

No U.S. Comment

On Thieu's Speech

But Officials Make
it Clear White House
Is Annoyed

by Bernard Gwertz-
man
Special to [NYT]

Washington,
Dec. 12 - The Nixon
Administration
refused ~~today~~ any
comment today on
President Nguyen Van
Thieu's speech set-
ting forth Saigon's
objections to the
Paris talks and his
own proposals for
ending the Vietnam
war.

Both the White
House and State
Department spokesmen
were ordered by
President Nixon to
avoid any discussion
of Mr. Thieu's
remarks.

"We don't want to
get into a public
debate with Thieu,"
one State Department
official said.

It was evident
from private
discussions with
Administration
officials, however,
that the White House
was annoyed by what
White House was annoyed by
what one official called Mr.
Thieu's "mischievous" remarks.

Surprise Is Discounted

Another official said that he
did not believe that the Ad-
ministration was surprised by
Mr. Thieu's decision to repeat
publicly his demand for a com-
plete withdrawal of North Viet-
namese troops from South Viet-
nam and for a disavowal of the
proposed National Council of
Reconciliation and Concord.

With the Paris talks now at
a critical stage, officials here
also were not disposed even to
discuss Mr. Thieu's proposals
for an indefinite cease-fire and
prisoner release at Christmas
time, to be negotiated by Sai-
gon and Hanoi.

Both the cease-fire and pris-
oner question have already
been discussed in detail at the

*Fox Butterfield,
Saigon (NYTimes
13 Dec 72) says
Thieu's "proposal
did not call for
withdrawal of
North Vietnamese
troops from South
Vietnam," but
that Thieu
"repeatedly
referred to" this.

Paris talks between Henry A.
Kissinger, Mr. Nixon's national
security adviser, and Le Duc
Tho, the chief Hanoi negotia-
tor.

The view here was that by
raising these matters independ-
ently of the Paris talks, Mr.
Thieu was either trying to
cause problems for the negotia-
tors in Paris or to leave him-
self some room to maneuver if
he is faced with a Washington-
Hanoi agreement.

One official said that he be-
lieved Mr. Thieu would in the
end accept such an agreement,
and might say that his demands
and proposals had been met by
the terms of the accord.

Silent on Speculation

Privately, most officials have
continued to express optimism
that Mr. Kissinger and Mr.
Tho will reach an agreement
soon. But newsmen have been
advised that Mr. Kissinger or
his deputy, Gen. Alexander M.
Haig Jr., might have to make
another trip to Saigon before
such an agreement is signed.

General Haig, who returned
to Washington on Sunday from
the Paris talks, conferred sev-
eral times by phone today with
Mr. Nixon, and was presumably
coordinating the cable traffic
from Mr. Kissinger's staff in
Paris with the White House,
the State Department, and the
Pentagon.

The Administration has avoid-
ed saying what would happen
if a Washington-Hanoi accord
was reached but Saigon con-
tinued to refuse to sign. One
official noted that in his speech
Mr. Thieu pleaded for contin-
ued American military and
economic aid.

"He must know," the official
said, "that if he blocks an
agreement, Congress won't vote
him a cent."