

# Rush of U.S. Arms to Saigon

## To Be Completed in 2 Weeks

By Michael Getler

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SAIGON, Nov. 14—The pre-cessate-fire rush of additional American arms to South Vietnam will be completed within the next week or two, but arrangement of an actual end to the shooting here may still be one or two months away, according to U.S. military officials.

While expressing confidence that the cease-fire will in fact be achieved, this assessment of the timing involved appeared to tie in with statements by White House spokesmen yesterday which implied that more than just one additional negotiating session with Hanoi, plus more consultations with Saigon, will be required before final agreement.

Informed military officials also estimated that once an agreement is signed, the United States will probably take the full 60-day withdrawal period allowed under the tentative agreement to complete the pullout of the remaining American forces here, many of whom are still in key advisory jobs with the South Vietnamese military.

With a settlement still viewed as a month or two away, this would mean that the final U.S. military personnel would leave South Vietnam sometime between mid-

February and mid-March of 1973.

There are now 31,100 American military men stationed inside South Vietnam, with the administration pledged to cut that figure to at least 27,000 by Dec. 1.

### Not Directly Affected

The withdrawal from the South will not directly affect about 100,000 airmen and sailors at bases in Thailand and on 7th Fleet carriers off the coast. Though some of those forces will be reduced, others will remain on station there.

Meanwhile, an unprecedented air and sea lift of supplies for Saigon's army, air force and navy is now in its final stages.

Final deliveries of 40 to 50 more tanks, another 20 to 30 armored personnel carriers, 20 to 30 more 105-mm. howitzers and about a dozen 155-mm. long range guns are now scheduled to reach here in the next two weeks, officials said.

With their arrival, the total amount of American arms rushed here within about a month's time will include: 60 to 70 tanks, 80 to 100 armored personnel carriers, 40 to 50 105-mm. guns, a dozen of the 155-mm. artillery pieces and eight of the very long range 175-mm. guns.

The build-up of the South Vietnamese air force is already completed, officials here

reported, with roughly 30 C-130 transport, 90 A-37 light attack jets, 120 F-5 fighters plus older A-1 attack planes and scores of helicopters already delivered. Tons of ammunition, spare parts and communications equipment were also airlifted here.

Military officials claim that the U.S. arms buildup here, especially of the ground equipment, is not meant to add more divisions to the army but is primarily to replace heavy losses of armor and artillery suffered by the South in the early days of the Communist offensive last spring.

While noting that there is no precise information on just how much new supplies the Communists are funneling into North Vietnam and then moving toward the South, military officials say that the re-supply effort appears to be considerably less than the amount of U.S. supplies pumped in here in recent weeks.

The most significant Communist movement thus far is a group of tanks estimated at between 50 to 70 which sources say are now "stuck in the mud" south of the North Vietnamese city of Vinh. The armored vehicles are said to be currently located in a population center and are expected to be targeted for air attack as they move further southward

toward the Demilitarized Zone.

Under the proposed Washington-Hanoi cease-fire agreement, additional arms coming into South Vietnam for both sides after a ceasefire would be limited to a one-for-one replacement basis. Thus, both sides are seeking to put as much in place as is possible before the signing.

But the agreement, at least that part of it made public thus far, makes no provision for limitations on the flow of Soviet bloc or Chinese arms into North Vietnam.

### Tacit Restraints

There is some speculation that big-power diplomacy between the U.S., the Soviet Union and China that went into bringing a peace settlement near in Vietnam may also have placed some tacit restraints on the size of the arms flow into Hanoi after a cease-fire.

On the other hand, the tremendous size and haste of the U.S. build-up could also signify failure of Washington to win such assurances.

Despite the optimism here that the final cease-fire agreement will be forthcoming, U.S. officials say there is a continuing flow of evidence indicating that at least some Communist troops in the South "have every intent of violating a

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cease-fire, taking advantage of the confusion, and using it to gain everything they can."

These officials believe the South Vietnamese forces can handle the type of threat likely to be posed by small bands of Communist forces after a formal end to the big war is achieved.

Orders to troops to take advantage of the cease-fire by grabbing as much as possible by force—especially in the Mekong Delta and the military regions outside Saigon—are coming primarily from the Vietcong headquarters.

These orders, some officials believe, may be partly to keep up the morale of troops that are now fanned out in many small groups throughout the South. They could also be a pressure tactic to extract more support from Hanoi for the indigenous Communist forces.

### Stepped-Up Attacks

#### On North Continue

SAIGON, Nov. 14 (AP)—Despite heightened hopes of peace, North Vietnam still is pushing fresh war material into the South and the U.S.

Command announced today that American planes kept up a heavy pounding of the enemy's main supply routes.

For the second time since Oct. 22, when bombing was restricted to below the 20th Parallel because of peace talks, U.S. warplanes mounted more than 220 tactical strikes on Monday against targets in North Vietnam, the U.S. Command said. The parallel is 75 miles south of Hanoi and about 240 miles north of the Demilitarized Zone separating the Vietnams.

The air war has steadily been increased from an average of little more than 100 strikes to 180 last Thursday, 200 Friday and 240 Saturday. Bad weather cut the missions to 150 Sunday. All are designed to blunt the enemy buildup.

Another 171 missions ere flown by Air Force, Navy and Marine fighter-bombers Monday just south of the Demilitarized Zone in Quangtri Province.

B-52 bombers struck deeper into North Vietnam than at any time since last April, attacking stockpiles 58 miles below the 20th Parallel.