

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 17, 1973

Dear President Thieu:

I have received your letter of January 17, 1973, and I have studied it with the greatest care.

I must repeat what I have said to you in my previous communications: The freedom and independence of the Republic of Vietnam remains a paramount objective of American foreign policy. I have been dedicated to this goal all of my political life, and during the past four years I have risked many grave domestic and international consequences in its pursuit. It is precisely in order to safeguard our mutual objectives that I have decided irrevocably on my present course. I am firmly convinced that the alternative to signing the present Agreement is a total cutoff of funds to assist your country. We will therefore proceed to initial the Agreement General Haig has brought you on January 23, 1973 and sign it on January 27, 1973. Thus we have only one decision before us: whether or not to continue in peacetime the close partnership that has served us so well in war.

Let me comment on the specific concerns raised in your letter. With respect to the protocols, I am bound to point out that these criticisms come extremely late considering the fact that for two and a half months we have been asking for your Government's joint participation in the drafting of these documents and your comments upon them. As late as January 16 your representatives in Paris refused to give any comments to Ambassador Sullivan. In our negotiations on these documents we

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E.O. 12356, Sect. 3.4

NSC 9/27/90 F90-868; DCS 9002254

By ADH NARA, Date 3-26-92

(NLN 90-27)

