stem from Mr. Thieu's new confidence—gained by the South Vietnamese Army's ability to reopen almost all highways quickly and to retake about 400 villages seized by the Communists as the cease-fire began. In these fights, some of which were witnessed by reporters and which amounted to violations of the cease-fire, the South Vietnamese employed air strikes and artillery barrages to dislodge the Communists.

"The best thing that could happen," a knowledgeable Vietnamese suggested, "would be for the fighting to continue to taper off as it has, and for the two sides to accept each other's areas of control. But things do not work that way in Vietnam."

## U.S. Expressing Concern

By JOHN W. FINNEY  
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 13—

The Nixon Administration expressed concern today that North Vietnam might be violating the Paris peace agreement by moving troops and weapons down the Ho Chi Minh trail toward South Vietnam.

The public statement of concern over the cease-fire, expressed at both the White House and the State Department, represented some change from the Administration's previously optimistic position that despite some anticipated difficulties, the Vietnam agreement was being carried out satisfactorily.

In recent weeks, there have been recurring news reports, largely from Saigon, of large-scale North Vietnamese troop and supply movements. The Administration has seemed to avoid public confirmation of such reports.

In confirming the reports yesterday, the Pentagon said that about 30,000 men, about 300 armored vehicles, and other equipment such as heavy artillery and anti-aircraft guns had been observed moving down the Ho Chi Minh trail since the first of the year.

Past Shipments Similar

But, the Defense Department spokesman, Jerry W. Friedheim, stopped short of expressing concern over actual movement of troops and matériel, noting that the infiltration was at about the same level observed in previous dry seasons. The same noncommittal stance was maintained yesterday by the State Department spokesman, Charles W. Bray 3d.

But today, reflecting what was described as "a high-level policy decision" within the Government, both the White House and the State Department spokesman expressed, for the first time, official concern about the North Vietnamese movements.

Gerald L. Warren, a deputy Presidential press secretary, said that the United States was "using every means of communications we have" to express concern to Hanoi about the continued movement of men and supplies. It was suggested by Administration officials that the issue had been privately raised within the Four-Party Joint Military Commission created under the Paris agreement.

### Bray Is More Explicit

At the State Department, Mr. Bray was more explicit in raising the possibility that North Vietnam might be violating the agreement. The United States, he said, is watching the North Vietnamese movements "very closely and with some concern in the context of Articles 7 and 20 of the Paris agreement."

Article 7 provides that after "enforcement of the cease-fire," no foreign troops or weapons can be introduced into South Vietnam, except for the replacement on a one-for-one basis of equipment worn out or destroyed. Article 20 prohibits foreign countries from "reintroducing" troops or military equipment into Cambodia or Laos.

Thus far, with the exception of some truck traffic across the demilitarized zone, there is no indication that significant amounts of the North Vietnamese men and supplies have been introduced into South Vietnam.

Mr. Bray declined to comment on whether any of the men and equipment coming down the Ho Chi Minh trail had actually reached the South. But he pointedly noted that none of the matériel seemed to be moving through the four entry points that the Paris agreement established for the introduction into South Vietnam of replacement equipment.

He had "no comment" when asked if the United States believed that under the peace agreement North Vietnam had to stop the movement of men and supplies that had been started before the cease-fire went into effect.