

Viet Pact Deadline Passes; President Won't Be Rushed

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President Nixon reiterated yesterday that the United States would not be rushed into an agreement to end the war in Vietnam that did not offer "the best hope for lasting peace."

As the Oct. 31 target date for signing slipped by, presidential press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler told reporters:

"The only deadline we're operating under is the one that will bring about the right kind of an agreement.

He said, "It is the President's firm intention to have a settlement which will offer the best hope for lasting peace . . . a peace that does not leave the seed of a future conflict."

Despite the implicit warning in Ziegler's remarks, the press secretary went on to express confidence that "we will reach agreement." This appeared to be based on the current exchange of communications reportedly under way between Washington and Hanoi.

In Paris, meanwhile, the Vietnamese Communists refrained from appearing pens in hand before a row of empty chairs to sign the document they claim has already been agreed to, a kind of gesture sometimes resorted to in the process of diplomatic maneuvering. This indicated that they did not want to precipitate a clash with the United States, even at the propaganda level.

Furthermore, Hanoi has refrained from publishing the full text of the agreement worked out in negotiations between presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger and the chief North Vietnamese diplomat to the talks, Le Duc Tho.

Since Hanoi has published only a summary and kept the details secret (the United States has revealed no details either), the North Vietnamese

appear to be leaving room to allow certain alterations in the text. Such changes could be far more difficult to make if the entire agreement were made public.

In a radio commentary, however, Hanoi charged that "trickery has been resorted to . . . unprecedented in the history of diplomatic talks." The broadcast said that Hanoi and Washington had "agreed that they are responsible for reaching consent with their allies on negotiations" and that South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu's objections were merely a pretext for U.S. refusal to sign.

Hanoi quoted Mr. Nixon as saying that any proposal he put forward in negotiations would be a "common proposal." The broadcast went on to repeat that Mr. Nixon has sent communications to North Vietnamese Premier Pham Van Dong, while Kissinger was in Saigon, talking with Thieu, stating that the agreement was complete "and expressing satisfaction with the

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DRV (North Vietnamese) government's interpretations."

But the Vietnamese Communists continued to leave open the prospect for signing at a later date. In Paris, the Viet Cong's Provisional Revolutionary Government issued a statement calling on the United States to sign "at the earliest possible date." It said the agreements had not been signed on schedule "because of the ill will and duplicity on the part of the American government."

In a press conference last Thursday Kissinger said he wanted to get "six or very concrete issues worked out between the United States

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