

'No Progress'

2 New Plans for South Vietnam

Paris

The rival South Vietnamese regimes traded new plans for a political settlement here yesterday, just two days before the end of the 90-day period set by the cease-fire agreement for a solution to their dispute.

Both sides said that there has been "absolutely no progress" in their talks so far.

They have been meeting at the leisurely pace of about once a week in the Chateau at La-Celle-St.-Cloud outside Paris. Yesterday was their eighth session, and the first in which they went beyond arguments on an agenda.

The South Vietnamese delegation presented a ten-point proposal with a firm calendar that would culminate with national elections on Sunday, August 26.

(In Saigon, South Vietnamese foreign minister Tran Van Lam acknowledged that the proposal was essentially a restatement of Saigon's longstanding position on a political settlement.)

ATTACKED

Spokesmen for the Viet Cong's Provisional Revolutionary Government in Paris attacked the plan as "mere propaganda" but did not reject it outright and agreed to examine it.

The Viet Cong presented a six-point proposal that they said went "to fundamentals" and avoided the "sensationalism" of setting deadlines.

On the surface, the two plans appeared to have many points of similarity, as both were based on various articles of the Paris accords of January 27 and drew heavily on the language of the signed agreements.

But this appearance of movement concealed the continued chasm between their positions, reflected clearly in the priorities urged in each plan and the

order of settlement required for successive points.

Saigon's plan made two important concessions in an evident attempt to lure the Viet Cong into early elections, or at least to gain credit for flexibility.

One concerned "general elections." The proposal called for voting for an "organism representing the people of Vietnam to decide the political future of South Vietnam," and said: "This organ will decide on state institutions at both the national and regional levels."

Previously, Saigon had insisted that the elections should be held under the existing constitution for existing institutions, a formula designed to strengthen its chances of maintaining full control. The Viet Cong had demanded elections for a constituent assembly.

PULLOUT

The second concession related to Saigon's continued demand for withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces.

South Vietnam offered to reduce the size of the South's army concurrently and by the same number as troops withdrawn. That procedure would, of course, reduce the total of Communist forces in the South by a far higher percentage than the Saigon forces.

The Viet Cong's plan called for an immediate end of hostilities, with both sides withdrawing to their positions of the date the cease-fire ostensibly took effect; release of all civilian prisoners; full freedom of political action, press and travel throughout the country; and formation of a three-segment national council of conciliation with fairly broad powers.

Only after those measures had been fulfilled, the text of the plan said, would there be elections and discussion of reducing the number of troops on both sides.

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