

Hanoi, Saigon Still at Odds

PARIS — (UPI) — The 90-day deadline for the Viet Cong and South Vietnamese to settle their political differences expired yesterday with the two sides still poles apart.

It seemed like par for the course of the Vietnam cease-fire and peace talks.

In South Vietnam, the cease-fire is consistently violated and the peace-keeping force has been ineffective. Economic aid talks between the United States and North Vietnam have foundered.

Even as the deadline for political settlement passed, the United States and North Vietnam returned to the conference table to try to inject some effectiveness into the original peace provisions.

Accusations

Accusations of cease-fire violations began almost as soon as the cease-fire did.

The United States said North Vietnam has infiltrated 30,000 troops and 400 armored carriers into South Vietnam since the cease-fire became effective. Hanoi

charged the United States with dragging its feet on promises to demine North Vietnamese harbors and with resuming reconnaissance flights over the north.

The Viet Cong accused Saigon of suppressing democratic freedoms, and the South Vietnamese said the Viet Cong fought to extend their so-called "liberation zones."

Ineffective

Truce supervision teams have not been effective. Members have been accused of partisanship. Belligerents have ignored or even attacked them.

Talks on the cease-fire violations are now taking place between North Vietnamese Deputy Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William L. Sullivan.

What success Thach and Sullivan will have is problematic. Neither side wants to go to war again and this could be the key to stricter adherence to the treaty.

For the first time this week, the Viet Cong agreed it might eventually discuss the withdrawal of troops from the south — meaning North Vietnamese, though the Communists will not admit they are in the area.

Saigon suggested a quid-pro-quo arrangement under which it would demobilize as many soldiers as North Vietnam withdrew from its territory.

Until some real measure of effectiveness is obtained in the cease-fire, the South Vietnamese and Viet Cong officials meeting regularly in Paris will face serious difficulties in plotting their political future.

Their failure to meet the 90-day deadline for establishment of a council to organize elections is itself a breach of conditions of the treaty. But by mutual consent, both sides will tacitly agree to ignore the treaty's stipulated deadlines in face of the practical difficulties of making the cease-fire work.