

Thieu Resigns, Calls U.S. Untrustworthy; Appoints Successor to Seek Negotiations; Evacuation of All Americans Considered

## FEAR IN PENTAGON

### Kissinger Opposes Call for an Immediate Pullout by U.S.

By JOHN W. FINNEY  
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 21 — Defense Department officials concluded today that the situation in South Vietnam was deteriorating so rapidly that the United States must plan on the immediate evacuation of all Americans and their dependents.

The issue was under urgent consideration at the White House during the day, officials said, with Secretary of State Kissinger opposing proposals for complete evacuation of the 2,800 Americans and 1,200 Vietnamese dependents still in Saigon.

There was no immediate indication whether a decision had been reached by President Ford.

[Meanwhile, an evacuation airlift from Saigon continued, and reports from the Philippines, where the planes were landing, said hundreds of Vietnamese, some present and former military officers, were aboard with Americans. Page 14.]

#### Aid Proposal Approved

Shortly after President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam announced his resignation, President Ford met with Mr. Kissinger to assess the Vietnam situation.

Afterward, Ron Nessen, the Presidential press secretary, said Mr. Ford still believed that Congress should approve his request for \$722-million in emergency military aid and \$250-million in humanitarian aid for South Vietnam.

On Capitol Hill, the House Appropriations Committee, by a vote of 36 to 15, approved a proposal advanced by Representative George H. Mahon of Texas, the committee chairman, to provide \$165-million in military aid and \$165-million in humanitarian aid for South Vietnam.

#### Mahon Proposal Endorsed

The Mahon proposal was endorsed by Mr. Kissinger, but it was regarded as doubtful that the full House would approve additional military aid for the Saigon Government.

The Secretary told the committee that the military aid was needed to "stabilize" a situation that he said was deteriorating so rapidly it could get out of control.

Gen. Frederick C. Weyand,

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the army chief of staff, testified before the committee that the North Vietnamese divisions now encircling Saigon "have the capability to overwhelm South Vietnam if they want to," and he expressed doubt that the situation could be stabilized for very long. But he also argued that Congressional approval of some emergency military aid would bolster the Saigon Government and perhaps permit "some sort of solution short of all-out surrender."

#### Aid Tied to Evacuation

The committee, which heard General Weyand in a public session, went into closed session to hear testimony from Mr. Kissinger about evacuation, and one committee member said afterward that the Secretary based his entire argument for additional aid on the necessity for a rapid removal of all Americans.

In public testimony today, Mr. Kissinger said that the Administration's goal was to seek a "controlled situation" that would permit a negotiated end to the fighting and an orderly transition of power. That effort, he said, is "as urgent, if not more urgent, today as it was previously."

Noting that it had been argued in the presence of President Nguyen Van Thieu was an obstacle to negotiations, Mr. Kissinger said "the next few days may tell whether that hypothesis was correct."

"Various negotiating efforts are going on," he said, "but it would be inappropriate for me to discuss them at this moment."

At the same time, Mr. Kissinger described the military situation as "very grim" and said "the range of choices is obviously extremely limited."

#### Resignation Hardens Opinion

The resignation of President Thieu some weeks ago might have moderated some of the Congressional opposition to supplying additional military aid to the Saigon Government. Now, in the opinion of the Senate Majority Leader, Mike Mansfield, and other congressional leaders, the effect of the resignation, combined with the deteriorating military situation, was to harden Congressional opposition to the President's request.

Congress, however, was prepared to provide humanitarian aid, although there were continuing differences with the Administration proposal that the assistance be channeled through the Saigon rather than through international and private relief agencies.

The Senate began debating today and was expected to approve tomorrow legislation authorizing \$200-million for humanitarian aid and the evacuation of Americans from South Vietnam. The house was expected to approve tomorrow legislation authorizing \$27-million for humanitarian programs and evacuation.

Both the Senate and House bills also would give the President circumscribed authority to use troops to protect the evacuation of Americans and any South Vietnamese withdrawn at the same time.

Pentagon officials, emphasizing that the situation was deteriorating faster than officials were willing to admit publicly are increasingly fearful that it might be necessary to use Marines to rescue Americans still in Saigon.

Over the weekend, the Defense Department assembled five carriers, about a dozen destroyers, four amphibious craft and cargo ships off the South Vietnam coast for a possible evacuation mission. About 4,000 Marines are aboard the ships.

Two of the carriers — the Hancock and the Okinawa — are carrying Marine Corps helicopter squadrons that would be used for an evacuation. The three other carriers — the Enterprise, the Midway and the Coral Sea — would provide air cover for the operation.

#### Ship Evacuation Questioned

Two cargo ships of the Military Sealift Command were also sent to Saigon for possible evacuation of Americans. There was some question in the Pentagon, however, whether this would be a safe method of evacuation since the ships would have to make the 100-mile trip down the Saigon River exposed to possible gunfire.

The withdrawal of Americans, which Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger described last week as "a trickle," has now been accelerated by the State Department and the White House, partly in response to Congressional criticism.

Defense Department officials, including Mr. Schlesinger, were still concerned, however, that the accelerated evacuation had started so late that plans to take out most of the Americans by civilian and military aircraft may be overtaken by events, forcing the use of helicopters and Marines.

Although Mr. Ford has talked in terms of evacuating "tens of thousands" of South Vietnamese whose lives might be en-

dangered in a Communist takeover, State Department sources reported that no concerted plans had been developed for large-scale evacuation of South Vietnamese.

The plan reportedly advanced by Graham A. Martin, the American Ambassador in Saigon, would call for the South Vietnamese to make their own way to the coast, with American ships then picking them up off the beaches.

Mr. Kissinger told the House Appropriations Committee that the number of South Vietnamese who could be evacuated would depend entirely on conditions when the evacuation takes place.

"In an uncontrolled situation," he said, "the number that can be evacuated is extremely limited."