

Haig to Join Conference In Florida

By Carroll Kilpatrick

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KEY BISCAIYNE, Fla., Jan. 13—President Nixon scheduled an early-morning meeting and a later, longer meeting Sunday with Henry A. Kissinger and Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr. for what appeared to be one of the decisive conferences in the long struggle to end American involvement in the Vietnam war.

At the second meeting the President is expected to decide whether he is prepared to approve the document Kissinger, his national security adviser, worked on in Paris this week with North Vietnamese Politburo member Le Duc Tho and what steps should next be taken in the effort to achieve a settlement.

The presence of Haig in the meetings suggested that he was being alerted for another trip to Saigon to brief South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu on the negotiations.

However, there was no official word on Haig's plans and no word on whether the President himself might decide to meet with Thieu.

White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said there are "no plans" for the President to address the American people before his inaugural speech Saturday. But Ziegler did not rule out the possibility that Mr. Nixon would have some report on Vietnam before that time.

The North Vietnamese statement in Paris that progress

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had been made in this week's bargaining sessions and Kissinger's airport departure statement that the talks had been useful were more optimistic than the statements issued here.

Ziegler said that the week's meetings in Paris were "serious," thus encouraging new

hope that progress had been made. Other than that he would not characterize the negotiations.

Before Kissinger returned to Paris last Sunday, Ziegler said that if both sides approached the meetings in a "serious" manner a settlement could be reached for a cease-fire in Indochina and a return of American prisoners of war.

A high American official asserted, however, that no agreement had yet been initialed. In the Kissinger-Tho negotiations in September and October it had been tentatively agreed that Kissinger would go to Hanoi to initial the document. At that time, it was believed that Secretary of State William P. Rogers would then go to Paris to sign the agreement.

There was no information available here on when or whether Kissinger would return to Paris or go to Hanoi and none on the President's schedule beyond Sunday.

While Ziegler was cautious and restrained in what he said—no doubt remembering the high hopes engendered by optimistic statements by Kissinger and the President in October and early November—he made it clear that the talks had not been broken off.

On the contrary, he said that American and North Vietnamese technical experts would meet again in Paris Monday, that Kissinger had returned "for consultations with the President" and that "both sides have agreed not to comment on the discussions while negotiations are still in progress."

Plans for today's announcements and for the Nixon-Kissinger-Haig meetings appeared to have been carefully orchestrated.

From the available evidence, the schedule was worked out well before Mr. Nixon left Washington Friday afternoon for what was described as "two or three days" in Florida to concentrate on his inaugural address and State of the Union message.

In a meeting with congressional leaders last week, the President was quoted as saying he believed he would know within a week after Kissinger and Tho resumed their talks whether progress could be made.

Despite Paris reports earlier in the week of a frosty atmosphere at the bargaining table, the sessions encouraged some hope because each day's meeting was lengthy.

On Thursday, when the

technical experts appeared at the table with the principle negotiators, new hopes were raised.

After the President arrived here Friday there was a flurry of interest because of reports from Paris that progress was being made, and old-time Nixon watchers sensed that much was happening behind the scenes even though nothing was being said publicly.

Shortly after 6 a.m. today, Ziegler awakened reporters to tell them that Kissinger would leave Paris at the conclusion of the day's session to fly here "for consultations with the President."

Why Ziegler made the announcement at that hour—several hours before Kissinger and Tho concluded their meeting—was never explained.

At a noon briefing, Ziegler announced that Haig was flying here from Washington to attend the meeting at the President's residence.

Formerly Kissinger's deputy, Haig earlier this month was sworn in as vice chief of staff of the Army. He has been at the White House on several occasions this week, presumably for conferences on Vietnam.

He has made nearly a dozen trips to Vietnam in the last

on Peace Talks

few years as the President's emissary, and he is in better standing with Thieu than is Kissinger.

Haig was in Paris with Kissinger for the early December bargaining that resulted in a break-up of the sessions. On Dec. 17, he flew to Southeast Asia to meet with Thieu and leaders in Cambodia, Laos and Thailand.

Ziegler was repeatedly asked for information regarding Kissinger's and Haig's future schedule but would give none.

To questions on the status of the negotiations, Ziegler replied: "I am not going to re-

spond to any question that directs itself to the negotiations. We will not comment on the talks or the conduct of the talks while the negotiations are in progress."

Asked if there would be consultations with Thieu, Ziegler said that throughout the negotiations "we have had . . . discussions and consultations with South Vietnam. That has been the case in the past and will continue to be the case, of course."

How these consultations will be carried out, he would not say, but it was believed here that they would involve more than consultation by cable.

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