

Talks Resume In Paris

Kissinger, Tho Confer 5 Hours In 2 Meetings

By Jonathan C. Randal
Washington Post Foreign Service

PARIS, Dec. 4—Presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger and North Vietnamese negotiators conferred today for five hours in two separate locations as they commenced what may be the final stage of their private talks leading to a cease-fire.

Even before the day's second session, the Florida White House announced that Kissinger and Le Duc Tho, the Hanoi Politburo member who is North Vietnam's ranking negotiator, would meet again Tuesday.

Neither delegation would comment formally on the substance of the talks which resumed after a nine-day suspension. But judging from the studied if unofficial optimism of American officials, the United States apparently has dropped many of the Saigon-influenced revisions in the October draft agreement. It was those major changes which brought the secret talks to an impasse two weeks ago.

Faced with the same tight news blackout which has been the rule in the 21 previous rounds of private negotiations dating back to August 1969, newsmen were reduced to reporting the surface details of the meetings.

The day's two-and-one-half-hour meetings took place in diametrically different settings—the morning meeting in the dingy working class suburb of Choisy-le-Roi and the afternoon talks in a luxurious country estate of a French cable company manufacturer to the west of the capital.

The estate once belonged to Capt. Peter W. Townsend, the World War II Royal Air Force

fighter ace whose romance with Princess Margaret in the early 1950s ended for reasons of state because he had been previously married and divorced.

The two chief delegates, each accompanied by some 10 aides, emerged poker faced from the house, which is located in a vast wall-surrounded park at Sainte Gemme, some 19 miles west of Paris at the edge of the Forest of Marly.

The morning meeting took place at Tho's residence, a small two story shuttered villa of field stone which is only four blocks from the North Vietnamese headquarters.

As Kissinger emerged from the restricted morning session with his aide, Gen. Alexander

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Haig, a black cat jumped on the roof of their Mercedes Limousine.

Although black cats are said to augur bad luck, newsmen who examined the animal noted that his four paws were white, a possibly hopeful sign.

Kissinger smiled and waved to the crowd of waiting newsmen. So, too, did Tho and Xuan Thuy, the titular head of Hanoi's delegation to the formal peace talks, when they emerged a few minutes later.

Counterpointing the secret talks were remarks at a press luncheon by Pham Dang Lam, Saigon's ambassador to the peace talks. He reiterated that the "principle" of a North Vietnamese troop withdrawal must be "inscribed in one way or another" in the cease-fire agreement.

He denied that Saigon is seeking "in any way to place obstacles to peace by excessive or unreasonable demands." Lam noted that the Hanoi troop withdrawal problem was "capital" and urged that the post-cease-fire transition machinery's mandate be limited specifically to the organization of elections.

Lam reiterated Saigon's objections to the machinery—the so-called National Council of Reconciliation and Concord, which is to include representatives of the Vietcong, Saigon and uncommitted South Vietnamese.

Although Lam also insisted that his government must sign any cease-fire agreement, he responded evasively when asked if the United States and North Vietnam alone could initiate the accord.

There have been suggestions that if agreement can be reached here, Kissinger would fly to Saigon to confer with President Thieu before traveling to Hanoi where the initialing ceremony would take place. Initialing the document is the final stage in treaty negotiations before binding signature.

Meanwhile, Kissinger was absorbed in less crucial matters. Upon returning to Paris,

he stopped by a building on the Left Bank, Quai Voltaire facing the Seine River, picked up a blonde woman and drove her back to the American ambassador's residence.

The identity of the woman was not known. Two weeks ago, he lunched in a fashionable Paris restaurant with Jan Cushing, the blonde wife of an official in the local branch of the Lehman Brothers Investment Bank.