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# Thieu Maneuvers

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SAIGON, Nov. 12 (Sunday)—President Nguyen Van Thieu and his advisers now expect to be successful in their opposition to major parts of the draft peace agreement worked out by Washington and Hanoi, according to authoritative sources in the Saigon government.

High ranking officials who were briefed on the negotiations by Thieu's staff in preparation for the arrival of White House representative Gen. Alexander Haig were told that most likely a cease-fire would be declared soon. But they were also told it would not include any political program affecting the structure of the South Vietnamese government.

Haig, who arrived here Friday for two days of talks with Thieu and his top advisers, is scheduled to leave for Washington today. Although there was no firm information about the substance of these discussions, it is widely believed here that they dealt more with timing and planning for the cease-fire than with negotiations on substantive issues.

[Saigon government sources were quoted by wire agencies as saying that Thieu has

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drafted a letter for President Nixon which is believed to be a reply to Mr. Nixon's message urging Thieu to accept a peace settlement.]

Government officials whose positions require that they be informed about the negotiations were assured by Thieu's aides that the United States is not trying to force South Vietnam to accept a simultaneous political agreement that it sincerely finds unpalatable, the sources said. Civilian officials have been instructed to go ahead with their preparations for a cease-fire, according to reliable informants, but there has been no suggestion, either before Haig's arrival on Friday or since, that Saigon to a political settlement to which it is not a willing party.

The same description of the likely outcome has been provided in separate conversations by South Vietnamese military commanders in the field.

It is substantially different from the nine point settlement announced by Hanoi, which would tie a cease-fire to a prearranged political program that would allow the National Liberation Front and non-Communist opposition groups to participate in organizing new elections in South Viet-

nam.

The big question is whether North Vietnam would accept a settlement such as that being outlined here. It would deny the Communists, at least for a while, the political legitimacy that has been one of their

principal objectives. Many well-placed U.S. and South Vietnamese sources believe that they might.

If their first priority is to get the U.S. out of the war, as some reports have indicated, and if they need a cease-fire because of their military losses, as U.S. intelligence sources believe, then the North Vietnamese might be willing to back off from some of the nine points. On the other hand, if the Communists really are as adamant as their public statements indicate, there could be a crisis in relations between Washington and Saigon.

The government-operated Saigon Radio said in an editorial yesterday that "President Nixon wants his coming inauguration next Jan. 20 to lift him to the position of 'PEACE PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD' with the Vietnam problem ceasing to be a cause of concern to the American people."

By the sudden increased shipments of military hardware to South Vietnam, the editorial said, "President Nixon wanted to show North Vietnam that the United States is ready to cope with any change in the situation. If North Vietnam negotiates seriously, there will be peace. But if North Vietnam remains obdurate, the U.S. will continue the war."

The commentary did not give its source for the assertion that "the U.S. will continue the war."

There seemed to be less assurance in a report last night in the newspaper Tin Song, controlled by one of Thieu's closest advisers.

One prominent story bore the headline, "Vietnamese political circles resentful at report that American helicopters are to be withdrawn off North Vietnam."

Commenting on reports that the U.S. Navy is moving mine-sweeping equipment into the Pacific, apparently in preparation for removing U.S. mines from North Vietnam's harbors, Tin Song said:

"The bombing and mining of North Vietnam is the only weapon of the U.S. to bargain with North Vietnam. To abandon this measure is like tying the hands behind one's back while fighting with an exhausted but still fiery enemy. North Vietnam is exhausted and a minimum of patience by the U.S. in the five last minutes of the war is enough to reach a settlement in honor to all parties with guarantees for a permanent and just peace."

## Thieu Reported Ready To Sign Draft Accord

From News Dispatches

PARIS, Nov. 11—President Thieu of South Vietnam has agreed to sign a cease-fire agreement in ceremonies that will take place before Nov. 20, the Paris newspaper France Soir reported today.

In a dispatch from its Saigon correspondent, Marcel Giuglaris, the paper said that Thieu had decided to take this step the day after President Nixon's reelection and before the arrival in Saigon of Gen. Alexander Haig, Mr. Nixon's special envoy.

Giuglaris, who accurately predicted the cease-fire announcement last month, said

that the document would be signed by Washington, Saigon, Hanoi and the Vietcong.

In exchange for Saigon's agreement to sign the document, South Vietnam would receive two-thirds of a \$7 billion U.S. aid program for Indochinese reconstruction, with only a third earmarked for North Vietnam, the dispatch said.

The paper said that the United States told Thieu he was free not to sign the draft agreement, to which he has raised strenuous objections. But in that case the United States would sign it with Hanoi, and Thieu would have to finance his own war.

Thieu also got American assurances that neither the Soviet Union nor China would finance or aid Hanoi to continue the war if Saigon accepted the draft agreement, France-Soir said.

"The opposition of the South Vietnamese government has ended," Giuglaris said. "President Thieu hesitated but, after several visits from U.S. Ambassador Bunker and the reelection of President Nixon, he chose to accept." The paper said that U.S. bombing of North Vietnam would probably end next week.