

Cambodian Impact

White House and Rogers Differ on Peace Outlook

Washington

The White House, denying a policy rift with the State Department, yesterday disputed Secretary of State William P. Rogers' pessimistic view of the post-Cambodia hopes for a negotiated settlement of the

Vietnam war.

"I know the Secretary of State feels without question that the Cambodian operation has helped Vietnamization — and anything that helps Vietnamization helps negotiations," said presidential press secretary Ronald Ziegler.

About the same time, Rogers made an impromptu appearance at the daily State Department briefing for newsmen and restated his assessment of the diplomatic situation in softer terms than those he used in a weekend interview in London en route home from an Asian tour.

'EVENTUALLY'

"The success of the incursions in Cambodia does increase the probability of negotiations eventually," he said. But at present, Rogers said, "the prospects for a quick negotiated settlement are not too bright."

Ziegler dismissed reports of a rift between Rogers and Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, the President's chief foreign affairs adviser, over diplomatic dealings in Indochina and the Middle East.

"It would be wrong to draw a conclusion that there is a lack of unanimity in this Administration on foreign policy," Ziegler said. "I have observed no problems where key decisions are made."

CHINA

The White House came down hardest on Rogers' remark in London that the Cambodia operation had strengthened China's influence in Hanoi and his earlier assertion that Peking is "the key to the future of Indochina."

Ziegler told questioners that North Vietnam's relations with China have always fluctuated and that "it's difficult to say if Hanoi is closer to China" as a result of the Cambodian operation.

On this point, Rogers was asked at the State Department whether the influence of China, which favors continued fighting over negotiations, wouldn't have a "negative effect" on the possibility of fruitful peace talks.

ANSWER

To this Rogers replied: "I would not conclude that. I don't know for sure. There's no reason to think that Hanoi and the Soviet Union won't come to the realization that Vietnamization is working."

Rogers also said that the Chinese "seem to have more influence, but that doesn't exclude the possibility that Hanoi and the Soviet Union's views may prevail."

In London, Rogers had told a television reporter that "we do know they (the Chinese) have increased their influence with Hanoi as a result of the Cambodian incursions" and that "we think it serves their purposes to have the war continue."

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