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**Rogers Said 'Our Hands  
Are Clean' on Cambodia**

**Although In on Raid Plans, Secretary  
Repeatedly Told Senators U.S. Did Not  
Violate Phnom Penh Neutrality**

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 24 — Secretary of State William P. Rogers, who participated in the decision to begin the secret bombing of Cambodia in March of 1969, repeatedly assured the Senate Foreign Relations committee more than a year later that the United States was doing nothing to violate Cambodian neutrality, excerpts from his classified testimony showed today.

Asked generally at the time about the American role in Cambodia, Mr. Rogers declared, according to the transcript: "Cambodia is one country where we can say with complete assurance that our hands are clean and our hearts are pure."

He also told the Senators, "Our best policy is to be as quiet as possible, to avoid any action which appears to violate the neutrality of Cambodia."

At no time, according to the excerpts, did Mr. Rogers explicitly say that no bombing was taking place.

There were also these related developments today:

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the former Cambodian chief of staff, denied that he authorized the secret bombing raids in 1969 and 1970. The denial came in a cablegram sent to The New York Times in response to an inquiry.

The Defense Department revealed that 81 American servicemen, most of them members of the Special Forces, had been killed in Laos and Cambodia since 1965 while on secret missions. Their deaths were falsely reported to their families and to Congress as having occurred in South Vietnam, a Pentagon

Continued on Page 4, Column 4

Continued From Page 1, Col. 2  
spokesman said.

The Senate Armed Services Committee announced that it had summoned Gen. John D. Ryan, the outgoing air force chief of staff, and Robert C. Seamans Jr., the former Secretary of the Air Force, to testify about the falsification

of records of the secret Cambodian bombing.

Well-informed sources told The New York Times today that Mr. Rogers was one of five key advisers who formulated the plan for secret bombing of Cambodia. Under that plan, as approved by President Nixon, 3,630 sorties were flown by B-52's and more than 100,000 tons of bombs were dropped between early 1969 and May, 1970. During the bombing, which was not disclosed until last week, the United States was officially professing respect for Cambodia's neutrality in the Vietnam war.

Asked for comment, a State Department spokesman noted that Prince Sihanouk had, in fact, been informed of the bombing and then added:

"There couldn't be any violation of Cambodian neutrality when the head of the Cambodian Government asked for assistance and acquiesced in it. The fact of the matter is that statements of general respect for Cambodian neutrality and sovereignty and the bombing limited to the sanctuaries in which Sihanouk acquiesced are quite consistent.

The transcript, a summary of which has been made available to The New York Times, asserted that some bombing had apparently been tacitly approved by Prince Sihanouk, who by the date of the Senate hearing — April 2, 1970 — had been ousted by a coup d'etat.

Early in the hearing, the transcript shows, the Secretary of State noted that the Prince had from time to time "indicated that, in fact stated, made it clear, that he did not object to bombing by the United States in Cambodia as long as there were no Cambodians in the area."

Sources who attended the hearing said that Dr. Rogers did not elaborate on the remark, which was volunteered, except to say in response to a question from Senator Stuart Symington, Democrat of Missouri, that there was no agreement between the United States and Prince Sihanouk about bombing.

Mr. Symington, chairman of the armed service committee, which has been investigating the falsification of official air force records of the secret bombing, said in a telephone interview today that after the

Rogers testimony "I had no idea that there had been any bombing in previous months."

"It would appear that Secretary Rogers was carrying out a policy that originated in the National Security Council," Mr. Symington said.

Senator Mike Mansfield, the majority leader, similarly said in a telephone interview that nothing he had heard during Mr. Rogers's testimony led him to believe that a systematic B-

52 bombing campaign had been authorized.

"I only knew whatever Rogers said," Mr. Mansfield noted, "and I believed him."

Another participant in the hearing noted that "the thrust of it was that we were as clean as a hound's tooth."

In rebuttal, a State Department spokesman noted that Mr. Rogers had testified again before the Senate Committee on April 27, and said that a transcript of that appearance showed that a number of Senators — including Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, and Senator Symington — understood exactly what the secretary was talking about.

In addition, the spokesman said, Senator Mansfield had been told of the bombing by Prince Sihanouk during a visit to Cambodia in August, 1969.

Congressional sources said that some Senators were particularly rankled, in light of last week's disclosures about the secret bombing, that Mr. Rogers had initially been requested to testify at an open session of the committee to discuss the steadily deteriorating Cambodian situation. He declined to do so, the sources said, explaining that his reasons for doing would become apparent during his testimony.

During his subsequent classified testimony, he repeatedly urged the committee to state publicly that the United States was respecting Cambodia's neutrality, a step it did not take.

Mr. Rogers emphatically denied any American role in the coup that toppled Prince Sihanouk and permitted Marshal Lon Nol to become Premier. Mr. Rogers added:

"We do not want to say any-

thing that would suggest that we are working in collaboration with the present government in Cambodia. It isn't true. If we suggested that, it would make it more difficult for the present government to maintain a neutral stance.

"I think it is highly important now to be sure that we do not conduct ourselves in such a way that suggests that we do not want Cambodia to remain neutral and that we have any intention of widening the war."

**Reassurance Offered**

When Senator Symington and other members of the committee expressed apprehension over the apparently deepening American involvement, Mr. Rogers assured them that President Nixon's interests were "exactly the same" as those expressed by the committee.

At one point, according to the transcript, Mr. Symington warned: "If we get into Cambodia in a big way or in any real way, then I am going to turn and say my piece about the war."

Little has been said publicly about Mr. Rogers's role in the initial decision to bomb secretly, but reliable sources said he attended at least some of the planning sessions in the White House along with the President, Melvin R. Laird, then Secretary of Defense, Henry A. Kissinger, Mr. Nixon's adviser on national security, and Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, then the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Also at some of those meetings, the sources said, was Alexander M. Haig Jr., then a colonel on Mr. Kissinger's staff, and now the White House chief of staff.

One source said that Mr. Rogers chafed about the rigid secrecy imposed on the operations, which apparently prevented him from fully informing his immediate staff or any Foreign Service officers about the bombing.

In an interview this week, Lloyd M. Rives, a Foreign Service officer who was named charge d'affaires in Phnom Penh in August, 1969, when the United States reopened its embassy there, said that he had had no idea about the sustained B-52 operations. Mr. Rives, now director of Laotian and Cambodian affairs in the State Department, also said that it was not known to the diplomatic corps in Phnom Penh and was never discussed with him by Cambodian officials.