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delegation 1 (p rk/deepe)

SAIGON, DECEMBER 4--The official and semi-official South Vietnamese delegations leave for the expanded ~~Viet~~ peace talks in Paris this week, believing the Saigon government has won major concessions from the Johnson Administration, ^{2 + 50-90-13} but still planning to stall from making any significant decisions on substantive matters until the Nixon Administration is installed in Washington, and ~~they hope hope~~, American Ambassador Averell Harriman ~~is~~ has been replaced as chief American negotiator in Paris.

Whether lengthy procedural battles actually do facilitate the South Vietnamese government's stratagem, however, remains a question—even among American o matter of debate—even among American officials in various world capitals, some arguing that Hanoi may be ¹¹⁹ will to make significant procedural concessions in order to deal with President Johnson, rather than a new administration whi more hard-line administration which would have to live with the consequences of a hasty Vietnam solution for ~~the~~ the remaining four years in office.

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delegation 2 (park/deepe)

The several Saigon delegations also leave for Paris expecting hard fighting in their homeland during their absence, hard bargaining with both the Americans and their enemies at the conference and a rather spectacular propaganda ~~foreign~~ struggle with the Communists. Certainly, as the peace talks begin, American and Vietnamese officials here foresee the Communists continuing—perhaps escalating—their policy of "fighting while talking", although the intensity and form of fighting may ~~x-fluctuate~~ fluctuate, with American military officers predicting another concerted Communist offi offensive, but ~~will~~ while some political sources ~~t~~ envision or de-escalating the Communists reverting to ~~a souped-up~~ simply ~~soup-~~ souped-up guerrilla warfare and terrorism.

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delegation 3 (park/deepe)

And, while all the Vietnamese belligerents of the war may soon be facing each other across the con peace table, there seems little doubt here that the long-term objectives of none have shifted. The Viet Cong and Hanoi radios daily continue calling for the general offensive and uprising funneled to overthrow the legal Saigon government, ~~and hence~~ setting up a transitional coalition government with Communists playing a dominant role in it. And, the Saigon delegations, to be masterminded by hard-line Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky, are equally adamant in accepting only something close to a Communist surrender in the South, with the insurgents laying down their weapons in return for x being given full rights of other Vietnamese citizens, including the right to v use ballots instead of bullets in selecting rather than overthrowing Saigon governments.

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delegation 4 (park/deepe)

Hence, the battlefield developments may take on an even more significant dimension in the ~~near~~ future, with victories and defeats splashing up into the diplomatic arena. And so, as the Saigon delegations leave for Paris, it may be equally significant that President Nguyen Van Thieu at the same time begins a cross-country review of the current government drive to accelerate pacification of an additional one thousand hamlets ~~and~~ and to line up his provincial subordinates to work harder on the upcoming ~~1968~~ 1969 pacification program.

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delegation 5 (park/deepe)

The November political developments in the South which finally moved ~~S~~ the Saigon delegation to Paris must be viewed as a continuum of the heated ~~Paris~~ Palace discussions before President Johnson announced the bombing halt. Only a few hours before President Johnson's November 1 announcement, the American officialdom here rejected the last-minute compromise proposal of Vice President Ky that Saigon would still send a delegation to Paris to talk directing with Hanoi--but only on procedural questions, the implication being that the Saigon government no longer trusted the arrangements the Americans were making for them with Hanoi. *To the* Americans officials rejected the proposal arguing that these procedural *AND WANTED SUBSTANTIVE issues discussed* discussions would take months and Washington was in a hurry. *And,* then *ing* Thieu said he would refuse to send a ~~1~~ delegation to the November 6th meeting in Paris and would not join Washington in announcing *ing* the halt of the bombing over the North.

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delegation 6 (park/deepe)

During the past month of boycotting Paris, however, the Thieu government got the substance of that last minute proposal the American officials here had once rejected--in writing, Thieu got the Washington in its November 27th statement to agree~~ment~~ to direct Saigon-Hanoi talks during discussions of the future political settlement--and the Saigon delegation is also going to Paris simply to discuss initially procedures, which some Vietnamese officials predict may last as long as three months.

Another factor leading to Saigon's decision to end the boycott was the return to South Vietnamese ambassador to Washington, Mr. Bui Diem, who explained much of the Washington post-election ~~politics~~ political life to the Saigon officials. Diem was important in the pre-bombing halt period of the Palace discussions for cabling the government that the Nixon camp had urged Saigon to hold to a firm line until after the election. Whether Diem~~'s~~ brought back any word or not from Nixon's camp ~~was~~ rescinding this after the election, and urging ^{Saigon} ~~for~~ them to end ~~their~~ ^{its} boycott is unknown here. But, Vice President-elect Spiro Agnew has said, according to press dispatches reaching here, that Nixon did help ~~convince~~ convince Saigon to send a delegation to Paris.

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delegation 7 (park/deepe)

The American officialdom also used the traditional carrot-and-stick approach in mid-November to convince Saigon to end its boycott. The big stick was the ^{Public} ominous/tantrum of Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford, threatening to leave Saigon out in the cold if it did not go; and the carrot was the gentle, conciliatory manners and concessions made here by American Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, who ~~anted~~ sweated out seven drafts before the Vietnamese government approved the final Washington statement and announced Saigon would go to Paris.

The Washington statement of November ~~20~~ 27th gave the Vietnamese government not only the face-saving devices, but also the political assurances it had long wanted: no American approval for a coalition government in the South (which Saigon officials, including reportedly even President Thieu, had suspected the Johnson Administration had already tacitly agreed to with Hanoi), no repeat no territorial division of South Vietnam, direct Saigon-Hanoi talks on the future political settlement in the South, explicit and public definition of the two-side Paris conference, rather than the four-sided conference the Communists had been ~~shrewd~~ shrewdly propagandizing.

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~~deleg~~ delegation 8 (park/deepe)

Hence, by waiting a month, the Thieu government lost somewhat propaganda-wise to the Communists, but in turn gained more concessions from Washington which ^{may} ~~would easily~~ affect the short-range course of, if not repeat not the final outcome, of the peace ~~1~~ conference. ^{won} The Thieu government ~~received~~ ^{won} gained much more from Washington than it had asked for even ~~agreed to~~ before the bombing-halt: a better ~~under~~ high-level understanding with the Americans on the future course of negotiations, a dramatic undercutting of Communist propaganda that Saigon was simply puppets of the Americans, a ~~unif~~ unifying of Thieu's own government more than it had ever been before, an increase in the internal political prestige of Thieu, Ky and the whole government. And, Thieu ~~and Ky~~ ¹ also won time.

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editorial note 1 (park/deepe)

SAIGON, DECEMBER 7--Probeedhem. I've booked room at Embassy Hotel for Mr. Mackenzie for december 21, but reservation is subject to reconfirmation. Hotel would like to know his arrival time. ~~Sorriest~~ I'll ~~try my best~~ do my best best to help him during his visit here, although there is some chance I'll be on a field trip during that period. Sorriest ~~even~~ unable to file your request for Tuesday foreign report, viewve getting ready for January departure from Vietnam. However, I'll ~~eyell~~ try fild file for the economist if you like before his or mark's arrival. Regards Deepe.

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