

# Promises to Saigon Clarified

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The Nixon administration promised South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu in "confidential exchanges" that the United States would "react vigorously to major violations" of the 1973 Paris cease-fire accord, the White House acknowledged yesterday.

"In substance," White House press secretary Ron Nessen said in making the disclosure, "the private exchanges do not differ from what was stated publicly."

Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.) rejected the contention that this disposes of his charge on Tuesday that there were "secret agreements" between Washington and Saigon involving "fateful decisions" on Vietnam policy.

"The White House statement is obviously not satis-

factory" because "it represents only a partial disclosure," Jackson told a news conference.

Jackson said there now must be a thorough Senate inquiry with disclosure of "all of the documents." He said that "obviously the Secretary of State," Henry A. Kissinger, will be among those called to testify under oath.

Jackson, a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, said he is asking for an investigation by the Senate Armed Services Committee, of which he is a senior member, and by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) said "I would anticipate" that these two committees

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"would look into" any questions about secret pledges involving Vietnam.

The Ford administration, seeking to avoid new national controversy on the eve of the President's major foreign policy address, insisted that Nessen's statement that there are no differences between the private and public Nixon administration statements had disposed of Sen. Jackson's charge.

President Ford told congressional leaders yesterday that he reviewed confidential records of the Nixon administration and concluded that "no private agreements were entered into between our government and the government of South Vietnam," said Rep. John B. Anderson (R-Ill.) chairman of the House Republican Conference.

This means, Anderson said, that "there are no hidden chapters still to be revealed."

Senate Republican Leader Hugh Scott (Pa.) told newsmen after the White House meeting, "There is nothing in the private understandings which differs substantially from the public announcements. This was strongly stated by Dr. Kissinger."

Anderson said the President made a strong appeal at the White House "to avoid recriminations of any kind" over Indochina.

Jackson, in launching his charge about undisclosed "secret agreements," said it is the Ford administration which seeks to blame Congress for "violating commitments and obligations"

never presented to Congress.

This "goes to the integrity of our foreign policy," Jackson said yesterday, following the statement by Nessen. The White House refused to disclose any documents or details of the "confidential exchanges." Such documents, Nessen said, "in the course of normal diplomacy are not made public."

The statement issued by the White House yesterday only officially confirmed what was generally known at the time. That is, that there were private assurances given by President Nixon and his subordinates to Thieu, to induce Thieu to go along with the Vietnam cease-fire signed in Paris on Jan. 27, 1973.

During nearly an hour of persistent questioning by White House reporters, Nessen declined to answer the key question whether the Nixon administration led Thieu to believe the United States would re-enter the war with air power or troops if North Vietnam massively violated the cease-fire.

Official American insiders indicated at the time of the cease-fire that the United States was deliberately ambiguous on this central question in its messages to Thieu.

Thieu charged last week, in the wake of the rout of South Vietnamese forces, that the United States now "Must do something . . . in order to avoid being blamed for betraying the South Vietnamese people, because when the Paris agreement was signed, the U.S. govern-

ment pledged that it would react vigorously if the North Vietnamese Communists resumed their aggression and brazenly violated the Paris agreement."

The White House statement issued yesterday, which officials said was drafted under Kissinger's close supervision, said:

"Assurances to the Republic of Vietnam as to both U.S. assistance and U.S. enforcement of the Paris agreement were stated clearly and publicly by President Nixon.

"The publicly stated policy and intention of the United States government to continue to provide adequate economic and military assistance and to react vigorously to major violations of the Paris agreement reflected confidential exchanges between the Nixon administration and President Thieu at the time.

"In substance the private exchanges do not differ from what was stated publicly.

"The law of 1973 of course ruled out the possibility of American military reaction to violations of the agreement."

The legislation referred to was the total ban on any U.S. combat operations in Indochina after Aug. 15, 1973, passed over President Nixon's strong objection.

Nessen, when asked if there had been a U.S. intent earlier for possible American military intervention after U.S. troops were withdrawn from South Vietnam in early 1973, said "I just don't have any idea what the intention was."