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Peace Hint Should Come

Soon: Rogers

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WASHINGTON — (AP) — Secretary of State William P. Rogers says the United States should know fairly soon, perhaps in two or three weeks, whether North Vietnam seriously intends to negotiate an end to the war.

"The first three weeks are going to be extremely difficult for this country," Rogers said, noting there are about 18,000 Americans whose "lives are in jeopardy," in the besieged northern quarter of South Vietnam.

The secretary was interviewed yesterday on a TV program.

Secret Talks

Asked who would handle private negotiations that are expected to run concurrently with the public peace talks in Paris, Rogers said:

"We don't talk about who is going to take part in private talks . . . The important point, though, is . . . that we should be able to detect fairly soon whether the other side has serious intentions or not."

He referred to the renewed round of discussions as "the last time" the United States would try to work out a negotiated settlement.

Russ Role

Asked if the Soviet Union is "applying pressure or advising Hanoi to re-enter negotiations and offer some political concessions beyond what they have done before" the secretary replied:

"We can't tell . . . , but we will know better about those things during the next two or three weeks."

Rogers said there could be no settlement with the North Vietnamese on the offensive, but negotiations toward a settlement could proceed while the fighting continues.