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**Thieu Aide Discloses Promises
Of Force by Nixon to Back Pact**

By **BERNARD GWERTZMAN**
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WASHINGTON, April 30—A former Saigon Cabinet official made public today letters from President Richard M. Nixon that promised the Saigon Government in 1972 and 1973 that the United States would "take swift and severe retaliatory action" and would "respond with full force" if North Vietnam violated the Paris cease-fire accords.

This was the first disclosure of any of the correspondence

Texts of letters released by former minister, Page 16.

between Mr. Nixon and former President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam.

The contents of the letters made public by Nguyen Tien Hung, former Minister of Planning, seemed more specific about the possible use of American retaliatory military force than the White House indicated

initially earlier this month when the matter of "secret assurances" to Saigon first became an issue.

Coincidental with Mr. Hung's disclosures, at a crowded news conference in the Mayflower Hotel, President Ford formally refused to give Congress copies of the Nixon-Thieu correspondence on the ground of diplomatic confidentiality.

Mr. Ford was asked by Senator John J. Sparkman, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, to supply the documents after Senator Henry M. Jackson charged that "secret agreements" had been made by the Nixon Administration.

The White House, which said the documents appeared authentic, asserted as it has all this month that no secret

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agreements had been made and that any assurances by Mr. Nixon did not differ in substance from what Mr. Nixon and others were saying publicly at the time.

"I've read them and I'm convinced that what we said at the time holds today," Ron Nessen, the White House press secretary, said, "at the time" meaning earlier this month. "Nothing that was said to Thieu privately differs in substance from what was said publicly."

Mr. Nessen seemed annoyed by the newsmen's fascination with the documents and their speculation whether confidential assurances were made that were not known to the public. He asked, "Why are toying with semantics at this late date?"

But the disclosures indicated that Mr. Nixon, in an effort to enlist Mr. Thieu's support for the Paris cease-fire accords being negotiated in the last three months of 1972 and in January, 1973, brought strong pressure to bear on Saigon and made far-reaching promises not disclosed to Congress or the American public at the time.

Mr. Hung, who is 40 years old and has a University of Virginia doctorate in economics, released the texts of letters from Mr. Nixon to Mr. Thieu, on White House stationery, dated Nov. 14, 1972, and Jan. 5, 1973. He also quoted from letters but did not provide their full texts. Those letters were dated Jan. 17 and Jan. 20, 1973.

He told the newsmen that he had had the letters in his possession for "some time," and had them when he came to this country two weeks ago on an aid mission. Mr. Hung said he was making the letters public without Mr. Thieu's knowledge "at the dictates of my conscience."

"It is my deep conviction that my discussion with you today is not only in the interest of the people of Vietnam, but in the long run, it is very much in the interest of the people of America," he said in a statement he had typed out beforehand, "for there cannot be the future without the past and present."

"The credibility of America in the future, which on occasions will be the decisive factor in matters of war and peace, will have to be taken seriously if American foreign policy is to be effective," he said.

The Nixon letters were written against a background of strong doubts and skepticisms expressed by Mr. Thieu to Henry A. Kissinger, at the time serving as Mr. Nixon's national security adviser, about the terms of the cease-fire accords then being negotiated in Paris by Mr. Kissinger with Le Duc Tho, Hanoi's representative.

What Worried Thieu

Mr. Thieu was particularly worried about the continued presence of North Vietnamese troops in South Vietnam and the lack of guarantees that the accord would be enforced. The Paris talks were to resume on Nov. 20, and Mr. Nixon, on Nov. 14, 1972, wrote to Mr. Thieu, urging him not to worry about particular points in the agreement.

"But far more important than what we say in the agreement of this issue—"the presence of the North Vietnamese troops—"is what we do in the event the enemy renews its aggression," Mr. Nixon wrote. "You have my absolute assurance that if Hanoi fails to abide by the terms of this agreement it is my intention to take swift and severe retaliatory action."

"Above all," Mr. Nixon wrote, "we must bear in mind what will really maintain the agreement."

"I repeat my personal assurances to you," he went on, "that the United States will react very strongly and rapidly to any violation of the agreement."

Mr. Nixon warned, however, that to be able to do this effectively, "it is essential that I have public support and that your government does not emerge as the obstacle to a peace which American public opinion now universally desires."

The Jan. 5, 1973, letter was written shortly after the end of the heavy American Christmas bombing of Hanoi, which followed a breakdown in December in the Kissinger-Tho talks. The negotiations resumed Jan. 8.

Mr. Nixon's tone was tougher toward Mr. Thieu, but included again a promise of retaliation.

Mr. Nixon again rejected Mr. Thieu's concern about North Vietnamese troops on his territory and warned of "the gravest consequences" if Mr. Thieu's government "chose to reject the agreement and split off from the United States."

"Should you decide, as I trust you will, to go with us, you have my assurance of continued assistance in the postwar settlement period and that we will respond with full force should the settlement be violated by North Vietnam," Mr. Nixon wrote.

"Full force," Mr. Hung said,

was interpreted by high Saigon officials as meaning actions similar to the heavy bombing of North Vietnam and the mining of Haiphong harbor in May, 1972, and the Christmas bombing.

On Jan. 17, Mr. Hung said, Mr. Nixon sent a letter in which he promised to send Vice President Spiro T. Agnew to Saigon after the signing, to reaffirm, publicly, American guarantees. Mr. Agnew went, but his trip was little publicized. In that letter, Mr. Nixon also repeated his assurances that Mr. Thieu had little to worry about from North Vietnamese forces.

On Jan. 20, when the negoti-

ations were virtually over, Mr. Nixon sent what Mr. Hung characterized as "an ultimatum" to Mr. Thieu: "As I have told you, we will initial the agreement on January 23. I must know now whether you are prepared to join us on this course, and I must have your answer by 1200 Washington time, January 21, 1973."

"The pressures, together with the assurances," said Mr. Hung today, "successfully forced President Thieu to agree to sign the agreement on Jan. 27, 1973." Mr. Hung was a personal assistant to Mr. Thieu in 1973.

Mr. Nixon's first public threat to use force against

Hanoi came in his news conference of March 15, 1973. Alarmed by reports of stepped-up North Vietnamese infiltration into the south beyond the rate allowed in the accords, Mr. Nixon said:

"We have informed the North Vietnamese of our concern about this infiltration and of what we believe it to be, a violation of the cease-fire. I would only suggest that based on my actions over the past four years, that the North Vietnamese should not lightly disregard such expression of concern, when they are made, with regard to a violation. That is all I will say about it."