

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~  
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

SEND VIA BUNKER CHANNEL

November 30, 1972

TO: AMBASSADOR BUNKER, SAIGON *FLASO*

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER

1. Presidential meeting with Duc and Phuong on November 29 lasted some two and a half hours. Duc presented President Nixon with a 24-page double-spaced letter from President Thieu which attacked North Vietnamese intransigence, emphasized the unsatisfactory character of the current draft, noted inevitable North Vietnamese duplicity and the essentiality of the principle of North Vietnamese withdrawal and the inadequacies of the current language on the political solution. Thieu's letter also emphasized the GVN had been making major effort<sup>s</sup> to put forth a constructive formula<sup>s</sup>, denied provoking a press campaign, hinted that it was time for the two leaders to discuss frankly the objectives of a satisfactory peace settlement and offered to release immediately 10,000 NVA prisoners in a separate arrangement which would permit return of U.S. prisoners. *We will send you the full text.*

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*DP*

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E.O. 12356, Sect. 3.4  
NSC 9/23/93 F9301194  
By *MC* NARA, Date 9/30/93  
SA 99

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
NOV 30 1972  
SA 99  
C-40

~~TOP SECRET~~ 341447 NOV 72 SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY  
VIA BUNKER CHANNELS SECTION FOUR OF SEVEN  
FROM: THE WHITE HOUSE  
TO: EMBASSY SAIGON  
CITE: WWS2260

NOVEMBER 30, 1972

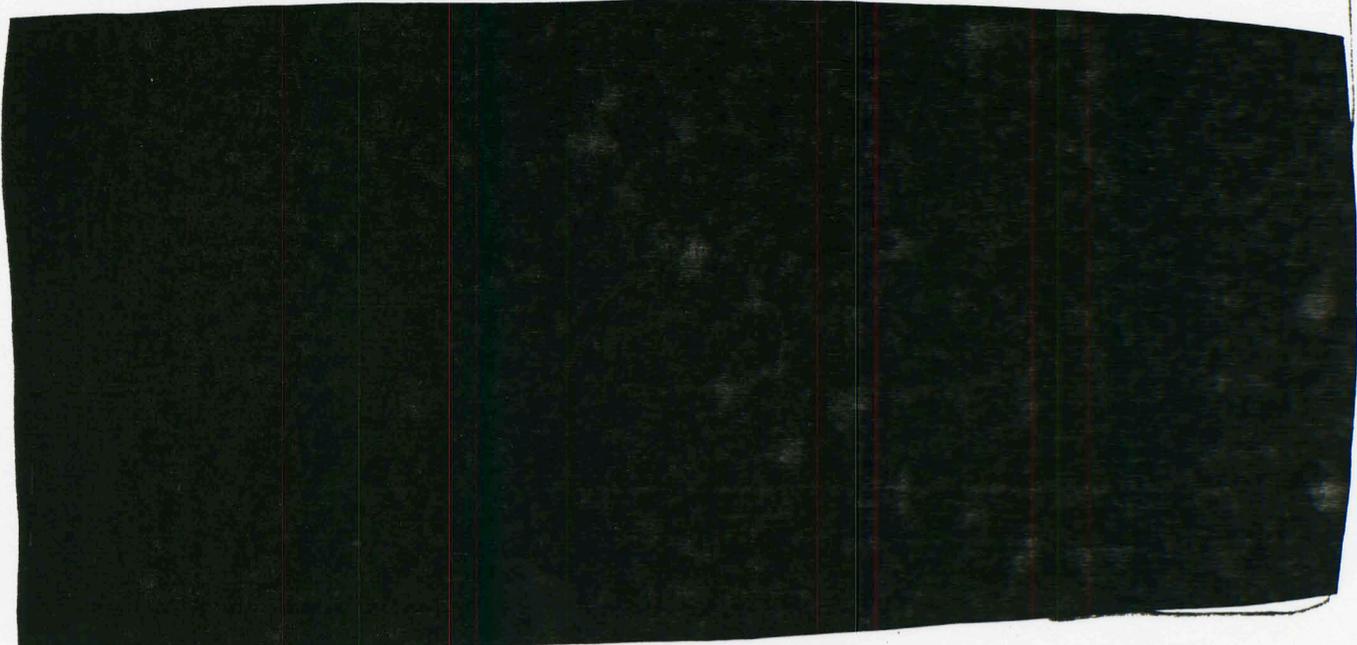
TO: AMBASSADOR BUNKER  
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER

DELIVER OPENING OF BUSINESS



*BP*

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E.O. 12356, Sect. 3.4  
NSC 9/23/93 F9301194  
By MRB NARA, Date 9/30/93  
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I HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT IN THE EVENT WE CANNOT ACCEPT THE ABSURD DEMANDS OF THE COMMUNISTS, THE UNITED STATES WOULD SEEK A SEPARATE ARRANGEMENT WITH NORTH VIETNAM FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF US FORCES AND THE RETURN OF AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR.

IF INDEED THE QUESTION OF THE PRISONERS OF WAR IS AN IMPORTANT QUESTION FOR YOU, I BELIEVE THERE STILL ARE WAYS TO OBTAIN THEIR RELEASE OTHER THAN JEOPARDIZING THE FATE OF THE 17 MILLION AND HALF SOUTH VIETNAMESE.

~~TOP SECRET SENSITIVE~~

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SA 99 C-4  
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~~TOP SECRET~~ 301440Z NOV 72 SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY  
VIA BUNKER CHANNELS SECTION FIVE OF SEVEN  
FROM: THE WHITE HOUSE  
TO: AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
CITE: WHS2250

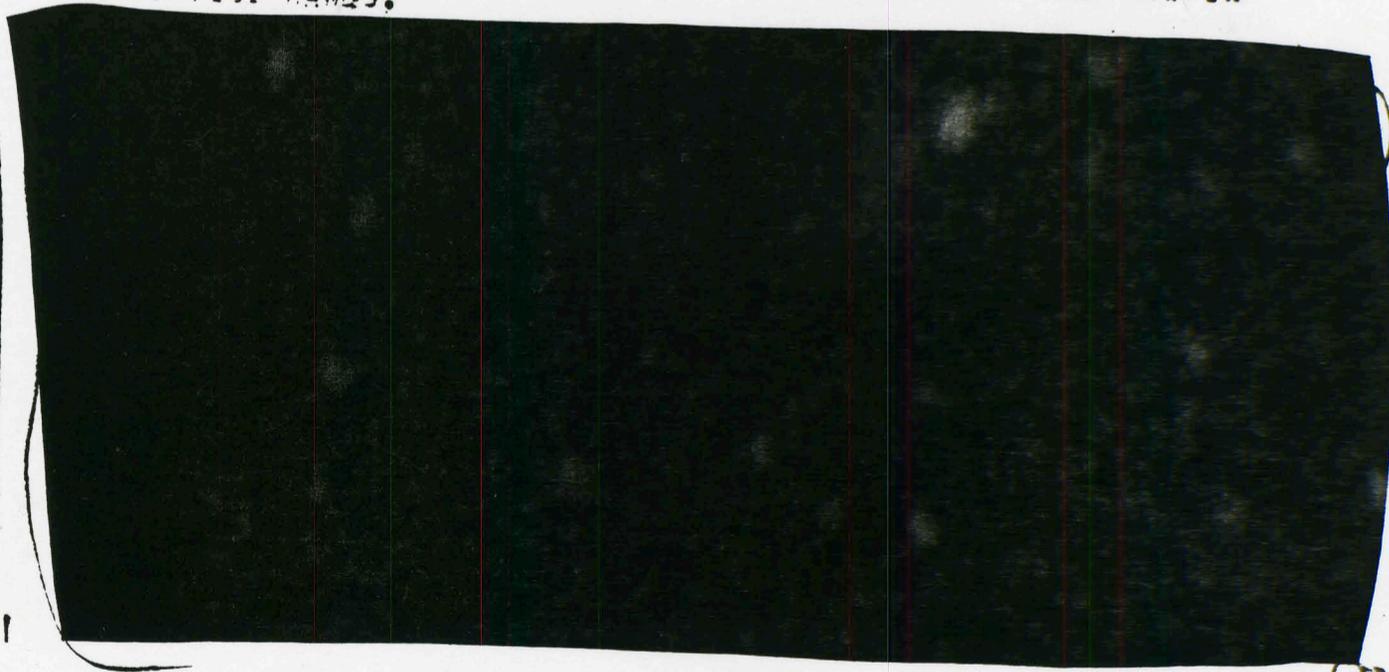
NOVEMBER 30, 1972

TO: AMBASSADOR BUNKER  
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER

DELIVER OPENING OF BUSINESS

ON THE QUESTION OF GETTING ALL THE US PRISONERS OF WAR BACK BEFORE CHRISTMAS, IF INDEED THAT IS WHAT YOU WANT MOST, I THINK THAT, IN DEALING WITH THE STUBBORN NORTH VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS WHO COMPLETELY DISREGARD HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES AND USE THE AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR AS POLITICAL HOSTAGES, THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE MORE ADEQUATE AND EFFICIENT MEASURES TO DEAL WITH NORTH VIETNAM AND WITH THEIR MASTERS WHO ARE THE SOVIET UNION AND RED CHINA. I BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED STATES COULD ALSO MOBILIZE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION MORE EXTENSIVELY BECAUSE OUR CAUSE IS RIGHT.

AS REGARDS THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, IN ORDER TO EXPRESS OUR DEEP GRATITUDE TOWARDS THE PEOPLE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES, WE ARE PREPARED TO DO ALL WE CAN FOR THE LIBERATION OF US PRISONERS OF WAR. TO THAT EFFECT, WE ARE READY TO RELEASE ALL THE 10,000 NORTH VIETNAMESE PRISONERS OF WAR IF THIS MAY HASTEN THE DAY FOR THE US PRISONERS OF WAR TO BE REUNITED WITH THEIR FAMILIES. FOR THIS, WE DO NOT EVEN DEMAND THAT NORTH VIETNAM RECIPROCATES IN RELEASING IN RETURN THE LARGE NUMBER OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE PRISONERS OF WAR NOW IN COMMUNIST HANDS.



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By MMK NARA, Date 9/30/93  
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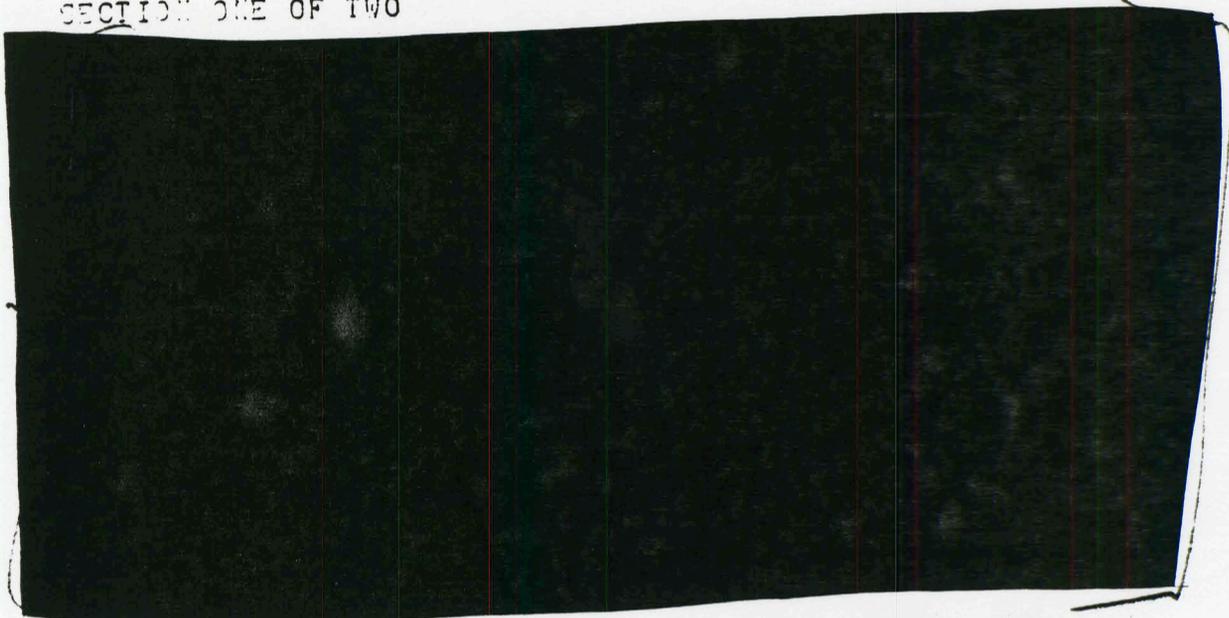
Tony  
Kennedy  
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~~TOP SECRET~~ 260510Z NOV 72 SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY  
VIA BUNKER CHANNELS

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER  
TO: AMBASSADOR BUNKER, SAIGON  
CITE: WNS2257

SECTION ONE OF TWO



YOU SHOULD INSIST OUR IMMEDIATE APPOINTMENT WITH THIEU AND DELIVER TO HIM PERSONALLY THE TWO TEXTS WHICH FOLLOW. YOU SHOULD TELL HIM THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR DUC TO COME TO WASHINGTON IMMEDIATELY, BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT WILL GIVE ME MY FINAL INSTRUCTIONS ON DECEMBER 1 RPT 1 AND I WILL LEAVE FOR PARIS DECEMBER 3 RPT 3. THIEU MUST BE PREPARED TO REACH A DECISION ON THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS PRIOR TO THAT TIME AND MUST THEREFORE HAVE AT LEAST ONE TURN AROUND OF COMMUNICATIONS WITH THIEU BEFORE I DEPART. YOU SHOULD MAKE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR TO THIEU THAT YOU ARE MERELY DELIVERING THESE TEXTS TO HIM IN SAIGON IN ORDER TO BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT THEY HAVE BEEN ACCURATELY RECEIVED. YOU WILL NOT RPT NOT BE AUTHORIZED TO NEGOTIATE OR EVEN DISCUSS THEIR SUBSTANCE WITH HIM. THAT CAN ONLY BE DONE BETWEEN DUC AND PRESIDENT NIXON. YOU SHOULD HOWEVER URGE THIEU TO INSURE THAT DUC PROCEEDS TO WASHINGTON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IF THERE ARE DELAYS IN THIS MEETING THE PRESIDENT WILL PROCEED WITHOUT THIEU.

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By            NARA, Date 9/30/93  
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[REDACTED]

THE TEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO ME FOLLOWS:

TO HENRY KISSINGER  
FROM THE PRESIDENT

I HAVE CHECKED TODAY AS TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE LEADING DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS WHO SUPPORT US IN THE SENATE ON VIETNAM. IN PREPARING THEM FOR THE CONSULTATION WHICH MUST TAKE PLACE ONCE AGREEMENT IS REACHED WE HAVE INFORMED THEM OF THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE OCTOBER 3 AGREEMENT --THE RETURN OF OUR POWS, A CEASEFIRE, AND THE FORMULA UNDER WHICH THIEU REMAINS IN POWER AND ALL SOUTH VIETNAMESE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A FREE ELECTION TO DETERMINE WHAT GOVERNMENT THEY WANT FOR THE FUTURE. THE RESULT OF THIS CHECK INDICATES THAT THEY WERE NOT ONLY UNANIMOUS BUT VEHEMENT IN STATING THEIR CONCLUSIONS THAT IF SAIGON IS THE ONLY ROADBLOCK FOR REACHING AGREEMENT ON THIS BASIS THEY WILL PERSONALLY LEAD THE FIGHT WHEN THE NEW CONGRESS RECONVENES ON JANUARY 3 TO CUT OFF ALL MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

TO SAIGON. MY EVALUATION IS THAT THE DATE OF THE CUT OFF WOULD BE FEBRUARY 1. THEY FURTHER BELIEVE THAT UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO GO IT ALONE AND TO MAKE A SEPARATE DEAL WITH NORTH VIETNAM FOR THE RETURN OF OUR POWS AND FOR OUR WITHDRAWAL.

[REDACTED]

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1972 SEP 27 PM 6 00

~~TOP SECRET~~ 272143Z SEP 72 SENSITIVE EYES ONLY BUNKER CHANNELS

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER  
TO: AMBASSADOR BUNKER  
CITE: WHS2171

1. YOU SHOULD INFORM THIEU AT EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY THAT WE MET WITH DRV DELEGATES FOR TOTAL OF 11 HOURS ON SEPTEMBER 26 AND 27. THERE WAS NO SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS AND NO AGREEMENTS OF ANY KIND WERE REACHED. WE HELD FIRM ON OUR BASIC PROGRAM INCLUDING POLITICAL QUESTIONS.
2. DRV SIDE DID, HOWEVER, TABLE YET ANOTHER PROPOSAL WHICH WILL BE TRANSMITTED IN IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING TELEGRAM. IT SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO THIEU FOR HIS COMMENTS AND STUDY PRIOR TO HAIG'S ARRIVAL. OUR PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT IS THAT DRV OFFER REPRESENTS NO MAJOR SHIFT BUT, IN RESPECT TO POLITICAL MATTERS, THERE IS MODEST THOUGH DISCERNIBLE TREND TOWARD DIMMINSHING SCOPE AND FUNCTIONS OF PROPOSED PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CONCORD.
3. DRV NOW PROPOSES THAT PRG AND GVN EACH WOULD BE FREE TO CONDUCT OWN FOREIGN POLICIES AND MANITAIN ARMIES. INTERNALLY GVN AND PRG WOULD EACH BE LEFT TO ADMINISTER AREAS UNDER RESPECTIVE CONTROL PENDING CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS SIX MONTHS AFTER AGREEMENT. INTERNAL TSKS ON NATIONAL CONCORD GOVERNMENT WOULD REMAIN EXTENSIVE, ALTHOUGH LANGUAGE HAS BEEN SOFTENED IN AREAS. GVN WILL RECALL THAT IN DRV AUGUST 10 PROPOSAL ALL REPEAT ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS WERE RESERVED FOR GNC. IN ADDITION NOW DECISIONS RE TO BE TAKEN BY UNANIMITY. NONE OF FOREGOING IS TO BE CONSTRUED AS MEANING WE CONSIDER OTHER SIDE'S POLITICAL PROPOSAL AS ACCEPTABLE. IT PLAINLY IS NOT.

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 By MZO NARA, Date 9/16/93  
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4. IN OTHER AREAS, IT EMERGED CLEARLY BOTH FROM DRV DOCUMENT AND DISCUSSIONS THAT WE REMAIN FAR APART ON A NUMBER OF MAJOR ISSUES. THEY DO NOT FORMALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE PRESENCE OF THEIR FORCES IN SVN AND ARE CLEARLY UNWILLING TO WITHDRAW THEM AS PART OF AN AGREEMENT; THEY REFUSE TO INCLUDE LAOS AND CAMBODIA IN ANY FORMAL CEASEFIRE OR POW PROVISIONS; AND THEY INSIST THAT THEIR SEPTEMBER 26 PROPOSAL IS FINAL POSITION. IN THIS CONNECTION YOU MUST DISABUSE THIEU ONCE AND FOR ALL OF ANY NOTION THAT WE ARE WORKING TOWARD A VIETNAM CEASEFIRE OR BOMBING HALT IN RETURN FOR OUR POWS. THERE HAVE BEEN ABSOLUTELY NO DISCUSSIONS ALONG THESE LINES. THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF THIS HAPPENING.

5. LOOKING TO THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, WE SEE PRACTICALLY NO POSSIBILITY OF A SETTLEMENT BETWEEN NOW AND NOVEMBER UNLESS HANOI TOTALLY REVERSES ITS POSITION. WHAT WE MUST LOOK TO NOW IS HOW BEST TO INSURE THAT WE KEEP SITUATION UNDER CONTROL IN THIS INTERVAL AND BEST POSITION OURSELVES FOR POST-NOVEMBER STRATEGY ALONG LINES I DISCUSSED PERSONALLY WITH THIEU WHEN LAST IN SAIGON. YOU SHOULD TELL THIEU THAT PURPOSE OF HAIG'S FORTHCOMING TRIP IS TO PURSUE OUR DISCUSSION OF THIS STRATEGY AND HOW WE PROPOSE TO HANDLE CONTINUED PRIVATE TALKS IN THIS CONTEXT.

6. HAIG WILL BRIEF THIEU IN FULL DETAIL. IN MEANWHILE YOU SHOULD CAUTION THIEU AGAINST ANY PUBLIC CHARACTERIZATION OF PRIVATE TALKS OR ANY OTHER COMMENTS WHICH MIGHT SABOTAGE SCENARIO WHICH WE HAVE PURSUED JOINTLY AND SO SUCCESSFULLY UNTIL NOW.

WARM REGARDS

~~TOP SECRET SENSITIVE~~ EYES ONLY

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1972 NOV 23 PM 7 58

~~TOP SECRET~~ 240030Z NOV 72 SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY  
VIA BUNKER CHANNELS  
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER  
TO: AMBASSADOR BUNKER, SAIGON  
CITE: WPS2255

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY~~  
VIA BUNKER CHANNEL  
TO: AMBASSADOR BUNKER FLASH  
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER

1. TODAY'S SESSION LASTED SIX HOURS AND WE WERE CONFRONTED WITH VERY LITTLE GIVE. AFTER GRANTING SOME IMPROVEMENTS, INCLUDING A MORE SATISFACTORY STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF THE DMZ, THE OTHER SIDE HELD RIGIDLY FIRM THAT THERE WOULD BE ONLY MINOR CHANGES IN THE POLITICAL CHAPTER AND NO IMPROVEMENTS WHATSOEVER IN THE TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT WITH RESPECT TO THE ISSUE OF THEIR TROOPS IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

CONCURRENTLY, THEY REITERATED THEIR DEMAND THAT THE POLITICAL PRISONERS HELD BY THIEU BE RELEASED WITHIN THE SAME TIME FRAME AS U.S. PRISONERS. IN RETURN FOR ONLY MINOR CHANGES IN THE POLITICAL CHAPTER AND RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, DUC THO STATED THEY WOULD MAKE A COMMITMENT TO RELOCATE SOME OF THEIR FORCES IN MR-1 AND TO BRING THE CEASEFIRE IN LAOS CLOSER TO THE TIME OF THE CEASEFIRE IN SOUTH VIETNAM. HE INSISTED THAT BOTH OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE IN THE FORM OF UNDERSTANDINGS RATHER THAN FIRM WRITTEN COMMITMENTS. HE INDICATED THAT IF WE MEET THEIR DEMANDS ON PRISONERS AND THE POLITICAL CHAPTER, THEY WOULD GIVE AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE ON THE NUMBER OF TROOPS THAT WOULD BE RELOCATED.

3. FOLLOWING TODAY'S MEETING, I MET WITH AMBASSADOR LAM AND THE OTHER SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADORS HERE IN PARIS AND OUTLINED THREE OPTIONS WHICH ARE NOW OPEN TO US. THE FIRST IS TO BREAK OFF TALKS AT OUR NEXT MEETING, AND THE SECOND IS TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSAL. INSIST ON THE ORIGINAL POSITIONS ON THE POLITICAL PRISONERS HELD BY THIEU, GIVING HIM THE ABILITY TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE VIET NAME FOR THEIR RELEASE. ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN A MINOR CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL PROVISIONS ALONG THE LINES THIEU HAS REQUESTED, AND INSIST ON THE ADDITION OF A REFERENCE WITH REGARD TO THE DEMOBILIZATION OF VIETNAMESE FORCES WHICH WOULD SPECIFY THAT THIS IS TO BE DONE ON A ONE-FOR-ONE BASIS BY BOTH SIDES. THIS PROPOSAL WOULD BE COMBINED WITH AN UNDER-

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NSC 8/24/93 F9301193

By 1120 NARA, Date 9/16/93

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DF

STANDING THAT THIEU WOULD RELEASE SOME POLITICAL PRISONERS IN RETURN FOR THE MOVEMENT OF SOME NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES FROM MR-1. THIS PROPOSAL WOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY BETTER OPTICALLY AND MARGINALLY BETTER SUBSTANTIVELY THAN THE AGREEMENT WE CONCLUDED IN OCTOBER. IT GIVES THIEU THE MINIMUM THAT HE HAS ASKED FOR IF HE WANTS TO BE REASONABLE, WHICH HE SHOWS ABSOLUTELY NO INCLINATION OF BEING AT THIS TIME. THE THIRD OPTION WOULD BE TO ACCEPT ESSENTIALLY NO CHANGES IN CHAPTERS 3 AND 4 BEYOND THE MINOR ONES WE HAVE ALREADY ACHIEVED TO INCLUDE ACCEPTING THE DEMAND FOR THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS BUT IN RETURN DEMAND THE WITHDRAWAL OF A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS.

4. I OUTLINED ALL THREE OF THESE OPTIONS TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AND SUGGESTED THAT OPTION 2 WAS BY FAR THE MOST ADVANTAGEOUS, RECOGNIZING THAT IT IN NO WAY MEETS THIEU'S CURRENT DEMANDS. I EMPHASIZED THE CONSEQUENCES OF A BREAK-OFF IN THE TALKS AND URGED AMBASSADOR LAM TO OBTAIN THIEU'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE THREE OPTIONS OUTLINED ABOVE, OR ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS WHICH SAIGON MIGHT HAVE FOR OUR NEXT MEETING. BECAUSE OF THE EXTREMELY TOUGH POSITION TAKEN THUS FAR BY LE DUC THO, PAIG AND I WILL MEET WITH HIM TOMORROW OUTSIDE OF THE NORMAL NEGOTIATING VENUE AND IMPRESS UPON HIM THE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF A FAILURE IN THE TALKS. WE WILL THEN CONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION ON SATURDAY MORNING, AFTER CONSIDERING SAIGON'S VIEWS WHICH WE HAVE REQUESTED TO ARRIVE HERE NOT LATER THAN FRIDAY EVENING PARIS TIME.

5. AT THIS JUNCTURE AN AGREEMENT ALONG THE LINES OF THE DRV APPROACH WOULD BE SOMETHING LESS THAN THAT WE HAD ACHIEVED IN OCTOBER AND THERE IS NO SIGN OF FURTHER FLEXIBILITY. THE PROSPECTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME DO NOT LOOK BRIGHT, BUT WE WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO OBTAIN SOME MOVEMENT ON SATURDAY RECOGNIZING THAT THUS FAR HANOI AND SAIGON ARE VERY FAR APART. THE REAL TRAGEDY IS THAT THIEU'S INTRANSIGENCE IN OCTOBER MAY WELL HAVE LOST US A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO ARRIVE AT A SETTLEMENT. COMMUNICATIONS WE HAVE RECEIVED THROUGH HIS PARIS AMBASSADORS ARE, IF ANYTHING, LESS FLEXIBLE THAN EVER. THUS WE FIND OURSELVES HELD IN SUSPENSION BETWEEN TWO FANATICAL FORCES WHO DO NOT APPEAR ABLE TO BRING THEMSELVES TO THE MINIMUM ESSENTIAL CONCESSIONS THAT ARE NECESSARY.

6.

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1972 SEP 18 PM 10 20

~~TOP SECRET~~ 132350Z SEP 72 SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES  
ONLY VIA BUNKER CHANNELS  
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER  
TO : AMBASSADOR BUNKER, SAIGON  
CITE: WKS2165

SECTION ONE OF TWO

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12356, Sect. 3.4  
NSC 9/23/93 F9301194  
By MMO NARA, Date 9/30/93

SA99

SUBJECT: MY SEPTEMBER 15 MEETING WITH THE NORTH VIETNAMESE

REF: SAIGON 0161 AND PREVIOUS

1. YOU SHOULD GIVE THIEU A FULLER RUNDOWN OF OUR SEPTEMBER 15 MEETING WITH THE NORTH VIETNAMESE, AS WELL AS PLANS FOR THE NEXT MEETING, ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES.



2. I ALSO CAME DOWN HARD ON THE NORTH VIETNAMESE RECENT HANDLING OF POW RELEASES AND THEIR RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE PRG STATEMENT OF SEPTEMBER 11.

*BP*

~~TOP SECRET SENSITIVE~~

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