

BOTH SIDES AGREE PROBLEMS REMAIN IN VIETNAM TALKS

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U.S. Confirms Tho Estimate

—Nixon and Kissinger

Confer With Rogers

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 13—

The United States and North Vietnam today agreed in effect that numerous difficult problems remained to be settled before peace in Vietnam is possible.

This general assessment of the private United States-North Vietnamese peace negotiations in Paris came as the White House press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, told reporters that "you can assume that we would not challenge" a statement in Paris earlier by Le Duc Tho, a member of the North Vietnamese Politburo, that "there still are many difficult things to settle."

It was the first official evaluation from either side on the status of the latest round of the talks, which ended Wednesday.

Mr. Ziegler, who otherwise refused to discuss the substance of the negotiations, made his comment shortly after President Nixon held his second conference in 12 hours with Henry A. Kissinger, his special assistant for national security, on this week's private negotiations in Paris.

Longest Talks So Far

Mr. Nixon met with Mr. Kissinger for nearly two hours last night after the latter's return from four consecutive secret sessions with Mr. Tho and the chief North Vietnamese negotiator, Xuan Thuy. This was the longest series of talks since their meetings began in August, 1969.

This morning, the present status of the peace negotiations was reviewed again during a 75-minute breakfast at the White House attended by

the President, Secretary of State William P. Rogers, Mr. Kissinger and his deputy, Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr.

A high-ranking official, however, reported that when Mr. Kissinger and Mr. Tho parted in Paris on Wednesday, they set no date for the next meeting. Such a date, he said, would be arranged through their usual channels, which he did not identify.

The intensified pace of the negotiations was reflected, according to officials, in recent instructions to Vietnam specialists in the State Department to prepare a new set of position papers projecting probable

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Vietnam: Still Problems

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responses from Hanoi as well as Saigon to a variety of possible changes in the American position.

Mr. Ziegler said repeatedly that the White House would announce new talks when they are held, but declined to be drawn into discussions as to how long the negotiating pause would last.

Tonight, the Columbia Broadcasting System reported on its evening television news program that Mr. Kissinger had offered new formulations to the North Vietnamese. It also said that under the present negotiating pattern a settlement would be achieved in a piecemeal fashion rather than as a full-fledged agreement.

Senior Administration officials said, however, that the talks involved, "two sided" exchange. They also said they could not comment on whether the talks were moving toward

a stage-by-stage settlement.

While Mr. Tho said on his departure from Paris for Hanoi that he would return to the French capital "if the occasion presents itself," Mr. Ziegler refused to say when—or even whether—the private negotiations would be resumed.

Mr. Ziegler said again, as he had earlier in the week, that he knew of no plans for either Mr. Kissinger or General Haig to meet with the South Vietnamese President, Nguyen Van Thieu in Saigon.

But other officials indicated that such consultations would be required before the United States took any new major step in the negotiations.

Later today, the South Vietnamese Ambassador here, Tram Kin Thuong, was summoned to Saigon for consultation.

Under persistent questioning, Mr. Ziegler said that the United States policy both on a political settlement, which in-

cludes the commitment to oppose President Thieu's immediate removal as demanded by Hanoi and the Vietcong, and on continuing bombing of North Vietnam remained unchanged inasmuch as "we have announced no new policy."