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Peace - Thieu 450

SAIGON AP - South Vietnam's special observers at the Paris peace talks were reported Saturday to have told President Nguyen Van Thieu the negotiations were "virtually deadlocked" over North Vietnamese troop withdrawals.

A government source said this was relayed to Thieu on Friday, following the first four days of resumed private talks between the United States and North Vietnam. The source said nothing apparently happened in Friday's fifth meeting to alter the situation.

The disclosure came hours before it was reported in Paris that the talks between President Nixon's chief negotiator, Henry A. Kissinger, and North Vietnam's Le Duc Tho had been broken off until Dec. 4.

Although there was no formal comment on developments in Paris, South Vietnamese officials were expected to regard as a significant victory President Nixon's agreement to meet with a special envoy of Thieu to discuss the peace talks.

The White House said Nixon had agreed to a meeting this week with Nguyen Phu Duc, Thieu's top national security adviser.

Duc is leading the team of Saigon observers in Paris. Thieu had asked Nixon in a letter last week to meet with a special envoy who could make South Vietnam's position more clear. This has been seen by some observers here as a slap at Kissinger, who has been criticized by the South Vietnamese for paying insufficient heed to Saigon's objections to the draft peace pact.

A Saigon newspaper controlled by Thieu's Independence Palace quoted a "high source" Saturday as saying no optimistic signs had been seen in Paris. It added in an editorial that peace remains "far away" because negotiators have ignored the troop withdrawal issue.

The government source said Thieu's observers in Paris informed him that in the first four days of renewed talks with Kissinger, the North Vietnamese had stiffened their position, even threatening to withdraw concessions previously agreed to.

The source said Thieu was informed that Hanoi rejected the idea of a withdrawal of its own troops from South Vietnam, contending that Vietnam is one country and its inhabitants one people, therefore there could be no such thing as a troop pullout.

Thieu's primary objection to the draft peace proposal already worked out by Kissinger and Le Duc Tho is that it contains no provision for a Communist troop withdrawal or restoration of the demilitarized zone dividing North and South Vietnam.

He claims there are as many as 300,000 North Vietnamese troops inside South Vietnam and that Saigon cannot agree to any pact which does not provide for their eventual and complete withdrawal.

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