

Thieu Said to Draw Plans For a Post-Truce Cabinet

NYTimes By SYLVAN FOX DEC 1 1972

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Nov. 30—Political figures inside and outside the Government say that President Nguyen Van Thieu is forging plans for major changes in his Cabinet, based on the conviction that a cease-fire will come to Vietnam soon.

The objective, they disclosed in a series of interviews, is to establish under Mr. Thieu a new and politically more potent Government to undertake the political struggle against the Communists that the Saigon authorities are convinced they face after a cease-fire agreement is signed.

Although the precise outline of the Government changes remains unclear, there are strong indications that Tran Van Don, leader of the 1963 coup that overthrew President Ngo Dinh Diem and a man who has maintained a curious political position astride both the Thieu and opposition camps, is likely to become Premier in a postwar Government.

Mr. Don has been in Paris for the last two weeks, meeting with French officials and Vietnamese exiles, at least partly in an attempt to validate his credentials as a political figure acceptable both to Mr. Thieu and to some of his opponents.

There is speculation in Saigon that he also made indirect contact with Communist representatives in Paris. Mr. Don returned to Saigon yesterday and promptly reported to President Thieu on the results of his mission.

The planning for a postwar Government suggests that while Mr. Thieu and his supporters have been condemning the terms of the proposed cease-fire agreement drafted by American and North Vietnamese negotiators in Paris, they have, at the same time, been quietly proceeding on the assumption that a cease-fire will come and that Saigon must be ready for it.

"They are expecting peace now," one member of the op-

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7

position faction in the National Assembly said today.

Beyond this basic assumption and the belief that Mr. Don would become the new premier, there are sharp differences between those close to President Thieu about how a new Government should be constituted.

One faction, apparently led by Mr. Don, appears convinced that a new cabinet should seek to include anti-Communist opposition forces.

Another faction, however, is urging the creation of a tightly organized, "efficient" government thoroughly loyal to Mr. Thieu.

Within recent weeks, Mr. Don approached at least one opposition leader, Tran Van Tuyen, to sound him out about joining a new government. Mr. Tuyen confirmed that Mr. Don had approached him.

Strong Misgivings Expressed

Mr. Tuyen, the leader of the National Assembly opposition faction called the People's Social Bloc, expressed strong reservations about such a proposal, based on the current political complexion of the Saigon Government.

"If the policy of the next Cabinet should be for peace, not for war," Mr. Tuyen said in an interview, "we should like

to take our responsibility—but for peace, not for war." He asserted, however, that the Thieu Government was preparing not for real peace and "national reconciliation" but for "suppression" and "more killing of Communists."

"They are still maintaining their determination to exterminate Communism from South Vietnam" he added.

In Mr. Tuyen's view, the real solution to the problems of postwar South Vietnam is "for Mr. Thieu to step down," but

he quickly added that "we are ready to compromise with him" as long as the President's policies reflected a genuine desire for peace.

Among those who believe that the present Government is "inefficient" is Nguyen Van Ngai, a Senator and a member of the central committee of Mr. Thieu's Democracy party, which is in the process of being organized.

Mr. Ngai said that a new cabinet should have two principal priorities: "to maintain the upper hand in the coming political struggle that will follow the cease-fire, and to further the economic development of the country."

Although some South Vietnamese politicians favor the inclusion of opposition factions in a new government, and some pay the idea lip service, there are other members of the present Government who sneer at the concept of such a "broad-based" government.

As one such political figure put it, broadening the Government "is for the gallery." What counts, he went on, is whether the Government is dependable, functioning and efficient.

This official compared Cabinet members and Government workers to a football team.

"They have to learn how to work together—and to obey only one coach," he said, adding that what was needed in a postwar South Vietnam was a

"monolithic system to match the other monolithic system."

Mr. Don, who was born in France 55 years ago, is a ruggedly handsome man of military bearing who was elected to the National Assembly, South Vietnam's lower legislative chamber, in 1971 as a member of the opposition An Quang faction.

Despite this affiliation, he has recently been close to the forces of President Thieu and manages to preserve good relations with both the President and his political rivals.

Continued on Page 5, Column 3