

# U.S. STEPPING UP ATTEMPT TO GAIN LAOS CEASE-FIRE

Kissinger's Asian Journey  
Will Include Talks With  
Officials in Vientiane

VIETNAM PARLEY IS SET

FEB 7 1973

Rogers Will Head American  
Unit at Meeting Opening  
in Paris on Feb. 26

NYTimes

By R. W. APPLE Jr.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 6—The White House today announced a further effort to achieve a cease-fire in Laos and plans for an international conference that will try to solidify last month's Vietnam cease-fire.

In a joint statement with the North Vietnamese, the White House said that the postwar conference to guarantee the Vietnam agreement would open in Paris on Feb. 26. Secretary of State William P. Rogers will head the American delegation.

A few hours later, Ronald L. Ziegler, the President's press secretary, disclosed that Henry A. Kissinger's forthcoming Asian trip would include a stop in Laos. In discussions with Laotian leaders, Mr. Kissinger will continue the effort to bring about an early cease-fire in the guerrilla war there.

### Laotian Sees Truce

The Laotian Premier, Prince Souvanna Phouma, predicted in Vientiane today that a cease-fire would be concluded within a week. [Details on Page 3.]

Mr. Kissinger, President Nixon's chief adviser on foreign affairs, is to leave Washington tomorrow aboard a Presidential jet plane.

Adding a few details to the meager joint announcement of the postwar peace conference, the State Department said that one of its prime purposes would be to persuade nations that have not fought in Vietnam "to associate themselves directly with the agreement."

### Consultations Under Way

This comment was taken to mean the Soviet Union and China, on whom, according to Mr. Kissinger, hangs much of the hope for Indochinese peace.

Charles W. Bray 3d, the State Department spokesman, said that the conference was expected to last for "days rather than weeks," that consultations among the 13 parties to the conference were already under way, and that Mr. Rogers would

Continued on Page 7, Column 1

## U.S. Widens Laos Truce Effort; Vietnam Parley Opens Feb. 26

Continued From Page 1, Col. 8

be assisted in Paris by William H. Sullivan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs, and George H. Aldrich, the department's deputy legal adviser.

Mr. Ziegler said that Mr. Kissinger, who negotiated the cease-fire, would not take part in the Paris conference.

In addition to the United States and North Vietnam, the parties attending the conference will be the Saigon Government and the Vietcong and the four nations on the international control commission—Canada, Hungary, Indonesia and Poland—as well as France, Britain, China, the Soviet Union and the United Nations.

The postwar conference was mandated by Article 19 of the cease-fire agreement, which required that it begin within 30 days. Its purposes were defined as follows:

"To acknowledge the signed agreements; to guarantee the ending of the war, the maintenance of peace in Vietnam, the respect of the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights, and the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination; and to contribute to and guarantee peace in Indochina."

Further talks will be held later to consider relief and reconstruction in North Vietnam, Mr. Bray said. He said he hoped that Japan might take part in those talks.

The first stop on Mr. Kissinger's Asian trip will be Bangkok, where he will talk with Thai officials and with the American ambassadors to South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. On Friday evening he will hold the meetings in Vientiane, the Laotian capital, before proceeding to Hanoi and Peking.

When President Nixon announced Mr. Kissinger's trip on Jan. 31, he said his adviser would open direct communications with senior North Vietnamese officials and discuss the postwar reconstruction program and postwar relations.

Mr. Kissinger said on Jan. 24 that he expected a cease-fire in Laos soon, but American planes have continued to bomb Communist positions here, especially along jungle supply routes. Article 20 of the cease-fire agreement specifically states that "foreign countries shall put an end to all military activities in Laos and Cambodia."

At the regular morning press briefing, asked about the seeming contradiction, Mr. Ziegler would say only that "we are prepared to observe the cease-fire in Laos when that time comes." He would not be drawn out about Article 20.

Mr. Ziegler was also asked about reports from Saigon that the release of American prisoners of war had been delayed because the United States had not submitted a full schedule of troop withdrawals.

Since American troops are already on their way home, he replied, "any delay is not due to any problem with U.S. troops withdrawals." He added that "we expect the first prisoners to be released soon," but supplied no date.

### U.S. Comments on P.O.W.'s

WASHINGTON, Feb. 6 (AP)—State Department officials said today that any North Vietnamese or Vietcong prisoners released by Saigon were processed and freed before the cease-fire went into effect Jan. 27.

The officials were commenting on a dispatch in The New York Times from Saigon that said South Vietnam reportedly released thousands of prisoners recently contrary to the cease-fire agreement, which provides that prisoners be turned over to North Vietnam or the Vietcong.

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, Feb. 6—The Vietcong delegation here today denounced Saigon's unilateral release of some 20,000 military and political prisoners as "a flagrant violation" of cease-fire agreements and "a perfidious maneuver."

A spokesman for the Vietcong's Provisional Revolutionary Government told Agence France-Presse in response to questions that the unscheduled release "puts the good will of the Saigon Government in doubt."

The Paris agreements provided for an exchange of prisoners, returning them to the side under which "they served." Saigon's move prevented the Vietcong from asserting authority over those who may not choose to return to the Communist side.