

House Panel Tells Rogers Aid to Hanoi Is Unpopular

**He Quotes Nixon in Terming Assistance
'Investment for Peace'—Also Gives an
Optimistic View of the Cease-Fire**

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN FEB 9 1973

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 8—Secretary of State William P. Rogers was warned by members of a House committee today that the Nixon Administration's proposals to provide a postwar economic aid program to North Vietnam were encountering growing public opposition.

Testifying before the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. Rogers gave a generally optimistic report on developments in Vietnam since the start of the cease-fire 12 days ago. He said those developments "certainly support our expectations that the agreement will work."

But in the question period several committee members indicated that the Administration would have problems getting approval of a key element in the peace plan—an American-backed rehabilitation program for North Vietnam.

Mr. Rogers, making his first appearance on Capitol Hill in nine months, said that the Nixon Administration could understand why there was opposition to aid for the former enemy. But he defended the usefulness of such aid, citing President Nixon's expression that it would be "an investment for peace."

Many members praised Mr. Rogers and the Administration for the cease-fire agreement, but others expressed strong reservations about the Administration's policies. At times the give-and-take became animated.

One of the sharpest exchanges occurred when Representative Donald M. Fraser, Democrat of Minnesota, a consistent critic of the war, questioned the Administration's policy of seeking reconciliation with North Vietnam while continuing to refuse to exchange Ambassadors with Sweden.

Last December, during the

Continued From Page 1, Col. 3

American bombing of North Vietnam, Premier Olof Palme likened the raids to Nazi atrocities, and this led to a chill in Swedish-American relations.

His voice rising in anger in his reply to Mr. Fraser, Mr. Rogers accused Mr. Palme of having made outrageous, vitriolic and gratuitous statements that "were not helpful" to ending the war.

"We believe that if a lot of people were quieter, the peace would have come quicker," Mr. Rogers said.

Asked by Mr. Fraser if the United States would refrain from sending an Ambassador to India as the result of sharp criticism by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on Tuesday, Mr. Rogers said no decision had been made, but "it is possible."

Daniel P. Moynihan, the Ambassador-designate, had planned to leave for New Delhi on Sunday, but yesterday the State Department said he had "no firm departure plans."

Mr. Rogers, in his opening remarks, ran through the provisions of the agreement and offered the following summary:

"The widespread killing has been stopped, the level of military activity has declined substantially from the first days of the cease-fire; the International Control and Supervisory Commission has placed teams at seven key locations; after understandable initial difficulties, the Four-Party Joint Military Commission is now functioning and is meeting with the International Commission, and direct talks between the South Vietnamese parties are now under way in Paris.

"Of course, there are many remaining problems to be worked out, but so far developments certainly support our expectations that the agreement will work, that the South Vietnamese people have a reasonable chance to sort out their own political destiny, and that peace with honor is being achieved."

He reiterated that the United States had "firm expectation" of a cease-fire in Laos soon, but he said that until then the United States would continue to

provide military support to the Laotian government.

Representative Thomas E. Morgan, Democrat of Pennsylvania, who is chairman of the committee, told Mr. Rogers that many members had received heavy mail critical of the Administration's plans to contribute to the reconstruction of Indochina, including North Vietnam.

Would Consult Congress

"We understand the opposition that may arise," Mr. Rogers said.

He said that any aid program would be examined in detail and efforts would be made to draw as many nations as possible into the rehabilitation effort—singling out Japan for special emphasis. He also reaffirmed that Congress would be consulted fully.

"I am of the view that if it is done carefully, it is an investment for peace that the American people will pay for," Mr. Rogers said.

Representative Morgan replied that he was "glad to see you're going to go slowly."

Another expression of concern came from Representative Benjamin S. Rosenthal, Democrat of Queens, who asked Mr. Rogers how to explain to his constituents how he could vote for foreign aid after the President "had cut off 100 domestic programs."

Mr. Rogers avoided the question by saying, "I'm not requesting your vote this morning."

At one point Mr. Rogers said he did not doubt that Hanoi still wanted to unite the two Vietnams, but he said he believed "they've given up the idea they can achieve their objectives by military means."

On another matter, Mr. Rogers said that the International conference on Vietnam scheduled for Feb. 26 in Paris would also cover Laos and Cambodia. Its purpose—as indicated earlier—will be to create machinery to which the International Control Commission can report.

Agnew in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, Feb. 8 (UPI)—Vice President Agnew discussed the American role in Southeast Asia with Prime Minister Abdul Razak today and an official Malaysian source said the two men found no great differences in outlook.

In a statement issued in advance of his departure for Manila tomorrow, Mr. Agnew said he had "found a basic harmony of views" with Mr. Abdul Razak on the future direction of Southeast Asia.

"We are both committed to the maintenance of peace and sovereignty and the encouragement of regional cooperation among the nations of Southeast Asia," the statement said.

The Malaysian source said Malaysia remained confident that United States air bases in Thailand would be dismantled "when it is clear to all that it is in the interest of all" to do so.

"We are not asking anyone to do anything not in their interests," the source said.

Continued on Page 5, Column 1