

Reds' Offer Is Close Enough,  
U.S. Reportedly Tells Thieu

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Concessions Said to Be Sufficient

(Agence France Presse)

Saigon

The United States has

**THE UNITED STATES HAS**  
told South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu that the National Liberation Front and the North Vietnamese have made sufficient concessions for their proposals to be accepted, it was reported here today.

This would mean accepting a cease-fire and the establishment of a coalition government.

The report came from a South Vietnamese senator, one of the 60-odd South Vietnamese political figures with whom Thieu conferred last night after his meetings with President Nixon's foreign policy adviser, Henry Kissinger. The senator asked to remain anonymous.

He said Thieu had told them that the Communist proposals were considered reasonable by South Vietnam's other allies, too.

However, Thieu had said that "the Communist demands are not reasonable," the senator reported.

In answer to a question from an opposition senator, the president had added: "If we don't accept the proposals, the Americans won't either."

Thieu, who was addressing government and opposition senators and deputies, had claimed to be "ready to give up power," adding: My person is of no importance. What I fear is that the Communists might take over Vietnam with their government of three components."

The senator quoted Thieu as saying that the tripartite government of national concord which the NLF was demanding would not only operate at national level.

The NLF — the political

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arm of South Vietnamese Communists — was demanding the tripartite formula at provincial, district, village and hamlet level, he said. It wanted elections at every level, so as to dissolve the current regime and replace it with a parliamentary regime.

Thieu feared that these changes would allow the "Communists" to take control of the country, the senator said.

(The three components of the coalition proposed by the NLF would represent the Provisional Revolutionary Government (the Communist counterpart to the present Saigon regime), the current Saigon administration without Thieu himself, and forces favoring national reconciliation.)

TALKS

Thieu, whose talks with Kissinger were reported to have been "difficult," told last night's meeting: "The war is heading for a solution which is unacceptable to us."

The Americans were recommending acceptance of the tripartite formula in order to end their involvement in Vietnam, although they continued to support the present regime, he said, according to the senator, who was reading notes taken during the meeting.

Thieu also rejected other demands made by the PRG and North Vietnamese, including demands for reparations, an end to U.S. support for the south, an end to U.S. intervention in Vietnam and dissolution of the "pacification" program.

COUNTER

Meanwhile, a well-informed political personality here said Kissinger's talks in Saigon had been concerned with working out counter-proposals to the PRG seven-point peace plan.

In these counter-proposals, to be announced before the November elections, the U.S. would only accept a tripartite government if Thieu remained at its head. A prime minister, to have enlarged powers, would be appointed from the "third force."

However, Thieu opposed a tripartite formula whether or not he would be participating. His proposal was for a general cease-fire followed by a national referendum "for or against Communist participation in a national government," the personality said.

This referendum would be prepared by the Saigon regime and the PRG in their respective areas and supervised by international organizations, the personality said.

CLAIM

The personality claimed that there was no crisis between Thieu and the U.S., adding that speedy agreement on a counter-proposal was not impossible.

A United Press dispatch from Saigon today quoted other members of the National Assembly who attended last night's meeting with Thieu as saying North Vietnam asked for a cease-fire before the U.S. presidential election but that President Nixon rejected the proposal.

Deputy Danh No, chairman of the lower house ethnic minority committee, said Thieu told lawmakers the North Vietnamese had proposed a cease-fire before the November 7 presidential election followed by establishment of the tripartite coalition government.

REASON

No and other legislators said the North Vietnamese wanted the cease-fire now to avoid "heavy military pres-

sure" from the U.S. if Mr. Nixon defeats Senator George S. McGovern.

Thieu gave no reason for Mr. Nixon's rejection of the cease-fire proposal, the legislators said. Thieu said only that he thought the cease-fire before the election would be more advantageous to the North Vietnamese than afterward when Mr. Nixon would have four more years to negotiate an end to the war.

Thieu met early today with other South Vietnamese political leaders and Kissinger conferred with American government and military officials.

Deputy Nguyen Van Thong, secretary general of the Chamber of Deputies, said Thieu last night told the legislators that Kissinger reported on his secret Paris talks with North Vietnamese delegates including Politburo member Le Duc Tho.

But Thong said the president told the legislators Kissinger had not finished briefing Thieu on results of his secret talks.

#### STATEMENT

The South Vietnamese information ministry yesterday issued a statement re-emphasizing Thieu's opposition to a coalition government with the Communists.

Thieu insisted that any change in the government would have to be approved by the people through "democratic methods."

An earlier dispatch yesterday from the Washington Post Service said that through a variety of official and unofficial channels, Thieu also raised other obstacles that could delay a peace agreement. Among them was a renewed call for an international conference with representatives from ten Southeast Asian nations, to settle the region's future.

Thieu met twice yesterday with Kissinger and other leaders of the U.S. diplomatic and military team. In a 3½ hour session in the morning, the president was accompanied by Vice President Tran Van Huong, Prime Minister Tran Thien Khiem, Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam, two of his special assistants and Tran Kim Phuong, South Vietnam's ambassador to Washington and chief negotiator at the formal Paris peace talks.

#### AMERICANS

The American delegation consisted of Kissinger, Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, General Creighton Abrams, Army Chief of Staff, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Sullivan.

Yesterday evening, Thieu met for about 90 minutes with Kissinger and Bunker.

As usual, U.S. officials provided no information about the substance of the talks.

At the regular daily military briefing, however, Vu Khanh, the official government spokesman, read a statement saying the morning meeting "aimed at reviewing the general situation and developments in the peace talks." This information was attributed to "informed sources."

#### 'OBSERVERS'

A subsequent paragraph said "political observers noted that the American delegation arrived in Vietnam as President Thieu continued broad consultations with the National Assembly, the supreme court and political parties, and he (Thieu) reasserted our position that we are determined not to accept the principle of three - segment government and not to accept any solution which is not agreed to by the Vietnamese people through democratic methods."