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EXCLUSIVE EYES ONLY

OCT 26 AM

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE 261120Z OCT 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)
FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0236 FLASH
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER
REF: WHS 2299

1. I HAVE JUST SEEN THIEU ABOUT HANOI'S PUBLICATION OF DRAFT AGREEMENT AND I FOUND HIM CALM AND RELAXED ABOUT IT. HE SAID THAT THIS IS WHAT ONE HAS TO EXPECT OF THE COMMUNISTS, THEY ARE TRICKY AND LACK SCRUPLES; THEY ALREADY HAD TRIED TO PRESSURE THE USG BY GIVING AN INTERVIEW TO NEWSWEEK IN WHICH THEY LEAKED SOME DETAILS AND NOW HAVE FOLLOWED UP BY LEAKING THE WHOLE PROPOSAL.
2. THIEU SAID THAT AS FAR AS THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE SITUATION IS CONCERNED, HE DID NOT ATTACH TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE TO IT. EVERYONE HERE UNDERSTANDS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS HERE WITH YOU. IT IS A NORMAL PROCEDURE THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE NEGOTIATED WITH THE DRV, THEN HAD COME TO SAIGON FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GVN, SUBSEQUENTLY RETURNED TO WASHINGTON FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT NIXON AND WILL TALK AGAIN WITH THE OTHER SIDE. PEOPLE UNDERSTAND ALSO THAT WHILE THE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE NOT YET BEEN COMPLETED WE WANT TO ARRIVE AT A SETTLEMENT OF THE WAR. THIEU SAID THAT AS A RESULT OF HIS SPEECH ON OCTOBER 24, EVERYONE HERE NOW UNDERSTANDS THAT THERE WILL BE A CEASE-FIRE IN A MATTER OF WEEKS OR MONTHS AT THE MOST.
3. I ASKED HIM TO HOLD UP ON ANY PUBLIC COMMENT UNTIL WE HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONCERT WITH HIM AND HE AGREED TO DO SO. SOMETHING ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINE, WHICH I HAD SUGGESTED, WOULD BE SATISFACTORY TO HIM.
BEGIN TEXT.

ANY AGREEMENT OBVIOUSLY HAD TO BE AD REFERENDUM TO THE GVN AS A PARTY TO THE AGREEMENT.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE PROPOSAL INCLUDING THE TIME OF SIGNING AN AGREEMENT NECESSARILY HAD TO DEPEND ON THE OUTCOME OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE GVN AND THE U.S. SOME PROBLEMS NEEDED FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND CLARIFICATION.

THIS WAS THE PURPOSE OF DR. KISSINGER'S VISIT TO SAIGON. MAJOR PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, BUT WE WANT A SOUND AGREEMENT AND WANT TO BE SURE THAT AS FAR AS POSSIBLE WE HAVE PROVIDED AGAINST FORESEEABLE CONTINGENCIES. SOME PROVISIONS STILL REMAIN TO BE WORKED OUT. IN OTHERS, THERE ARE TECHNICAL DETAILS WHICH NEED TO BE RESOLVED. ON FURTHER EXAMINATION, SOME PROVISIONS SEEM TO BE TOO AMBIGUOUS AND NEED TO BE STATED MORE DEFINITELY.

WE HAVE PROPOSED TO THE OTHER SIDE TO MEET WITH THEM IN PARIS AT ANY TIME AND ARE READY TO TRY TO WORK OUT WITH THEM THE REMAINING PROBLEMS. THE GVN AND OURSELVES ARE AS READY FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE, PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AS THE DRV. END TEXT.

4. I TOLD THIEU I WOULD FLASH THIS TO YOU AND WOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH NHA THIS EVENING WHEN I HAD A REPLY. HE THOUGHT WE DID NOT NEED TO ISSUE IDENTICAL STATEMENTS AS LONG AS WE WERE ON THE SAME WAVE LENGTH.
5. WARM REGARDS.

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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State Dept. review completed