

# Mr. Kissinger in Paris

By James Reston

PARIS

PARIS, Dec. 12—Henry Kissinger has been living during the critical last days of the Vietnam peace talks in the old Rothschild house, now the American Embassy, at No. 41 Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, down this glittering street from where President Pompidou of France resides in the Elysée Palace.

On the Faubourg St. Honoré, all the shops look like Tiffany's on Christmas Eve. Judging by the prices, this must be where inflation was invented, so the few reporters who wait outside for Henry can at least go window-shopping.

That's about their only consolation and considering their salaries, it isn't much. In the Paris peace talks of 1919, Harold Nicolson, the British diplomat, said there were three ways to deal with the press. The best way, he said, was to tell them nothing, which at least gave them the excitement of a chase. The next best way was to tell them everything, which kept them busy and eventually bored them. And the worst way, he said, was to pretend you were giving them the facts when you weren't.

Mr. Kissinger has followed the first course. He has told the press nothing. He has left them to judge by his expressions when he came out of the meetings with Le Duc Tho how things were going. When he seemed pleased, they assumed the negotiations were going well; when he seemed grim, they assumed things were going badly; when he read their interpretations in the press, he switched, and looked amiable when he was depressed and sad when he had made a little progress.

So he has come to the end of his negotiations here without seeing the reporters or indicating how his negotiations have come out, but the Vietnamese have talked cautiously to their friends in Paris about the central issue that still remains, and it is an extremely awkward issue.

According to these secondary sources, it is a question of whether the cease-fire agreement between the United States on the one hand and North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front on the other will acknowledge in a few simple unambiguous words that the Saigon Government has sovereign right and authority over all the territory of South Vietnam.

Saigon, according to these sources, keeps asking that all North Vietnamese troops be removed from South Vietnam but insists, even if it cannot negotiate their withdrawal, that the cease-fire agreement make clear that they have no legal right to be there. This is opposed by the National Liberation Front, which hopes to replace the Thieu Government in Saigon, and Hanoi has supported the N.L.F. And though Mr. Kissinger has proposed innumerable ways of avoiding or postponing this dilemma, apparently it has not been resolved.

Meanwhile, Mr. Kissinger has found time, during the interminable arguments over this central point in the last few days, to talk to the French

about the even more serious questions that are developing between the United States and the expanded Common Market countries of Europe, and between the United States and Japan over the critical monetary and trade questions in the world.

The Europeans are paying little attention to the intricate questions of the Vietnam cease-fire. They assume that these will be settled fairly soon, either with the agreement of Saigon, or in a separate agreement among Washington, Hanoi and the Liberation Front. In fact, the newspapers in Britain and in Europe have given up on trying to analyze Mr. Kissinger's facial expressions, and pay little attention to the last phase of the Vietnam talks.

Mr. Kissinger is clearly turning his mind to the problems of the future. President Nixon is already preparing his State of the Union Message, his Inaugural Address and his annual report on the state of the world. One has the impression that, whatever difficulties remain in the Vietnam negotiations, the United States is determined to have a cease-fire by Inauguration Day on Jan. 20 at the latest, and preferably to get some prisoners of war home by Christmas if possible, even if this means signing a cease-fire agreement without Saigon.

Mr. Kissinger talked the other day to President Pompidou privately about the monetary, trade and political questions between the U.S. and the European Common Market, and the related question of money and commerce between these two and Japan. He also had a talk in Paris with Jean Monnet, the architect and philosopher of European unity, and Monnet will be going to Washington late in January to carry on these conversations.

So even before these difficult negotiations about Southeast Asia and the past are over, the Administration is beginning to turn to the neglected and larger problems of the world. Mr. Kissinger initiated an inquiry into Washington's relations with Europe and Japan last June, during the Presidential election, but has been so preoccupied with the Vietnam question ever since that he has not had time to bring the European and Japanese questions to the forefront of National Security Council staff debate.

Now things are changing. The question of sovereignty over all of South Vietnam remains—and either Mr. Kissinger or General Haig or somebody else will have to go to Saigon again to try to persuade General Thieu to sign the cease-fire and avoid a separate peace—but the impression one gets here is that President Nixon is determined to have the Vietnam cease-fire behind him before he takes the oath of office for his second term on Jan. 20.