

Nixon, Gromyko Talks

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Centered on Vietnam

WASHINGTON — (CST) — President Nixon and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko stretched a day of talks yesterday all the way from the White House to Camp David, concentrating on Vietnam behind a facade of concern about other matters.

Joined by Secretary of State William Rogers, national security adviser Henry Kissinger and Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin, they met for 70 minutes in the President's oval office here in the morning and then continued the discussions into the night at Nixon's mountain retreat in Maryland.

Gromyko was a guest for the night, the first Soviet foreign minister to stay at Camp David.

The Administration put out the word that the talks related to the treatment of Russian Jews, trade and East-West relations in Europe. But it was learned unofficially that the main topic was Vietnam.

As the President and Gromyko conferred yesterday, Kissinger's assistant, Maj. Gen. Alexander Haig, met in Saigon with South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu.

Kissinger's secret negotiations with the North Vietnamese, expected to resume in Paris immediately after Haig returns here today, are reportedly stuck on Hanoi's demand that Thieu step aside in favor of a new coalition government.

Haig is apparently trying to determine Thieu's flexibility on the point and whether he might give way if his views were represented by others in the coalition.

Hanoi recently proposed

that one-third of the coalition be composed of officials of the present Saigon government, excepting only Thieu. One-third would go to the Viet Cong and the other third to "neutralists."

Differences over the proposed coalition have evidently narrowed. Kissinger reportedly told friends over the weekend that the secret Paris talks are now at the

"serious" stage.

And the fact that the North Vietnamese have maintained — and even stepped up — the pace of the talks during the campaign, knowing them to be a political boon to Nixon, indicates they have concluded he will be reelected and they must maintain decent diplomatic relations with him.

Administration officials believe the Russians, and

the Chinese as well, have been applying pressure on the North Vietnamese in talks held last week in both Moscow and Peking.

Gromyko presumably gave Nixon a report on those discussions. The President presumably sought additional assurance that the Soviets will slow down their supplies to North Vietnam, if he agrees to stop the bombing as part of a cease-fire.