

Chou Hints

Viet Pact in
'2 or 3 Days'

Examiner News Services

PARIS — White House Adviser Henry Kissinger held another secret meeting with Hanoi negotiators today and a French radio station quoted Chinese Premier Chou En-lai as saying a cease-fire agreement might come within two to three days.

The report coincided with Washington dispatches implying there had been more progress in the talks than indicated in pessimistic reports thought to have originated from Viet Cong representatives.

Kissinger and several aides sat down with North Vietnamese negotiators Le Duc Tho and Xuan Thuy in a heavily guarded villa of suburban Neuilly-Sur-Seine for their seventh meeting in eight days — the first time their sessions have lasted so long.

The conference got under way as the French radio sta-

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tion Europe No. 1 quoted Chou as telling newsmen in Peking it was possible that the Americans and the North Vietnamese would reach agreement "within two or three days."

Ambassador William J. Porter, the chief U.S. negotiator at the regular semi-public Paris peace talks, sat in on the Kissinger - Tho conference for the first time.

And, perhaps significantly, North Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Le Thanh Nghi arrived in Paris yesterday from Hanoi with Nguyen Van Kha, the man who played a large part in framing the Geneva Accords.

Nghi would have sufficient rank to sign any agreement which would have to be signed on the American side by Secretary of State William P. Rogers. Rogers flew home last Friday from a NATO meeting in Brussels disappointed that he was unable to sign the cease-fire agreement last weekend.

Kissinger's deput. Gen. Alexander M. Haig, briefed President Nixon yesterday on the status of the negotiations.

Viet Cong sources here, and South Vietnamese Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam in Saigon, continued to insist

that peace negotiations were deadlocked over the issue of North Vietnamese troop withdrawal from South Vietnam. American sources here counseled caution on these reports.

Today's meeting followed a unique "technical" session yesterday which was reported to include the ironing-out of linguistic differences in a new draft agreement.

Gen. Haig was believed to have carried with him a draft of an agreement finally hammered out between Kissinger and Tho, with the purpose of submitting it to President Nixon for approval — or perhaps rejection.

Nghi was here ostensibly to attend the 20th congress of the French Communist Party. But observers felt his visit to Paris indicated that an initialling of an agreement might be imminent, an event which Hanoi felt required the presence of an official senior to Tho.

Nghi arrived in Paris following two weeks in Moscow, during which he negotiated a new aid agreement with the Soviet Union. The agreement provided for "large quantities of goods and equipment," a Moscow announcement said, but it was not clear whether this included offensive armament.

The "technical" session held yesterday did not include Kissinger and Tho, and was without precedent in the four-year history of Paris peace negotiations. Perhaps more than anything else the session — attended by translators — engendered belief that a new draft had been completed.

A nine-point cease-fire agreement was disclosed unilaterally by Hanoi Radio Oct. 26, and later confirmed by the United States. In summarizing the draft, Hanoi said the U.S. had pledged to sign it by Oct. 31, and demanded that this deadline be met.

The Hanoi summary said the draft provided for a supervised "in-place" cease-fire, a U.S. military withdrawal within 60 days — accompanied by a "parallel" return of prisoner-of-war — and a complex arrangement providing for a political settlement in South Vietnam. Provisions was also made for mutual troop withdrawals from Laos and Cambodia.

In confirming the Hanoi report, however, Kissinger told a televised White House press conference that while peace was "at hand," no Oct. 31 deadline existed, as announced by Hanoi.