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EXPRESS NEWS

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\* WHITE HOUSE: VN PACT TO BE SIGNED WITHIN WEEKS OR LESS

Washington, Oct. 26 (CNA-UPI): The White House announced Thursday that an agreement would be signed "within a matter of weeks or less" ending the war in Vietnam and bringing home U.S. troops and prisoners of war.

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, who has been conducting the negotiations for President Nixon, said the agreement called for a cease-fire in place to be followed within 60 days by the withdrawal of U.S. troops and the simultaneous release of all American prisoners.

He said the final agreement could be reached after one more meeting of three or four days with Hanoi's negotiators, and left it up to the North Vietnamese on when to arrange the session.

Kissinger said Hanoi had insisted on a deadline of Oct. 31 for signing the agreement but indicated this deadline might not be met, chiefly because of the need to work out final details of the agreement and to take into consideration objections raised by South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu. Kissinger said he was convinced Thieu would accept the cease-fire despite Thieu's address to the nation Wednesday which indicated a reluctance to do so. "Peace is within reach in a matter of weeks," Kissinger said. He added "we will not be stampeded" into an agreement that is not complete, nor "deflected" from one that is. Kissinger in effect confirmed the statement by Hanoi that a nine-point agreement was imminent. Generally it provides for a cessation of hostilities and the framework for a political settlement to be worked out between the Vietnamese.

## Disagreement on Deadline

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His only disagreement with the Hanoi report was the Oct. 31 deadline. He said the United States had agreed to work toward the Oct. 31 deadline but had not made a firm commitment to do so. Although the agreement specifies a cease-fire only in Vietnam it also provides that all sides would respect the sovereignty of Laos and Cambodia and not use its territories for hostile purposes -- which appears to mean, in effect, that the cease-fire extends throughout Indochina.

It also provides that all foreign troops be withdrawn from Laos and Cambodia.

"We believe that peace is at hand," Kissinger declared, saying the United States had made a firm commitment to sign the peace agreement after one more negotiating session. Kissinger said the timing of the agreement was not motivated by the presidential election. He said the administration had "no intention" of disclosing it and would not have if Hanoi had not broken the news.

At the Paris peace talks, the United States officially protested Hanoi's disclosure of the agreement. Ambassador William J. Porter called it a "most unfortunate violation of our understanding," but Hanoi denied there was any agreement to keep it secret. There would be no limitation, under the agreement, on U.S. economic assistance to Vietnam. But military assistance would be limited to keeping arms and equipment at current levels. This provision pertains to both sides.

Kissinger insisted that the negotiations to end the war were completely divorced from U.S. domestic political considerations.

An international commission would be established to guarantee the cease-fire, but Kissinger declined to say who would serve on it. He said Secretary of State William P. Rogers already was involved in consultations to establish such an organization.

"We have been very concerned about the divisions and the anguish the war has caused in this country," Kissinger said. "One reason the President has been so concerned with ending the war in a manner consistent with our principles is the hope that the act of making peace will restore unity." He expressed the hope that peace would be "an act of healing rather than a source of new divisions" within this country. Kissinger did not rule out the possibility that the agreement would be signed by the Oct. 31 target date established by Hanoi. But he said: "We will not be stampeded into an agreement until its provisions are right. We will not be deflected from an agreement if its provisions are considered right," Kissinger said.

\* Unsettled Issues

Washington, Oct. 26 (CNA/AP): Here are the "six or seven concrete issues" that U.S. presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger says need to be settled before a final Vietnam peace agreement can be signed:

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- The need to insure against final military langes in the pre-cease-fire period to gain territory and to protect against the "dangers of loss of life" and the possibility of a "massacre."
- Establish an international cease-fire inspection commission in place at the time a cease-fire takes effect.
- Clarify the relation between the military situation in Cambodia and Laos to the cease-fire in Vietnam.
- Clarify "misapprehensions" that appeared in an interview given Newsweek magazine last week by North Vietnamese Premier Tran Van Dong. Kissinger provided no specifics on this point.
- Clarify "linguistic problems" concerning differences in the English and Vietnamese translations of the proposed treaty. Kissinger gave as an example the need to insure that North Vietnam realizes the national council of reconciliation and concord that will oversee the election procedure will be an administrative body and not a coalition government.
- Obtain agreement by Hanoi that the current Saigon government will sign the final agreement on the theory that the nation which has suffered the most "should have the right to sign its own peace treaty."
- Settle "technical problems" concerning which parts of the 1954 Geneva Accords will apply in the new agreement.

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