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paris 1 (friar/deepe)

SAIGON, November 22--Promillinship. The South Vietnamese government's ~~ambitious~~ diplomatic strategy is to stall sending a delegation to the Paris peace talks as long and as much as possible--at least until January 20, when the new Administration is inaugurated in Washington--unless these three unlikely circumstances develop:

1. The Communists back down in Paris and merge the National Liberation Front delegation with Hanoi, instead of having the NLF as a separate entity, which the Saigon government has previously vowed it ~~will never accept~~ would never accept because it diminishes the sovereignty and legality of the legally constituted government.

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paris 2 (frisar/decpe)

2. World opinion shifts radically against the Saigon government. But so far, the Communist shelling of ~~towns~~ towns and violations of the demilitarized zone—which President Lyndon J. Johnson led the world to believe would not repeat not happen—seem to be making the government's anti-Communist position here more comprehensible to the outside world.

3. ~~Statements~~ President J. Johnson applies so much <sup>pressure</sup> on the Saigon government to go to Paris that ~~Thieu~~ Thieu can no longer stall without suffering serious reprisals affecting the conduct of the war—or even the longevity of himself and Vice President Ngo Nguyen Cao Ky in office. Rumors are rampant in Saigon that the Americans will attempt to ~~spark~~ spark a coup d'etat against Thieu and Ky—although these rumors are not given much credence in serious circles.

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paris 3 (frier/deepe)

"I see nothing now or on the near horizon to get a Saigon delegation to Paris before January 20," one reliable source explained. "And after January 20th, there will be some sort of a face-saving formula worked out between Washington and Saigon, but not repeat not between Hanoi and Saigon. Saigon is not repeat not ~~such~~ with the National Liberation Front having a separate delegation in Paris. It would have been if Thieu and Ky had acquiesced to Lyndon Johnson—but since they they have dug in their heels. Now there will have to be a complete new deal made in Paris and the new deal will have to come from the new administration. From Saigon's vantage point, it is better to ~~maintain~~ negotiate along with an American administration that will have to live with the Vietnam solution for the next four years, rather than with Johnson who ~~maintain~~ can make any deal he wants with Hanoi without having to suffer the consequences of ~~that~~.

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paris 4 (frin/r/decpe)

The source continued:

"What then will happen is something not repeat not happening—that is, the talks will drag on and on, maybe even at a lower level, with Saigon maybe sending an observer team only. And Hanoi's military position <sup>will</sup> go from bad to worse and ~~withdrawing~~ <sup>its</sup> ~~troops~~ troops will have to fade away. The thing is now the ~~As~~ Allies are winning the war on the battlefield, Hanoi will not repeat not allow itself to be defeated in negotiations. And being unable to win militarily or at the conference table, the only thing left is for Hanoi to remove itself by fading away—to lick its wounds and to fight another day."

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paris 5 (frier/deepe)

At the root of the problem of sending a delegation to Paris is the fact that the Thieu government believes—whether true or not—that part of the secret deal between LBJ and Ho <sup>in</sup> Na Hanoi involved first the <sup>removal</sup> removal of Thieu and Ky from office, and they being replaced by someone more agreeable to Hanoi, which may explain why the American pressured Thieu so much in October for the return to General Duong Van (Big) Minh—and second, in effect, a de <sup>de</sup> facto coalition government in Saigon.

And when Thieu and Ky learned this and sized up the LBJ peace package—knowing the American officials here were either lying to them or else not repeat not telling them the whole <sup>of</sup> picture—Thieu has remained adamant to avoid falling into a joint LBJ-Hanoi <sup>ambush</sup> ambush in Paris. While <sup>no</sup> one here pretends to know what Nixon's future position will be, Thieu and Co. <sup>is</sup> still cling to the hope that Nixon was being honest during the election campaign when he said he opposed a coalition government in Saigon.

(Sorry I have not received your dope sheet, so hope this is of some use to you as is. ~~Regard~~ Please just invent a byline for me. Regards Bev Deepe).

--end reuter