

U.S. AIDES ALERTED FOR VIETNAM DUTY AFTER CEASE-FIRE

100 in Foreign Service Told
to Be Ready to Leave for
6-Month Assignments

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ALL HAVE SERVED THERE

Could Send Back Accurate
Reports to Washington on
Any Truce Violation
NYTimes

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 7—The State Department has quietly alerted 100 Foreign Service officers to prepare to go to South Vietnam, once a cease-fire is declared, to check on how the truce is being observed, department officials said today.

The pending transfer of the officers, all of whom have served in South Vietnam and speak either Vietnamese or French, was disclosed by one of those who received the unexpected stand-by orders yesterday. It was confirmed by State Department spokesmen.

The officials said that the United States wanted to have a trained corps of observers in the South Vietnamese countryside to make accurate reports to Washington on postwar political and military developments.

They said that these data might also be used to report violations to the international cease-fire supervisory teams charged with monitoring the agreement now being negotiated in Paris.

[The Paris discussions between Henry A. Kissinger and the North Vietnamese continued on Thursday, and another session was scheduled for Friday. In the formal negotiations, meanwhile, delegates of Hanoi and the Vietcong took a tough position. Page 10.]

Six-Month Assignments

The stand-by orders went out yesterday to 50 officers now assigned to embassies abroad and to an equal number

of officers posted in Washington. The men were told to make plans to leave as soon as a cease-fire was announced for a six-month assignment to consulate-generals in South Vietnam.

At present the United States has an embassy in Saigon, and one consulate in Danang. Officials said that it was contemplated to upgrade the Danang mission to a consulate-general and to create consulate-generals in Nhatrang, Bienhoa, and Cantho, where the United States operates major aid missions.

Officials said the decision to
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alert the 100 officers was a further sign of the United States' determination to maintain a strong presence in South Vietnam, even after the American military forces withdraw under the terms of the projected settlement.

The Nixon Administration has already disclosed plans to increase its economic aid programs to South Vietnam after a settlement is reached. Reports from Saigon have also said that about 10,000 American civilians will be hired to provide training and maintenance services for the South Vietnamese armed forces.

One well placed official said that he interpreted the stand-by orders as a "straw in the wind" that the Paris negotiations were going well.

"We wouldn't alert all those officers, and cause them problems with their wives and children right before Christmas, unless it was absolutely necessary," he said.

Under the orders, the officers were told to leave their families at their present posts, in the expectation that they would return there after six months.

Officials said that it was not known what would happen after the initial six-month period ended.

'An Unusual Assignment'

"This is an unusual assignment for an unusual country," one official said.

He said that the plan to send the officers was one of several "contingency" operations drawn up in recent weeks to take account of the expected changes

in the countryside following a cease-fire.

American officials have predicted privately that there would be an intense political and underground struggle between the Vietcong and the Saigon regime to gain control of contested areas.

Presumably, the presence of the American Foreign Service officers might provide Washington with an independent source of information amidst the expected flood of charges and countercharges.

State Department officials said that the pending assignment of the 100 officers did not mean necessarily an increase in the number in the country. There are many others who are there now who might return, they said.

The decision to send the foreign service officers into the countryside has not been discussed with Hanoi, an informed official said, but has been made known to Saigon.

Officials also said that it was quite likely that fewer than 100 might go to South Vietnam.

If an officer had strong reasons not to go, such as pressing personal problems, he would be exempted, they said.

The reaction of the Foreign Service officers seemed mixed. One such officer, obviously unhappy with the prospect of returning to Vietnam after having spent two years there, said, "I suppose we'll have two guys to a major village, and we'll drive around ducking bullets from the friendlies and the not-so-friendlies."

Two other officers, however, said they were eager to return to "see the peace through."