

Yacht Talks

Nixon, Kissinger Confer on War

Washington

President Nixon and Henry A. Kissinger, his national security adviser, conferred aboard the presidential yacht Sequoia on the Potomac river last night about the worsening situation in Vietnam.

The conference, with Kissinger's deputy, Brigadier General Alexander M. Haig Jr., also present, came as a decidedly pessimistic note began creeping into official comments on the war — in contrast to the optimism voiced by administration officials last week.

There were these developments:

- Defense Department spokesman Jerry W. Friedheim acknowledged that South Vietnamese forces face a "very serious" situation in the northern part of South Vietnam, but he still predicted that South Vietnam will win a majority of the forthcoming battles.

- State Department spokesman Charles Bray said "we fully expect" the loss of one or more South Vietnamese provincial capitals. He also said that some victories by Saigon forces are expected.

The Nixon-Kissinger conference climaxed a day sprinkled with reports that Kissinger may be preparing to go to Paris to resume secret peace talks with North Vietnamese negotiator Le Duc Tho.

He met with Tho six times in Paris in 1970 and 1971,

and there were indications last week that the administration is looking to another such secret meeting to probe the real intent of Hanoi in calling for resumption of the public peace talks.

There has been no apparent movement in the public sessions, and the State Department hinted yesterday that the United States might break them off again after the session scheduled for tomorrow.

The New York Times said sources in the administration hinted that unless the promise of positive results emerges this week from public or secret peace talks, the U.S. would soon resume heavy bombing in the Hanoi and Haiphong areas of North Vietnam.

The reports that Kissinger might again be Paris-bound were fed by the new White House policy of silence on the comings and goings of the presidential aide. White House spokesmen refused to say where he might be.

Presidential press secretary Ronald Ziegler had refused Monday to discuss Kissinger's whereabouts. He said he was "not going to dig myself into another hole" like the one of two weeks ago when the press was told that Kissinger was at Camp David, Md., with the President when actually he was in Moscow.

L.A. Times Service