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## Zumwalt Refuses VA Post

Washington

Admiral Elmo Zumwalt Jr., retiring chief of naval operations, said yesterday he had refused appointment as head of the besieged Veterans Administration because "it was not possible to do that job in the way it ought to be done."

Zumwalt, who leaves his Pentagon post today for private life, said the VA job offer was extended by White House chief of staff Alexander M. Haig Jr. at President Nixon's behest.

Administrator Donal Johnson, target of much congressional criticism, has announced his resignation but remains in the office pending appointment of a successor.

"I feel that veterans of the Southeast Asia war have not been well served," Zumwalt said. "Much improvement in benefits would be required and I did not see a way of getting that changed."

Pressed on that comment, Zumwalt added only, "I think the domestic political condition is such that important, innovative new programs have very little chance for success."

A.P.