

Vietnam Set to Talk Oil

Bangkok

South Vietnam announced yesterday that it was ready to discuss exploration and exploitation of oil in its coastal waters with any foreign governments and companies "irrespective of their social and political color," Liberation Radio said.

But those allowed to engage in the oil business in South Vietnam would have to respect that country's independence and adhere to the principle of "equality of mutual benefit," the broadcast said.

"The provision revolutionary govern-

ment of the Republic of South Vietnam has also announced many times that all commitments of the former regime of Nguyen Van Thieu on the finding and exploitation of natural resources and raw materials, including oil, are illegal and void," the broadcast quoted a government statement as saying.

Several American international oil companies had begun exploration for oil off South Vietnam's coast in the early 1970s but reportedly found little to indicate evidence of large, profitable deposits.

Associated Press