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Mutual Recriminations

Mark Formal Talks

By Jonathan C. Randal
Washington Post Foreign Service

PARIS, Oct. 12—Despite an unprecedented four days of secret talks between Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho here this week, the set speeches and press conference comments by both sides at the 163d session of the formal peace talks today were still marked by the mutual recriminations long associated with the nearly four-year-old weekly meetings.

Ly Van Sau, the Vietcong delegation spokesman, even said, "Peace is not for tomorrow." Nguyen Thanh Le, his Hanoi counterpart, charged stepped-up U.S. bombing of his country showed that "the Nixon administration still

nourishes the illusion it can win a military victory."

But they, and the allied spokesmen, purposely sought to fuzz over whether they were talking about the semi-public formal conference or the private talks between Kissinger and Tho to which, in principle, they do not refer.

U.S. delegation spokesman David Lambertson, however, added to speculation that the United States had changed its negotiating positions in the private talks when he declined to reiterate publicly the allied and Communist positions.

He specifically declined to comment when asked if the United States was still opposed to the Communist plan for a three-segment—Communist, government and neutralist—coalition regime which Saigon President Nguyen Van Thieu violently denounced again today.

Asked about a possible American change of position on this key point, the Vietcong spokesman said his side "hoped" the United States would do so, "but I regret to

have to say we do not have that impression" so far.

The North Vietnamese spokesman tried to suggest that Kissinger did not meet with Tho and Thuy, leader of the North Vietnamese delegation at the formal talks, in the absence of any statement on this point. It has been assumed that such a meeting had taken place when Thuy failed to show up for the semipublic meeting to represent his government.