

Thieu Is Defiant on Pact But Suggests New Talks

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Nov. 1 — President Nguyen Van Thieu celebrated South Vietnam's National Day today with a round of public appearances and a speech saying he would "never accept a surrender of the South Vietnamese people to the Communists."

In a 15-minute broadcast over the national radio at 8 A.M., Mr. Thieu sounded defiant. And in a visit to the National Cemetery at Bienhoa he told journalists to ask Henry A. Kissinger what differences had come up between the Americans and Mr. Thieu over the draft peace agreement negotiated by Mr. Kissinger and the North Vietnamese in Paris in early October.

In his broadcast, Mr. Thieu said the draft agreement was "only a cease-fire to sell out Vietnam." But he said he would be willing to meet with the Communists to negotiate further and suggested that the Saigon Government and the National Liberation Front, or Vietcong, should settle their political differences without outside interference.

Serious Talks Urged

"Today, on behalf of the people of Vietnam," he said, "I say that the people of Vietnam hope for a peace solution and a cease-fire, as soon as possible. The Government of Vietnam and myself ask the North Vietnamese Communists to come to serious negotiations to sign a peace and cease-fire agreement. We also ask the National Liberation Front seriously to negotiate to sign a political solution to the problems of South Vietnam."

Despite all his strong rhetoric, the South Vietnamese President has left most of his listeners with the feeling that a cease-fire and peace settlement are still possible soon. His position of demanding further clarification of the political aspects of the agreement and asking for the withdrawal of all North Vietnamese troops from the country is supported by most of his opposition.

President Thieu began the day's celebrations by receiving Saigon's diplomatic corps at the palace at about the time his

speech went out over the radio. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, of the United States, the dean of the corps, made a brief speech that sounded as though peace had already come to Vietnam, although aircraft were dropping bombs only about 20 miles away this morning. Mr. Bunker said:

"These past months of resistance to aggression have strengthened the Vietnamese people's confidence in the ability of their Government and armed forces to withstand the sternest tests, to persevere in the effort to insure national self-determination and to succeed in the tasks of reconciliation and reconstruction that lie ahead.

"Times such as these are always marked by mixed feelings of hope and trepidation for the future, but it has been demonstrated, Mr. President, by the strenuous, spirited, and brave struggle of the Vietnamese people, and by your leadership of the nation through this ordeal, that the Republic of Vietnam has the will, the fortitude, and the ability to meet the challenges of peace.

"In this endeavor, you will have the continued support of your allies, and, I am sure, the encouragement of all those in the international community who are committed to liberty and peace with justice."

Early Conference

Mr. Bunker saw Mr. Thieu for one hour early yesterday.

It is possible that the Ambassador informed the South Vietnamese leader then of the results of the secret contacts the Nixon Administration says it has had with North Vietnam in the last few days and that, armed with assurance that the draft peace agreement would be modified in certain provisions, Mr. Thieu went ahead today with a speech denouncing the text as it stood.

The official American attitude here is one of confidence that Mr. Thieu is only delaying and preparing the way for final agreement, and, in effect, that he does not mean all that he has been saying. Mr. Thieu encourages such speculation by confusing the public demands

of the Communists with the text of the draft accord as it has been made public by Hanoi. As a result listeners are never clear exactly what he is denouncing.

National Day in Vietnam marks the coup d'état that overthrew President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963. Today, in a somewhat unusual obeisance to the late President Diem, there was a sign in English near the Saigon Cathedral that said, "President Ngo Dinh Diem — sacrifice must unite, not divide."

President Thieu said, in his speech this morning, "I denounce all those who, individually or as members of organizations, are making a disguised effort to put the blame on me, saying I am the only obstacle to peace. In South Vietnam there is not only one Nguyen Van Thieu who is an obstacle to this agreement to surrender, but there are seventeen and one half millions who are opposed to such an agreement."