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THIEU EXPECTED TO ACCEPT TRUCE PACT, OFFICIALS SAY, THOUGH PROBLEMS REMAIN

TEXT UNDER STUDY

Accord Is Reported to Contain No Provision for Hanoi Pullout

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Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Wednesday, Jan. 17—President Nguyen Van Thieu is expected to give his approval to the text of a cease-fire agreement brought to him yesterday by Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr. and the Government is now going over the details of how it is to be carried out, according to Vietnamese officials close to the presidential palace.

It was reliably reported that the agreement does not contain any provisions for the withdrawal of all the North Vietnamese troops now in the South. Saigon puts the number of these troops at 300,000, but the United States estimates the total at 150,000.

However, according to Vietnamese officials close to the talks going on here, the agreement will call for re-establishment of an effective demilitarized zone centered roughly along the 17th Parallel, as was provided in the 1954 Geneva agreements, and will include a formula for Saigon's sovereignty in the area the South Vietnamese Government controls below that line.

Sizable Control Force

The accord will also provide for a sizable control and supervisory force to see that its terms are observed, the officials say.

[The Associated Press quoted South Vietnamese sources as saying that Washington and Saigon would order a cease-fire Friday to prepare for the signing of a peace agreement. In Key Biscayne, the White House refused to confirm or deny such reports. Page 10.]

South Vietnamese sources said that if the details of how to carry out the agreement were worked out in Saigon and in Paris to everyone's satisfaction, a cease-fire could go into ef-

fect soon. The 23,800 American servicemen here could then be withdrawn within 60 days and American prisoners of war held by the Communists could be released, they said.

General Haig, President Nixon's special envoy, who arrived here yesterday morning, brought the Vietnamese-language text of the cease-fire accord, the sources said. They said that President Thieu was now satisfied with the principles

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of the agreement and was concerned with additional documents, called protocols, that spell out the specific details of how it will be carried out.

"There are still many details in the military protocols to be solved," one South Vietnamese official said. "But for the principles, the Government now agrees."

There was no official confirmation of this by the Government or by the United States Embassy, which is maintaining tight secrecy on all aspects of General Haig's visit here. General Haig, the Army Vice Chief of Staff, who long served as deputy to Henry A. Kissinger in the National Security Council, made no statement as he arrived at Tan Son Nhut Airport yesterday morning and is holding no meetings with the press during his visit.

No Truce Date Given

Soon after his arrival from the United States yesterday, General Haig and Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker went to the presidential palace for a meeting with President Thieu that lasted two hours and 35 minutes. General Haig then spent the afternoon at military command headquarters conferring with Army and Air Force commanders.

The general was accompanied on his trip here by John D. Negroponce, the Vietnam expert on the National Security Council staff, and two military assistants.

No sources here gave any date by which a cease-fire might go into effect, but there was speculation that an agreement, at least, might be announced soon, with an actual cease-fire to follow later.

Mr. Thieu is sending to Paris a delegation of military experts headed by Lieut. Gen. Vinh Loc, commandant of the National Defense College, to participate with American and North Vietnamese technical experts in drafting the military protocols of the agreement. The delegation will leave this week, according to Vietnamese officials.

Mr. Thieu is now reportedly willing to accept an agreement that leaves North Vietnamese troops in the South, after having long asserted that he would fight to the end unless they were withdrawn.

The details now being worked out concern such questions as establishing the Government's membership in joint military commissions with the North Vietnamese to control the cease-fire in many parts of the country, and establishing priorities in carrying out the stages of a cease-fire and of regrouping of the troops of both sides from contested areas and battlegrounds.

The American decision to stop the bombing and shelling of North Vietnam Monday night was seen by diplomats and South Vietnamese observers here as a sign to Mr. Thieu that President Nixon was satisfied that the cease-fire agreement was acceptable and that he would not be deterred by any further objections from Saigon.

"It is a clever gesture by President Nixon, but as long as there is no final agreement, anything like a bombing halt can only benefit the North Vietnamese," one pro-Government legislator said.

The halt in bombing was not mentioned here in the public press or on the radio until yes-

terday afternoon. But neither did the Government issue a public demurrer, as it did when President Lyndon B. Johnson halted the bombing of the North in November, 1968, also hoping to reach a peace agreement with the North Vietnamese.

President Thieu has made no statement to the South Vietnamese people about the imminent possibility of a cease-fire, but, according to Government sources, he and his close aides have issued orders for a new set of cease-fire contingency plans to be distributed to all Government offices in the country.

Communist officers have now begun telling their troops and agents that they may be able to spend Tet, the Lunar New

Year holiday which begins Feb. 3, with their families, according to American intelligence. So far military sources said, they are not known to have any plans for last-minute attempts to gain territory or otherwise improve their positions, before a cease-fire.

General Haig is expected to visit Laos and Cambodia before going on to Bangkok, Thailand, on Friday.



Associated Press

Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker and Gen. Frederick C. Weyand, center, U.S. commander, with Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr. at the airport near Saigon on General Haig's arrival.

The Peace Situation

President Nixon's order halting all hostilities against North Vietnam, together with the Saigon visit of Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., resulted yesterday in a new surge of expectation, peace rumors and widespread speculation that an agreement would be signed soon.

There was no official confirmation of any of the reports.

Attention centered on Saigon. South Vietnamese officials said privately that President Thieu was expected to approve the cease-fire agreement brought by General Haig, but cautioned that Mr. Thieu was still reviewing the details. No one in either Mr. Thieu's office or the United States Embassy would comment officially.

Many important questions remained unanswered. One was the actual contents of the agreement worked out in Paris. A second was Mr. Thieu's ultimate reaction to them and whether he would make further counterproposals. A third was what President Nixon planned to do.

And on all these points, with memories of the breakdown of peace efforts last month still fresh, there was a general atmosphere of caution in all the capitals involved and a reluctance to make predictions.