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Technical Experts to Join Talks

By Jonathan C. Randal
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PARIS, Jan 10—Henry A. Kissinger and Le Duc Tho conferred for four hours today in the third day of their resumed search for a Vietnam cease-fire agreement and scheduled another meeting for Thursday.

Both sides maintained their mutually agreed news blackout but observers were intrigued by a North Vietnamese announcement that the Thursday meeting would also include technical experts who have been negotiating since Jan. 2 on what were believed to be important, but not crucial, aspects of an agreement.

In the past, there have been relatively few such joint meetings of principals and technical experts. But this afternoon, Hanoi's deputy foreign minister, Nguyen Co Thach, and William H. Sullivan, deputy assistant secretary for East Asian and Pacific affairs, concluded the day's technical discussions at the American villa in the western suburb of Saint-Nom-la-Breteche and joined Tho and Kissinger at the North Vietnamese villa at Gif-sur-Yvette.

The only visible variation in the chilly surface atmosphere was provided by a North Vietnamese diplomat whom newsmen saw shaking Kissinger's

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hand as the presidential envoy entered the villa this morning.

Whether the handshake was meant to be seen was not clear, since both Kissinger and Tho have avoided being seen together in public since the American bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong in December.

During the long November-December negotiations, both men shook hands, smiled and even laughed together to the delight of photographers and television cameramen and thus helped create the false impression that they were nearing agreement.

Neither the United States nor North Vietnam today provided any indication that the present round of talks was going well. Indeed, North Vietnamese sources stressed that, despite the bombing, Hanoi is insisting on the original October draft accord pretty much unchanged.

Meanwhile, William J. Porter, head of the American delegation to the formal weekly peace talks since the summer of 1971, left Paris by air to become under secretary of state for political affairs, the No. 3 post in the State Department.

Heyward Isham, his deputy, will temporarily fill in at the formal talks. Although they have produced little but propaganda, the weekly session may provide some further insight into both American and North Vietnamese thinking now that the resumed secret negotiations have lasted nearly 15 hours since Monday.