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WASHINGTON, Dec. 19—In the aftermath of the breakdown of the Paris negotiations, and the renewed bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong, some diplomats, officials and newsmen are wondering aloud whether any possible strains have developed between President Nixon and his chief negotiator and foreign policy adviser, Henry A. Kissinger. The speculation is based on both reasonable deductions and intangible evidence. The rumors have been magnified by the current confusion in Washington about almost everything dealing with Vietnam. Despite Mr. Kissinger's news conference on Saturday, there is uncertainty about the reasons for the collapse of the Paris talks, and the brief White House announcement yesterday about the bombing fell short of an explanation of why it was ordered.

Summed up, the speculation amounts to a feeling that the concessions made by Hanoi in October, which were reported by Mr. Kissinger on Oct. 26 as the breakthrough to a settlement, were not seen in the same light by Mr. Nixon after Saigon's objections became known.

This view holds that Mr. Nixon decided subsequently to order Mr. Kissinger to seek a "tighter" settlement than originally envisaged, one that up to now Hanoi has not been willing to accept.

Loyalty Not Questioned

Despite the differences, if any, there seems no reason to doubt that Mr. Kissinger serves the President as a loyal assistant. Frequently, advisers and Presidents have seen issues in different ways, but once a President makes a decision, an adviser carries it out. There is no sign that Mr. Kissinger does anything but that.

Moreover, such speculation is not unusual in Washington, where as much attention is often focused on the mechanics and personalities of policy-making as on the policies themselves. It is also not the first time that rumors have circulated about supposed differences between the outspoken, brilliant former Harvard professor and the President.

One theory expressed in recent days in Washington is that when Mr. Kissinger, in his news conference of Oct. 26, said "peace is at hand," he was speaking both for the President and for himself, but that when Mr. Kissinger met with the press last Saturday to blame Hanoi for the breakdown in the negotiations, he was speak-

ing almost entirely for the President.

It was not by accident, proponents of this view say, that when Mr. Kissinger reported his inability to reach an accord, he put it this way: "we have not yet reached an agreement that the President considers just and fair."

Although Mr. Kissinger complained about Hanoi's negotiating tactics, he seemed to speak more in sorrow than in anger.

"The negotiations have had the character where a settlement was always just within our reach," he said, "and was always pulled just beyond our reach when we attempted to grasp it." He said the negotiations were frustratingly close to an agreement—99 percent settled, he said at one point — but were held back by a difference over one key point and several minor ones.

But was the fault for the failure to reach an agreement solely Hanoi's? Here the confusion is heightened.

Saigon a Factor

There is some evidence that Mr. Kissinger believed that Saigon was at least equally to blame for the impasse, and that instead of directing all American fury at Hanoi, pressure might have been also applied on President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam.

In Paris last week, shortly before the conclusion of the talks, James Reston of The New York Times reported that responsible officials there were frustrated over the futile debate caused by Saigon's desire to have sovereignty over all of South Vietnam written into the agreement. A similar report was written by Joseph Kraft, a syndicated columnist. These reports, based on high-level discussions, said that Hanoi had balked at any language proposed by the United States that would give Saigon a basis for claiming that it had sovereign right over all of South Vietnam.

Moreover, both Mr. Reston and Mr. Kraft suggested that the American view in Paris was that only by applying direct pressure on Saigon could an agreement be achieved. Their reports did not indicate that the Americans held Hanoi chiefly to blame. But that was the central point of Mr. Kissinger's Saturday news conference and subsequently the rationale for the stepped up bombing raids.

Debate Involves DMZ

Since then officials have said that the debate in Paris revolved around American efforts to get Hanoi to reaffirm its support for making the demilitarized zone between North Vietnam and South Vietnam a temporary border.

Mr. Kissinger said on Saturday that Hanoi had agreed to such language early in the week of Nov. 20 but withdrew its agreement on Dec. 4. No one knows the reason, but it may have been because of the concern of the Vietcong that such language would, in effect, deprive it of being an equal power in South Vietnam and make it a subversive force, backed by "illegal" North Vietnamese forces.

Even so, the United States continued to press for the point. Presumably this was done to make sure that South Vietnam would sign the agreement and not cause a political furor by compelling Washington and Hanoi to sign over its head.

After Mr. Kissinger came here to report to Mr. Nixon last week, the Administration decided to blame Hanoi entirely for the breakdown of talks, thereby exonerating Saigon. Since then Washington officials in justifying the new bombing, have pointed to Mr. Kissinger's description of Hanoi as not interested in serious negotiation.

The question remains whether the demilitarized zone was so important an issue that it should have been allowed to hold up agreement.

Mr. Kissinger's comments at different times in these negotiations have varied from one another. And many of his remarks and attitudes last Saturday clearly differed from his earlier opinions.

For example, Mr. Kissinger showed no particular concern about the demilitarized zone on and shortly after Oct. 26. His view then, as reflected by his aides, was that the cease-fire agreement as worked out with North Vietnam was a good one even though it did not take special note of the DMZ.

Safeguards Cited

His argument was that provisions of the cease-fire already included safeguards to prevent a major attack by North Vietnam against the South.

For instance, he pointed out on Oct. 26 that the nine-point draft in the South, barred any replacement for these forces. If Hanoi were to abide by the accord, then, it could not reinforce its forces in the South. He also contended that if Hanoi chose to violate the agreement flagrantly, it would do so whether a DMZ was called for in the agreement or not.

As to the argument that the zone was needed to delineate the two Vietnams, Mr. Kissinger argued that political arrangements in Vietnam had to be negotiated by the Vietnamese once the Americans left. All that Washington was seeking, he said many times, was an accord that did not impose a Communist government on

Saigon, one that gave Saigon a good chance of fending for itself.

But on Saturday Mr. Kissinger said the United States wanted some language "however vague, however illusive, however indirect," that would "make clear that the two parts of Vietnam would live in peace with each other and that neither side would impose its solution on the other by force."

In other words, the United States was seeking some acknowledgment by Hanoi that the Saigon Government had a right to exist.

Dispute Over Supervision

Another point Mr. Kissinger stressed Saturday was that Hanoi's idea of an international supervisory commission, if put into effect, would paralyze the group and prevent it from being an effective monitoring force. He noted that Hanoi wanted to limit the force to 250 men with its freedom of movement sharply curtailed. Earlier, Hanoi was said to have agreed to a 5,000-man force, as contemplated by the United States. In any case, in October supervisory machinery. On Oct. 26, for instance, he joked about the provisions for the force, saying that they "will not doubt occupy graduate students for many years to come."

In private people close to Mr. Kissinger were saying that it was unrealistic to expect that a cease-fire would depend on whether a group of Canadians, Hungarians, Indonesians and Poles would monitor it fairly.

Previous supervisory teams had failed, and these officials were saying that a cease-fire would only be effective if the big powers, the United States, the Soviet Union and China, used their influence to make sure their allies respected it.

Air Force Would Remain

Moreover, the United States was leaving its air force in Thailand and aboard Seventh Fleet ships to retaliate against flagrant violations by North Vietnam, Mr. Kissinger noted.

The October draft agreement was admittedly a "loose" document, Mr. Kissinger and his aides said, but it at least provided the framework for a cease-fire and a way for Vietnamese to work out their political problems.

If Mr. Thieu had agreed with Mr. Kissinger's interpretation in October, an accord might have been signed by Oct. 31, or soon afterward. But Mr. Thieu, seeing a variety of problems with the agreement, said he could not sign such a document without endangering his own country's security.

He argued that the Communists, given equal footing in South Vietnam, would use subversive methods to take over eventual power. He was also

apprehensive about the future of his Government if the United States military presence were not maintained. His concern did not seem assuaged by the promises of extensive American aid.

It now seems that despite Mr. Kissinger's arguments in favor of the original accord, the Administration decided that it would not accept an agreement with "holes" in it. And between Oct. 26 and now the American position hardened and moved closer to that of Mr. Thieu.

A Saigon Role Indicated

Although Mr. Kissinger said on Saturday that Saigon did not have a veto over American actions, evidence supports the view that Mr. Nixon decided that it was not in the American interest to sign an accord with Hanoi over Saigon's head.

Though not all Mr. Thieu's objections were supported, Mr. Kissinger was ordered to gain acceptance of the DMZ proposal, which, in Vietnamese thinking, went to the political heart of the debate: Who is the rightful administrator of South Vietnam? This was an issue neither side had been able to settle on the battlefield.

From all accounts Mr. Kissinger, as the President's chief negotiator, did his best to carry out the assignment. It is unclear, however, why the talks were cut short last Wednesday and why Mr. Nixon felt so angered by the failure to achieve an agreement that he ordered the bombs to fall on Hanoi again.
