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Major Japanese Aid for Indochina Slated
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By RICHARD HALLORAN

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TOKYO, Nov. 1 — Foreign Minister Masayoshi Ohira today told a special envoy from South Vietnam, Pham Dang Lam, that Japan would contribute heavily to the postwar economic reconstruction of Indochina.

Japanese officials said, however, that Mr. Ohira had not committed Japan to a specific amount of assistance and did not go into details about when and how it would be extended.

They said speculation in Washington and Southeast Asia to the effect that Japan was prepared to give between \$1-billion and \$2-billion was premature and incorrect.

Mr. Lam, who is Saigon's chief delegate to the Paris peace talks, was sent here by President Nguyen Van Thieu to counter criticism directed at South Vietnam for objecting to the nine-point peace plan proposed by Hanoi.

Japanese officials said that Mr. Lam told Mr. Ohira that Saigon could not agree to the peace plan because it gave no assurance that North Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn from South Vietnam and because the proposed three-part "Council of National Reconciliation" would take over the executive authority of President Thieu's Government.

Mr. Lam later met briefly with Premier Kakuei Tanaka and give him a personal letter

from President Thieu. Although it was not made public, Japanese officials said it made the same points that Mr. Lam had made with Mr. Ohira.

A Government spokesman said that Mr. Ohira had "understood" Mr. Lam's objections, an expression that in the Japanese language is courteous but does not mean approval or acceptance. Mr. Ohira was said to have expressed Japan's hope for an early negotiated peace.

Japanese officials said that Mr. Lam had raised the question of economic reconstruction during his meeting with Mr. Ohira. They said that while Japan was committed to helping with money and technical aid, a concrete plan would have to wait until they had seen the shape of the peace in Vietnam.

The officials indicated, however, that Japan was eager to help and they expected little political opposition domestically. The war in Vietnam has been unpopular in Japan because many Japanese, with memories of the destruction in World War II, feared that it might spread and engulf them.

Officials here said that Japanese help in reconstruction would be supported by a consensus in Japan since it would be largely a humanitarian effort in helping other Asians. They said that Japanese businessmen foresaw large contracts for steel, machinery, electrical generation equipment, concrete and construction projects.

They also said that Premier Tanaka, who was in the construction business before turning to politics 25 years ago and

still owns a construction company, was personally attuned to the concept of a large-scale reconstruction program in Indochina.

The officials said that the Japanese Government had discussed plans for reconstructing Indochina in broad terms with United States officials. The United States, if it accepts the nine-point plan, will be committed to aiding in the rehabilitation of the war-torn peninsula.

Although the Japanese said they have not yet formulated a detailed plan, the officials indicated that its general outline has taken shape.

They said that Japanese aid would go to South Vietnam, North Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

The Japanese Government would much prefer, the officials said, that Japan's aid go through international, multilateral institutions, such as a consortium or the Asian Development Bank, rather than go directly to the Indochinese nations.

They said that Japan might contribute as much as one-third of the cost of reconstruction, using Japan's contributions to the Asian Development Bank. Japan has put up one-third of the bank's funds, the United States one-third, and other members the remaining third.

The officials indicated that Japan wished to steer clear of direct involvement in Indochina to avoid the possibility of conflict with other contributing nations, such as China and the Soviet Union.