

U.N. AIDE STRESSES THANT'S '65 VIEW

Reiterates Stand on Effort
to Open Talks on War

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Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, June 17 —A United Nations spokesman today in effect reiterated a six-year-old statement by Secretary General Thant that if the American public had known the facts about Vietnam in early 1965 it would have agreed then that the bloodshed there should end.

Asked at today's news briefing about that Thant statement, William P. Powell, the spokesman, said that Mr. Thant had referred "to arrangements he tried to work out during the fall of 1964 and early weeks of '65 for a meeting between representatives of Hanoi and the United States, probably in Rangoon, Burma." Mr. Thant's suggestion was accepted by North Vietnam and turned down by the State Department.

After conferring with Mr. Thant later today, Mr. Powell said specifically that the Secretary General stood by his 1965 statement as it applied then and that he still felt that it was pertinent at the time.

Mr. Thant spoke at a news conference on Feb. 25, 1965, angered and frustrated after the collapse of a five-month-long personal peacemaking effort.

He said:

"I am sure the great American people, if only they know the true facts and the background to the developments in South Vietnam, will agree with me that further bloodshed is unnecessary. And also that the political and diplomatic method of discussions and negotiations alone can create conditions which will enable the United States to withdraw gracefully from that part of the world. As you know in times of war and hostilities, the first casualty is truth."

Mr. Powell's answer today was the first official acknowledgement here of Mr. Thant's peace efforts of that period, although reports on them have appeared in the press.