

Thieu Tells Nixon He Will Call Shots

SAIGON — (AP) — A rift was reported today between President Nguyen Van Thieu and the Nixon Administration over political aspects of President Nixon's new peace proposals.

Thieu sent word to Washington that South Vietnam's political future must be negotiated by Saigon and not by the United States.

High-level diplomatic sources said Thieu was angered by Secretary of State William P. Rogers' statement that the U.S. government is "flexible" on the provision of Nixon's eight-point peace proposal calling for Thieu's resignation one month before a new presidential election.

Nixon's plan does not rule out Thieu as a candidate in the election, and observers in Saigon say the longer the time between his resignation and the voting, the more his political strength would weaken.

Sources said Thieu ordered Ambassador to the United States Bui Diem, to consult the State Department about the exact meaning of Rogers' statements at a Washington new conference last Thursday and whether the secretary's remarks indicated a lessening of the Nixon Administration support for Thieu.

Orders from Thieu also went out to his chief negotiator at the Paris peace talks, Pham Dang Lam.

Sources said he was directed to tell the U.S. delegation chief, Ambassador William J. Porter, that any proposals for a political settlement must be presented by Saigon rather than Washington.

Under Nixon's eight-point peace plan submitted to the North Vietnamese in Paris last October, the chairman of the senate would head a provisional caretaker government for the month between Thieu's resignation and the presidential election.

The plan calls for an "independent body representing all political forces in South Vietnam" to run the elections and for international supervision of the voting.

But there is no provision for any change in the pro-Thieu lineup of the government, the police and the army.

A revised Viet Cong peace plan, backed by North Vietnam, calls for Thieu's immediate resignation and negotiations to set up a coalition government including the Communists which would hold elections for a constitutional convention.