

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

NSC/Soubers to Smith 09/04/2002

By lrc Date 06/27/07

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

~~SECRET - GDS~~

March 23, 1974

National Security Decision Memorandum 249

TO:                   The Secretary of Defense  
                      The Director of Central Intelligence  
                      The Deputy Secretary of State

SUBJECT:             U. S. Deployments in Thailand

The President has reviewed the studies submitted in response to NSSM 171, related studies, and the views of the concerned Departments and Agencies. He has directed that the following actions be taken:

The Secretary of Defense should:

- Withdraw unessential non-strike aircraft (EC-121's and C-130's) by June 1, 1974.
- Withdraw US combat forces between May 15 and December 31, 1974, to a residual level of nine tactical air squadrons, one AC-130 gunship squadron and 17 B-52's, as outlined in the plan presented by the Secretary of Defense. These withdrawals should be spaced over the period in question, with the precise timing of the withdrawals to be determined in consultation with the Thai Government.
- Reduce MACTHAI/JUSMAGTHAI and U.S. Army Support Command manpower by 30 percent by August 31, 1974, consolidate headquarters wherever possible and eliminate all unessential headquarters and support units.

The Deputy Secretary of State should:

- Immediately initiate consultations with the Royal Thai Government on the foregoing withdrawal plans, on means of reducing the economic dislocation caused by these withdrawals, and on securing re-entry rights.

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The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Deputy Secretary of State, should prepare and submit for the President's consideration no later than May 1, 1974, recommendations as to equipment and facilities associated with US forces in Thailand that can be made available for turnover to the Thai as US forces are withdrawn.

The Secretary of Defense should also prepare and submit for the President's consideration no later than May 1, 1974, alternative plans and recommendations on the transfer of EC-47 aircraft to either South Vietnam or Thailand or some combination of the two.

The Secretary of Defense in coordination with the Director of Central Intelligence and the Deputy Secretary of State should submit recommendations on alternative long term (FY 76 and beyond) US military force levels in Thailand and proposed withdrawal plans to support each of the alternatives. These recommendations should be submitted not later than June 30, 1974, for consideration by the NSC Senior Review Group.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. A. Kissinger". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Director, Office of Management and Budget  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff