

# Rogers Tells of Viet Peace Stand

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## Washington

Secretary of State William P. Rogers said yesterday that the United States is willing to work out a military agreement in Indochina while leaving strictly political problems to be settled at a later date.

"We have proposed something of that kind in private talks in the past and the proposals still stand," Rogers said.

This type of limited agreement would involve a cease-fire, withdrawal of U.S. troops and the return of POWs but would not sort out such thorny political problems as the makeup of the Saigon government nor the method by which it should be chosen.

Rogers said, however, that he has no reason to believe the North Vietnamese might be more willing to accept

these proposals now than they were in the past.

U.S. strategists suspect that the U.S. offer to withdraw all forces by a fixed date in return for a cease-fire and the return of POWs — which North Vietnam spurned in 1971 — may be served back to Washington by Hanoi with some variations.

Rogers, interviewed on NBC's "Meet the Press," said he does not know who would handle any private talks for the United States.

"There may be different people at different times," he said.

Asked if he is willing to push for a coalition government in Saigon in an effort to reach a settlement, Rogers replied, "those matters are matters that have to be decided by the Vietnamese."

On other aspects of the war Rogers said:

- The next three weeks are going to be extremely difficult for South Vietnam. President Nixon has done everything a reasonable man could do to negotiate a settlement, and he is determined not to surrender, not to be defeated and not to have South Vietnam taken over by military force." Rogers did not spell out why the next three weeks will be such a challenge.

- If the enemy is now serious about negotiating a settlement, the United States is willing to seek an accord, "As you know, we

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have indicated a willingness to settle either militarily or have a settlement, including both military and political factors."

- He did not know if the Soviet Union was advising Hanoi to re-enter negotiations and offer political sessions, but "we hope so." Rogers said it is also hoped that the Soviet union would stop sending offensive weapons to Hanoi.

- The United States is not stuck forever with a policy of bombing and shelling, but it will not allow the present North Vietnamese invasion to succeed.

Rogers, questioned about the prospects of a treaty to limit use of strategic arms with the Soviet Union, said he and Gerard Smith, U.S. ambassador to the talks, would meet today with Mr. Nixon.

Progress had been made in the talks, he said, and it was hoped that any agreement would include limits on missile-firing submarines.

"We would hope that we would include both offensive and defensive weapons in any agreement," Rogers said.