

Signing: 'Convolutated' System

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 24—Because the Saigon and Vietcong authorities do not recognize each other, the signing of the Vietnam settlement in Paris on Saturday will involve "a somewhat convoluted procedure," in the words of Henry A. Kissinger.

Secretary of State William P. Rogers, in his first direct public involvement in Vietnam peace efforts since he took office, will sign one document in the morning and one in the afternoon.

First he will sign "a document involving the four parties," as Mr. Kissinger put it at his news conference, although its preamble calls them vaguely "the parties participating in the Paris conference on Vietnam" and its text refers to the "two South Vietnamese parties."

Mr. Kissinger said this vagueness was meant to get around the problem that the Saigon and Vietcong authorities "have not yet been prepared to recognize each other's existence."

For the same reason Mr. Rogers and Saigon's Foreign Minister, Tran Van Lam, will sign on the page and Hanoi's Foreign Minister, Nguyen Duy Trinh, and the South Vietnamese insurgents' foreign minister, Nguyen Thi Binh, will sign another page.

Later the Secretary and the North Vietnamese Minister will sign a document that is substantially the same as the first except that it will mention the names of the four parties, including the so-called Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, whose name, like "Vietcong," Mr. Kissinger avoided using throughout his briefing.

Mr. Kissinger observed at his briefing that the procedure had "aged us all by several years." He was apparently alluding to the wrangling about the relative status of the Saigon Government and the Vietcong, which used up the first seven months of the formal Paris talks on Vietnam and led to the creation of a distinctive item, widely called "the two-sided round table," for use by the negotiators.

The complex signing procedure is viewed by weary diplomats here and in Paris as a translation of the table's bizarre shape into "diplomatese."