

# Sharp Response to Hanoi Disclosed by Washington

NYTimes

Special to The New York Times

APR 25 1973

WASHINGTON, April 24—The United States made public today a sharply worded reply to Hanoi's charges of cease-fire violations, accusing the North Vietnamese of "direct

and inexcusable" breaches of the three-month-old Vietnam accord.

Washington was responding to a note of April 16, addressed to the nations that participated in the Paris conference on Vietnam, in which North Vietnam contended that the "United States and the Saigon Govern-

*Texts of North Vietnamese and U.S. notes, Page 10.*

ment had "brazenly and systematically violated many essential provisions" of the cease-fire agreement, which was signed on Jan. 27 in Paris and endorsed at the international conference by 12 parties on March 2.

The American note was sent over the weekend to all participants of the International Conference on Vietnam, with the exception of the Vietcong, and detailed Washington's claims—in Henry A. Kissinger's words yesterday—that Hanoi had systematically and cynically violated the agreement.

Many of the charges in the North Vietnamese and American notes had already been aired by the two Governments through their spokesmen. They reflected the sharp polemical tone of recent public comments by Hanoi and Washington toward each other.

The United States, for in-

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ringed the Khe Sanh airfield complex in the northern part of South Vietnam with ground-to-air missiles of the SAM-2 type, "which clearly were not present prior to the cease-fire."

¶North Vietnam was accused of having launched attacks on hamlets, villages and South Vietnamese Government military outposts "in unequivocal violation" of the agreement's "fundamental purpose." These Hanoi forces were charged with launching larger military offensives, to open new supply routes, such as in the Sa Huynh area in central South Vietnam.

## Hanoi Charges Violations

In their note, the North Vietnamese charged the United States and the Saigon forces with numerous violations. The United States sought, in its note, to rebut them. The charges, and the American responses, included the following:

¶The Saigon forces, backed by the United States, were

charged with having failed to observe the cease-fire and with having launched "tens of thousands" of military operations to encroach on Vietcong areas. The United States said, in response, that instead of "backing" such acts, it had concentrated on observing the cease-fire "scrupulously."

¶The United States was accused of not having withdrawn its arms and equipment as it pulled its last troops out. In its note, Washington said that it had "fully complied" with the agreement, and any arms left behind had been transferred to Saigon before the signing of the cease-fire.

¶North Vietnam charged the United States with having supplied new arms and munitions in violation of the agreement, but Washington said that all arms given since the accord were on the one-for-one basis allowed by the accord, and therefore permitted by the terms of the agreement.

¶North Vietnam charged that the United States, in withdrawing its troops, "has left behind over 10,000 military personnel disguised as civilian advisers." The United States said that this charge "has no basis in fact." It said that in addition to the 200 military men attached to the embassy, there are no other American military men in South Vietnam. The United States did acknowledge "less than 9,000" civilian personnel, most of whom are filling logistics and maintenance functions for the South Vietnamese army.

¶The United States also denied that its bombing of Laos and Cambodia was in violation of the accord. It said the raids were the result of Hanoi's combat violations in those countries.

In its note, Hanoi also accused the United States of having delayed completion of the mine-sweeping operations in North Vietnamese waters.

Since the distribution of Hanoi's note, the United States

has announced that it is suspending the mine-sweeping because of violations by North Vietnam. In addition, the United States has resumed reconnaissance flights, also banned in the agreement.

The American note said this was "justified as a response to the numerous material breaches of the agreement" by Hanoi.

It referred—as the State Department did last Friday—to the 1969 convention on the law of treaties which said that "a material breach of an international agreement by one party entitles the other party to suspend operation of the agreement in whole or in part."

## ANSWER TO HANOI DISCLOSED BY U.S.

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stance, said it rejected "as utterly groundless the accusations of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and views this note as an ill-disguised attempt by the D.R.V. to divert attention away from its own numerous and extremely serious violations of the cease-fire."

Among the statements made by the United States were the following:

¶North Vietnam was accused of "illegal movement" of equipment and supplies into South Vietnam, via Laos and Cambodia. The United States said that more than 400 tanks and armored vehicles, 300 artillery pieces, and vast amounts of ammunition and supplies were

included. Some 27,000 tons of military supplies have been moved across the demilitarized zone since the cease-fire was signed, it said, and 26,000 tons were moved into Laos. Some 17,000 military truck movements were sighted going from North Vietnam into Laos, and 7,000 across the DMZ.

¶Hanoi was charged with "an intention to persist" in violations by seeking to "upgrade the road system" in Laos and South Vietnam. The only "logical use" of such roads would be as "a clandestine supply highway into the central coastal regions" of South Vietnam, the United States said.

¶In what the United States called Hanoi's "most serious violation," more than 30,000 North Vietnamese troops were said to have moved through Laos and Cambodia into South Vietnam since the cease-fire.

¶North Vietnam was accused of having put up anti aircraft guns in South Vietnam since the cease-fire and of having