

# Saigon Official Says Thieu Prepares Plans for Truce

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Oct. 22—A high Government official said today that President Nguyen Van Thieu ordered his Government to start preparing detailed plans for a cease-fire two weeks ago, and has told Cabinet officers that he and Henry A. Kissinger have been discussing intricate details of a proposal for a cease-fire in place.

The official said, however, that he thought President Thieu would never accept a peace settlement involving a major concession of political power.

He said that President Thieu had urged his Cabinet, during a meeting held yesterday, to stand firmly in opposing any settlement that would stop the fighting only temporarily, and had reiterated his opposition to any form of three-part coalition government.

These exhortations, which have also shown up in semi-official publications and in a Government Communiqué last week, appeared to indicate that the most difficult part of the negotiations between Mr. Kissinger and President Thieu concerns the political aspects of a new proposal for a settlement, which appears to be a more likely possibility than it has in years.

The Government official, who asked not to be identified, described President Thieu as "occupied." He said the Cabinet had not been told what Mr. Kissinger was asking for.

Mr. Thieu has for much of a week been telling Government officials, pro-Government Deputies and Senators, some minor opposition figures and leaders of the professions in Saigon that the country must stand behind him united against the Communists and in opposing a coalition.

These actions suggest to some journalists and opposition leaders that if Mr. Kissinger has made a deal with the North Vietnamese it includes Mr. Thieu's removal from the presidency as a condition, and

that the South Vietnamese leader is either trying to resist

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that or to insure that his Government will hold together and support his positions even if he steps down.

The Government source was told that North Vietnam's Premier, Pham Van Dong, was quoted as describing a settlement involving cease-fire in place, American troop withdrawal, direct negotiations between the Saigon Government and the Communists toward a temporary coalition, and then general elections. He replied that President Thieu "will never accept that."

But the official disclosed that on Oct. 7 President Thieu set up a 50-member Central Study Committee headed by his close aide, Lieut. Gen. Dang Van Quang, to draw up detailed plans on what Government ministries should do in the event of a cease-fire.

"I don't think it will have time to complete its work before the cease-fire, though," he said. "It may come before the Presidential elections in the United States."

The former commander of United States forces in Vietnam, Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, is in Saigon and Administration officials have hinted that he is here to help with technical advice on a cease-fire.

The official appeared to reflect a general unhappiness within the Thieu Government about the possibility of a peace settlement whose outlines — as disclosed mainly by rumors in Saigon and by the North Vietnamese — appear to them to be disadvantageous.

"The Americans will get something out of a cease-fire — probably their prisoners," said the official, who has a military background. "The North Vietnamese will get something — American troop withdrawal and

a bombing halt. But the South Vietnamese — we will not gain anything except the Communists right by our sides."

"The Communists would try to take advantage of every moment between the announcement of a cease-fire and the signature of an accord," the official said. "They would try to move in on our territory and destroy Government infrastructure in the hamlets they took over. That is why the Central Study Committee is working on plans, how to counteract this."

Thus the political aspects of a cease-fire are intricately intertwined with its military aspects. Consequently even the Saigon speculation about what agreements Mr. Kissinger may have made with the North Vietnamese in Paris has created what passes for turmoil in political circles here.

## Truce Aspects Intertwined

A persistent rumor concerned the formation of a three-part electoral committee in Saigon charged with organizing national elections in which the Communists would be represented. The six Government names being circulated about for the committee include only one opposition Deputy, Tran Van Tuyen. The others are Premier Tran Thien Khiem, Gen. Cao Van Vien, Senator Tran Van Don, Senate Chairman Nguyen Van Huyen and Supreme Court Judge Tran Van Linh.

Three other names would be proposed by the National Liberation Front.

The most prominent political figure in the country beside President Thieu, Gen. Duong Van Minh, has not even come up in the speculation. An Assembly Deputy close to him said that the opposition was being kept out of the latest developments and did not know what was going on. The opposition has remained mostly quiet,

Deputy Nguyen Huu Chung has explained, because "we do not like to be thrown in jail."

Another political figure, the pro-Government Senator, Nguyen Van Ngai, said today that "there are still wide differences between the positions of Hanoi and Saigon."

"The President is very firm, very categorical," he said. "I can tell you that the United States cannot go over our heads, and if it tries to, then strong resistance from Saigon could hurt Mr. Nixon's chances of getting re-elected. I can tell you, my friend, that there is nothing coming yet, nothing yet."