

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird said today operations for bringing out U.S. prisoners of war from Hanoi "will start this next week," with more than 100 to be home within two weeks.

Laird said the POWs will be flown nonstop from Hanoi to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines over a roundabout route that will first take them over Vientiane in Laos.

But he said there would be no landing in Vientiane, as indicated Wednesday by presidential advisor, Henry A. Kissinger, in outlining terms of the

peace agreement. "Present plans do not call for a stop in Vientiane," Laird said.

North Vietnam will provide American officials in Paris with a list of POWs on Saturday. A spokesman for the U.S. delegation in Paris said the list will not be made public in Paris, however.

Pentagon officials said, meantime, next-of-kin would be notified before the list is made public unless the North Vietnamese make it public when they turn it over to U.S. officials.

Indications were that the list would

be made public early next week if next-of-kin are notified first. It was not clear whether under such circumstances all of the names would be released simultaneously.

In a taped interview on the NBC Today show, Laird gave no specific date for the landing of U.S. planes in Hanoi and left unclear when the first prisoners would be given their freedom.

U.S. OFFICIALS working on the POW release plan said this was likely to occur sometime near the end of the

two-week period following the signing of the peace agreement.

Asked in the interview, "When can we expect the first American prisoners to return home?" Laird replied: "The operation—it's Project Homecoming—the operation will start this next week."

But later in the program, when questioned specifically as to when the POWs can be expected back in this country, he refused to give a specific date, saying only that "more than 100 prisoners will be back in the United States within the first two weeks."

The start of Project Homecoming, referred to by Laird, could mean the arrival of a small group of Americans, including specialists to set up communication links from Hanoi to U.S. installations. These men are expected to arrive in the North Vietnamese capital in about a week.

Under the terms of the peace agreement to be signed Saturday in Paris, all American POWs in Indochina are to be returned within 60 days and roughly equal installments at two week intervals.

Laird said that will mean releases in

groups of more than 100 each. The Pentagon lists 591 Americans captive in Southeast Asia.

He gave no explanation for the westerly route from Hanoi over Vientiane rather than the more direct easterly flight pattern over the open sea to the Philippines.

AS PLANNED, Laird said the POWs will be given initial medical examinations at Clark before they are flown to Travis AFB in California, and dis-

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persed to one of 31 military hospitals nearest their homes.

Laird said "Operation End Sweep," the name he gave to the plan for clearing U.S. mines from North Vietnam's harbors and waterways, will begin shortly after the ceasefire becomes effective Saturday night.

U.S. Navy helicopters and mine-sweeping ships now in the Western Pa-

cific are moving on station at the present time," he said. But he added that, before clearing operations can begin, a meeting is required between U.S. and North Vietnamese officials, apparently to discuss the mine-sweeping plan and to exchange navigational charts.

As for the remaining 23,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam, the Pentagon chief said they will be withdrawn on a daily basis.