

White House Dashes Hopes

PRE-YULE PEACE RULED OUT

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Nixon has no plans at this time to make an announcement on Vietnam before Christmas, the White House said today.

Presidential press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said Nixon met again Thursday night and Friday morning with adviser Henry A. Kissinger, just returned from the latest round of secret peace negotiations in Paris.

Kissinger also is consulting with Secretary of State William P. Rogers, Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, and intelligence chief Richard Helms in individual meetings, Ziegler said.

Kissinger and his top assistant, Gen. Alexander Haig, briefed Rogers for an hour and a half late Thursday.

But the White House spokesman had no further travel plans to announce concerning the Vietnam negotiating, such as a trip by Kissinger to Saigon or a meeting between Nixon and South Vietnam's President Nguyen Van Thieu.

There are continuing Washington-Saigon differences over peace proposals. The sum total of the press secretary's remarks left an impression that the peace negotiations are pretty much at a standstill at the moment.

He declined again to characterize the status of the negotiations beyond saying "negotiations have taken place in Paris" and "we will stay in touch with the other side (North Vietnam) through messages."

Asked about the possibility of a presidential statement to the public before Christmas, Ziegler replied:

"There is no plan for the President to do that at this time."

Underlining Washington's differences with its Saigon ally was Ziegler's challenge Thursday of a report from Paris that the United States backs Thieu's new package proposal for a pre-Christmas cease-fire extending into the new year.

The White House spokesman referred to the permanent cease-fire envisioned in the nine-point peace plan worked on by Kissinger and Tho since October and said:

"We have a proposal now being negotiated on a cease-fire and we support no other position on a cease-fire."

Thieu has stoutly opposed portions of the nine-point plan, including its lack of formal provision for withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops from the South. He also is said to want assertion of his government's sovereignty over all of South Vietnam, which the Communists oppose.

Nixon may send Kissinger or Haig to Saigon again in a further effort to line up Thieu on the peace agreement. But Ziegler told of no future travel plans for either White House aide.

Meanwhile some unresolved difficulties were said to exist with North Vietnam in the wake of the lengthy Kissinger-Tho parleys during the past 3½ weeks.

Senior U.S. officials refused to specify what obstacles remain, nor would they predict when a settlement might be reached.

In Paris, with Kissinger gone and Tho preparing to leave today for Hanoi, the semipublic portion of the peace talks resumed and both sides escalated their recriminations, noticeably muted during the Kissinger-Tho talks.