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Vietnam Accord on U.S. Missing Is Due

SAIGON, South Vietnam, March 19 (AP)—The United States, North and South Vietnam and the Vietcong were reported near agreement today on a combined search for Americans and American dead unaccounted for in Vietnam. A United States spokesman said that the operation was expected to take years.

The problems holding up final agreement, officials said, included security arrangements and liaison between local authorities and the searchers.

A task force based at the Nakhon Phanom air base in Thailand is to take up the search in Cambodia and Laos. There are 1,300 United States servicemen listed as missing in Indochina.

The proposal for the Vietnam search calls for a 56-member team made up of nine officers and five enlisted men from each member of the Four-Party Joint Military Commission. The commission discussed the proposal today.

Prisoner List Requested

At the same meeting, the United States asked the Communists again for the list of the last group of American prisoners of war to be released and the date when they would be freed. The American spokesman said that the Communists did not respond immediately.

The Communists have released 439 Americans since

Security and Liaison Said to Be Delaying Start of Search

Jan. 28, when the cease-fire took effect, and they are still holding 147. They have said repeatedly that all the prisoners will be released by the March 28 deadline set by the cease-fire agreement.

The chief of the delegations also ratified a decision by a subcommission to complete the exchange of Vietnamese prisoners on Sunday, three days before the March 28 deadline. South Vietnam will have handed over more than 26,000 prisoners and will have received nearly 5,000 from the Vietcong.

The Saigon military command, meanwhile, threatened to start military operations in the next few days to relieve two bases just north of Saigon if the International Commission of Control and Supervision failed to investigate charges of violations of the cease-fire. The South Vietnamese say that Communist troops have laid siege to the bases, 25 and 63 miles north of the capital.

Trail Still Busy, U.S. Says

WASHINGTON, March 19 (Reuters)—The Defense Department said today that the North Vietnamese were continuing to move supplies and men down the Ho Chi Minh supply trail

network toward South Vietnam, despite President Nixon's warning that this might provoke American retaliation.

The Pentagon spokesman, Jerry W. Friedheim, said that most of the tanks and armored vehicles that had been seen on the trail going through Laos during the first few weeks after the cease-fire had arrived at the border area or were in South Vietnam.

"There is a continued movement on the trail, but I am not in a position to qualify it with statistics on figures," Mr. Friedheim told reporters. "We judge some of the equipment is inside South Vietnam. The bulk of the movement is supply trucks." Tank movements appeared to have halted, he added.

Mr. Nixon voiced concern last Thursday about the movement of North Vietnamese military equipment toward South Vietnam and warned that Hanoi should not disregard his words. His remarks, made at a news conference, were interpreted as an unmistakable warning that the North Vietnamese were risking resumption of American bombing. According to Pentagon sources, up to 450 tanks and other armored vehicles have moved down the trail from North Vietnam since the cease-fire agreement was signed on Jan. 27. Many were believed to have been stored in southern China while the war was continuing and American planes were bombing North Vietnam.