

State Department
review completed

TOP SECRET

EXCLUSIVE

EYES ONLY

Flash

OCT 22 11 08 53

T O P S E C R E T 222050Z OCT 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER SAIGON 2225 FLASH

TO: WHITE HOUSE, GENERAL HAIG

HAK TO 45

REFERENCE: TOHAK 84

1. WITH REFERENCE TO TOHAK 84, I HOPE YOU ARE NOT BRIEFING THE PRESIDENT ALONG THOSE LINES AND THAT YOU LET HIM READ MY CABLES.

2. CAN YOU FIND ONE CABLE WHERE I RECOMMEND AN OPEN PUBLIC BREAK WITH THIEU? ON THE CONTRARY, ALL MY ADVISE HAS BEEN IN PRECISELY THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION; AND SOME OF YOUR OWN RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD HAVE PUT THE FOCUS ON THIEU.

3. AS FOR YOUR CHARACTERIZATION OF THE CONTENT OF THE AGREEMENT I WOULD LIKE TO RECALL YOUR VIEW THAT IT WAS A GOOD AGREEMENT WHEN WE CONCLUDED IT. IT HAS SINCE BEEN GREATLY IMPROVED WITH RESPECT TO CAMBODIA, LAOS, THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, AMERICAN PRISONERS, SOUTH VIETNAMESE PRISONERS AND THE REPLACEMENT PROVISION. AS FOR ASKING THIEU TO GIVE UP SOVEREIGNTY OVER HIS TERRITORY JUST WHAT HAS A CEASEFIRE ALWAYS ADDED UP TO? WE PROPOSED THIS WAY BACK IN OCTOBER 1970 AND AGAIN IN JANUARY 1972 AND MAY 1972. WHAT ELSE WERE THESE PLANS GOING TO LEAD TO EXCEPT PRECISELY THE SITUATION WE NOW HAVE? I MAKE THESE POINTS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT MY VIEWS ARE BEING PRESENTED IN THE PROPER LIGHT TO THE PRESIDENT. THEY ARE CERTAINLY NOT CONTAINED IN TOHAK 84.

4. AS FOR THE SECURITY SITUATION I JUST DO NOT RECOGNIZE YOUR CHARACTERIZATION THAT HANOI WOULD GET AN IMPROVED DE FACTO SECURITY SITUATION BACKED UP BY DIVISIONS FROM THE NORTH. AS I HAVE TOLD YOU, I HAVE MET WITH ALL REGIONAL ADVISORS, THE DIRECTOR OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE ETC. AND THE PICTURE THEY PRESENT IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT. GENERAL MINH ESTIMATES THAT THERE ARE 8,000 NORTH VIETNAMESE IN MR3. NO BATTALION HAS A STRENGTH OVER 150. A SURVEY THIS WEEK SHOWED EXACTLY 2 HAMLETS UNDER VIETCONG CONTROL IN MR3. I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT TO FREEZE THE SITUATION WITH A PROHIBITION AGAINST REINFORCEMENT WAS AS CLOSE TO A MILITARY AS WELL AS A POLITICAL DEFEAT FOR THE DRV. IF ANOTHER INFILTRATION PUSH STARTS WE MAY BE WORSE OFF NEXT YEAR. MANY WARS HAVE BEEN LOST BY UNTOWARD TIMIDITY. BUT ENORMOUS TRAGEDIES HAVE ALSO BEEN PRODUCED BY THE INABILITY OF MILITARY PEOPLE TO RECOGNIZE WHEN THE TIME FOR A SETTLEMENT HAD ARRIVED.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS
APPLY

5. WITH RESPECT TO BOMBING RESTRICTIONS, ALL YOUR ARGUMENTS ARE IN THE MISLEADING CONTEXT OF A UNILATERAL AMERICAN MOVE ALONG THE LINES OF 1968. PLEASE PUT THE FOLLOWING ARGUMENTS BEFORE THE PRESIDENT AS WELL AS THE RATIONALE I HAVE ALREADY PRESENTED.

THE ARGUMENT FOR A BOMBING RESTRICTION IS NOT SOFT-HEADEDNESS BUT TO SALVAGE WHAT CAN BE SALVAGED AND GIVE US THE TIME WE NEED. WE ARE DEALING WITH AN ENEMY WHO HAS MADE EVERY CONCESSION WE HAVE DEMANDED OF HIM WITHIN THE LAST TWO WEEKS, ACCEPTING OUR VERBATIM TEXT ON FIVE MAJOR ITEMS WITHIN 24 HOURS. WE HAVE JUST SENT HIM TWO PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES TO THE EFFECT THAT OUR ESSENTIAL TERMS HAD BEEN MET AND WE HAD A COMPLETE AGREEMENT. TO MAINTAIN THE POSITION THAT TO RESTRICT OUR BOMBING WHILE WE RENEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT IS THE SORT OF MOCK TOUGHNESS THAT IF THEY GO BACK TO PROTRACTED WARFARE WOULD DESTROY THE WHOLE BASIS OF OUR PUBLIC SUPPORT.

WE MUST INSTITUTE A RESTRICTION AT LEAST AT THE 20TH PARALLEL - THOUGH I DOUBT THAT IS ENOUGH - UNTIL I CAN RETURN TO TALK TO THE PRESIDENT. WE CAN OF COURSE LIFT THE RESTRICTION IF THE OTHER SIDE DIGS IN AGAIN BUT IF YOUR THEORY IS FOLLOWED WE WILL BLOW WHATEVER CHANCE THERE IS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE RESTRAINT.

6. SO I COUNT ON THE INSTITUTION OF A 20TH PARALLEL RESTRICTION WHICH HAS BEEN AFFIRMED IN A PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE. AND I COUNT ON ITS BEING MAINTAINED AT LEAST UNTIL I RETURN TO WASHINGTON. IT IS NOT TOTALLY PREPOSTEROUS TO SUGGEST A PROCESS BY WHICH HANOI DOES NOT GET HIT EXCESSIVELY FOR GIVING US THE TIME WE NEED AT THIS POINT. NOTHING IN THE RECORD SO FAR WOULD TEND TO STRENGTHEN THE MODERATES IN HANOI. EVERYTHING WOULD TEND TO STRENGTHEN THOSE WHO ARGUE THAT EVERY DRV CONCESSION LEADS TO MORE U.S. DEMANDS, AND UNDER YOUR THEORY, MORE ESCALATION.

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND WHAT HAS GOTTEN US AS FAR AS WE HAVE, AND THAT WE CANNOT BREAK THE FRAMEWORK IN MOSCOW AND PEKING.

7. AGAIN I ASK THAT YOU MAKE SURE THAT THE PRESIDENT READS MY CABLES.

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TOP SECRET

EYES ONLY

State Department
review completed

~~TOP SECRET~~
EXCLUSIVE EYES ONLY

72 OCT 23 AM 12 4

T O P S E C R E T 230340Z OCT 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER CITE SAIGON 0223
TO: GENERAL HAIG, THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FLASH
HAKTO 043

1. MY TWO-HOUR FIFTEEN MINUTE SESSION WITH THIEU THIS MORNING SERVED TO EASE THE ATMOSPHERE AND SHOULD BUY US SOME WEEKS OF QUIET HERE. AFTER HIS INITIAL STATE OF CONTINUED AGITATION I SUCCEEDED IN CALMING HIM DOWN AND THE MEETING ENDED ON A VERY CIVILIZED NOTE.

2. I TOLD HIM THAT WE WOULD NOT MOVE AHEAD UNILATERALLY OR GO ON FINAL LEG. I EMPHASIZED, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT WE STOOD BY OUR POSITIONS; THE SETTLEMENT WAS SOUND AND THE BEST TERMS WE CAN GET; AND WE INTEND TO PURSUE IT, HOPEFULLY WITH HIS COOPERATION. I TOLD HIM THAT AT THE NEXT PRIVATE MEETING WITH THE NORTH VIETNAMESE I WOULD RAISE SOME OF HIS CONCERNS BUT I DID NOT BELIEVE THAT A MAJORITY OF THEM WERE OBTAINABLE. I POINTED OUT THAT DOMESTIC AND CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURES AGAINST US A FEW MONTHS FROM NOW WERE AN UNAVOIDABLE FACT OF LIFE. THIEU PROMISED TO THINK OVER THE SETTLEMENT AND CONVEIVABLY MAY DO SO, BUT GIVEN HIS TRACK RECORD WE SHOULD TAKE LITTLE COMFORT IN HIS PROMISE.

3. OUR JOB NOW IS TO KEEP BOTH HANOI AND SAIGON QUIET AND GET ON THE OFFENSIVE PUBLICLY WITH A CONFIDENT, POSITIVE POSTURE OF WORKING TOWARD AND NEARING AN AGREEMENT WITHOUT ELECTORAL CONSIDERATIONS INFLUENCING US.
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ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

1972 Oct 22

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State Department
review completed

EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

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LORD

T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE 221152Z OCT 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)
FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0220 IMMEDIATE
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR GENERAL HAIG
REF: HAKTO 32

1. TWO HOUR MEETING WITH THIEU, WHICH BEGAN AT 0800, WAS POST-
PONED FROM YESTERDAY AND FOLLOWED HIS EMOTIONAL TELEPHONE CALL
LAST NIGHT IN WHICH HE ACCUSED MEMBERS OF KISSINGER'S AND HAIG(S
STAFFS AND EMBASSY PERSONNEL OF LEAKING STATEMENTS CONCERNING
PEACE PROPOSALS TO POLITICAL PERSONALITIES HERE. MEETING BEGAN WITH
THIEU IN TENSE AND HIGHLY EMOTIONAL STATE. HE SPOKE IN VIETNAMESE
WITH NHA ACTING AS INTERPRETER. THE FRANKNESS OF THE DISCUSSION ON
BOTH SIDES, HOWEVER, BROUGHT THE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES MORE CLEARLY
INTO FOCUS AND THIEU'S ATTITUDE BECAME MORE RELAXED AS WE EXAMINED
THE ALTERNATIVES BEFORE US. WE BOTH LEFT WITH IMPRESSION WE HAD
FINALLY MADE A BREAKTHROUGH.

2. DR. KISSINGER BEGAN BY EXPRESSING HIS AMAZEMENT AT THIEU'S
TELEPHONE CALL THE PREVIOUS NIGHT, AND FACT THAT THIEU SHOULD HAVE
SUSPECTED THAT HE AND GENERAL HAIG HAD INCITED THEIR STAFFS TO UNDER-
MINE THIEU'S POSITION IN THE LIGHT OF THE SUPPORT WHICH THIEU HAD
BEEN GIVEN BY THE PRESIDENT, DR. KISSINGER AND GENERAL HAIG DESPITE
THE STRONGEST KIND OF BUREAUCRATIC, CONGRESSIONAL, AND PUBLIC OPPOSI-
TION. NEVER HAD HE, AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT, BEEN SUB-
JECTED TO SUCH TREATMENT AS HE HAD EXPERIENCED HERE IN THE LAST FOUR
DAYS - NOR AS INDEED THE AMBASSADOR HAD EXPERIENCED IN THE LAST MONTH.
WE BELIEVE THAT IN OUR SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT THIEU AND THE GVN
WE HAVE TOGETHER ACHIEVED GREAT SUCCESS. WE HAVE GONE TO GREAT
LENGTHS TO SECURE PLANES - TO IRAN, TO KOREA, TO ROC - AND WE ARE
PROVIDING ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF THE GVN
AND THIEU HIMSELF. OUR PURPOSE IS TO MAKE PEACE TOGETHER, TO
WORK OUT AN AGREEMENT TO THIS END AND TO DETERMINE A COMMON
STRATEGY.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

3. DR. KISSINGER READ THE MESSAGE WHICH HE HAD RECEIVED FROM THE PRESIDENT IN WHICH THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT AFTER CLOSE STUDY OF THE AGREEMENT HE BELIEVED IT WAS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF BOTH OF US TO ACCEPT IT; GAVE ASSURANCE OF HIS SUPPORT TO THIEU; WELCOMED A JOINT MEETING AFTER OUR ELECTIONS; AND SAID THAT HE BELIEVES THE CURRENT PROPOSAL OFFERS THE BEST CHANCE FOR PEACE AND THE OPPORTUNITY IN THE SPIRIT OF MIDWAY TO GO AHEAD TOGETHER.

4. DR. KISSINGER SAID HE HAD NOT READ THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE EARLIER IN ORDER TO AVOID THE APPEARANCE OF PRESSURING OR ARMTWISTING. WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT WE HAVE MOVED AT A SOMEWHAT ACCELERATED PACE, WE HAVE DONE SO TO AVOID HAVING HANOI PRESENT A PLAN WHICH WE WOULD HAVE BEEN FORCED TO ACCEPT. THE IDEA THAT WE WOULD COME HERE TO UNDERMINE THIEU OR THE GVN IS SIMPLY BEYOND COMPREHENSION.

DR. KISSINGER HAD AGREED TO THE SCHEDULE WHICH HE HAD MENTIONED TO PRESIDENT THIEU AT THE FIRST MEETING A

D TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS

IN HANOI BECAUSE HE BELIEVED IT WOULD INDUCE HANOI TO MAKE CONCESSIONS. THIS HAD, IN FACT, OCCURRED. HANOI'S INTERVIEW WITH DE BORCHGRAVE WAS ADMITTEDLY A BREACH OF CONFIDENCE AND THE FACT IS THAT WE HAVE NO MORE TRUST IN THE COMMUNISTS THAN THIEU. AS A RESULT OF DEVELOPMENTS HERE AND IN HANOI, HOWEVER, DR. KISSINGER HAS CANCELLED HIS EARLIER APPOINTMENT. WE NOW FACE TWO ALTERNATIVES;

A) WE CAN WORK DURING THE NEXT TWO DAYS ON CHANGES WHICH SEEM PRACTICABLE; IN THIS CASE HE WOULD SEND A MESSAGE TO

HANOI POINTING OUT THAT SOME CHANGES ARE NEEDED, OR

B) HE CAN RETURN TO WASHINGTON IN WHICH CASE HANOI WILL UNDOUBTEDLY PUBLISH THE FULL PLAN.

WE CAN DELAY MATTERS BY ATTRIBUTING OUR DELAY TO TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WHICH STILL REQUIRE TO BE WORKED OUT, BUT THE MAIN PROBLEM THIS POSES IS THAT A SETTLEMENT WHICH CAN NOW BE CLAIMED AS A VICTORY WILL THEN BE DISTORTED AS HAVING BEEN DRAGGED OUT OF US.

5. PRESIDENT THIEU RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT LAST NIGHT WHEN HE TELEPHONED, HE WAS HOLDING A CABINET MEETING TO ISSUE PROMPT DIRECTIVES TO COPE WITH THE FLAGRANT ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMUNISTS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. THE COMMUNISTS KNEW OF THE AGREEMENT AND SOME MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION WERE SPREADING RUMORS AND LEAKING SOME ESSENTIAL POINTS ABOUT IT. HE HAD CONFIDENCE IN THE ACCURACY OF HIS INTELLIGENCE. THE INTERVIEW BY DE BORCHGRAVE WAS PROOF THAT HANOI DID NOT RESPECT THEIR AGREEMENT WITH US, AND WERE IN FACT PAVING THE WAY FOR A COUP OR AN OFFENSIVE IMMEDIATELY AFTER A CEASE-FIRE. SOME AMERICANS HERE MIGHT BE ACTING FOR THEIR OWN MOTIVES OR PERHAPS HAD BEEN BOUGHT OFF.

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

EXCLUDED FROM ONLY

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T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE 221152Z OCT 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)
SECTION TWO OF THREE
FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0220 IMMEDIATE
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR GENERAL HAIG
REF: HAKTO 32

6. HE (THIEU) HAD APPOINTED A TASK FORCE TO PRESENT THE GVN SUGGESTIONS TO US. SUBSEQUENTLY THE VICE PRESIDENT HAD CONVENED THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL TO STUDY THE POINTS PRESENTED BY THE TASK FORCE AND OUR RESPONSE TO THEM AT THE MORNING SESSION. TODAY THIEU PLANS TO CONVENE THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL TO HEAR A COMPLETE REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE PROPOSALS.

7. TO DR. KISSINGER'S QUERY AS TO WHICH COURSE THIEU BELIEVED WE SHOULD PURSUE, THE LATTER SAID HE WOULD ANSWER IN A DIRECT, FRANK MANNER. HE DOES NOT KNOW THE NEEDS OF THE UNITED STATES OR THE FACTS OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS OR CHINA, NOR DOES HE KNOW ALL THAT WENT ON IN PARIS. HE IS UNDERSTANDING OF OUR PROBLEMS BUT THERE ARE TWO THINGS WHICH THE GVN AND THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM CANNOT ACCEPT: 1) THE PRESENCE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN SOUTH VIET-NAM. THEY WILL BE CONSIDERED A TROJAN HORSE AVAILABLE FOR MILITARY AND POLITICAL ACTION AGAINST THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, AND 2) WHILE UNDER THE PROPOSED AGREEMENT IT CAN BE SAID THAT INTERNAL POLITICAL MATTERS ARE LEFT TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND THE GVN CAN AGREE TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD, IT CANNOT AGREE TO A COMPOSITION OF THREE EQUAL SEGMENTS. IF HANOI CHOOSES TO PUBLISH THESE PROPOSALS, EVERYONE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM, EXCEPT A SMALL MINORITY, WILL OPPOSE THEM - BUT THE MINORITY WILL BE ELIMINATED.

8. THE ISSUE IS THE LIFE AND DEATH OF SOUTH VIET-NAM AND ITS 17 MILLION PEOPLE; IN THE U.S., THE ISSUE IS TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT THIEU OR TO ABANDON HIM. WE SHOULD NOT PAY ATTENTION TO HIS OWN PERSONAL POSITION, BUT HE DOES NOT KNOW HOW HE CAN ACCEPT THESE TWO POINTS AS THEY STAND. HE MUST ABIDE BY THE CONSTITUTION; IF HE ACCEPTS THE TWO POINTS HE IS SURE THE PEOPLE WILL NOT ACCEPT THEM.

9. DR. KISSINGER POINTED OUT THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES HAVE BEEN GREATLY REDUCED IN NUMBER, CAN EASILY BE DEALT WITH BY THE NUMERICALLY VASTLY SUPERIOR GVN FORCES WHICH OUTNUMBER THE ENEMY BY AT LEAST A RATIO OF 11 TO 2, THAT INFILTRATION IS PROHIBITED AND THAT THE ENEMY FORCES WILL BE REDUCED BY ATTRITION. MOREOVER, PHAM VAN DONG HIMSELF HAS REFERRED TO THE NCRC AS AN "ELECTORAL COMMISSION" AND IT SHOULD BE TREATED WITH IRRELEVANCY. DR. KISSINGER SAID THAT WE ARE CONSCIOUS OF THIEU'S GREAT PATRIOTISM AND ARE COMMITTED TO THE PRESERVATION OF HIS PRESIDENCY. THE ATTRACTION OF THE PROPOSED AGREEMENT IS THAT IT WILL DO THIS WHEREAS WE ARE NOW FEARFUL THAT HE IS EMBARKED ON A COURSE WHICH LEADS TO GREAT DANGER.

10. WE HAVE OBTAINED CONCESSION FROM HANOI WHICH WE HAD HERETOFORE BELIEVED IMPOSSIBLE. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY HAVE ACCEPTED OUR PROPOSALS ON CAMBODIA, INCLUDING WITHDRAWAL; THIEU'S RESIGNATION HAS BEEN SUPERCEDED BY THE PRESENT AGREEMENT; OUR DRAFT CONCERNING PRISONERS IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA HAS BEEN ACCEPTED; AND WE BELIEVE THERE IS A 50-50 CHANCE THAT THEY WILL ACCEPT A CHANGE IN THE TRIPARTITE COMPOSITION OF THE NCRC. THE TRAGEDY WE NOW FACE, HOWEVER, IS THE FACT THAT IF THE PLAN BECOMES PUBLIC, CONGRESS WILL CERTAINLY CUT OFF AID. WE ARE ALREADY \$4 BILLION AND BY JANUARY WILL BE \$6 BILLION IN THE HOLE BECAUSE OF ADDED COSTS OF THE WAR. WE BELIEVE THAT IF WE PRESENT THIS PROPOSAL AS A VICTORY WE CAN PREVAIL; IF NOT ALL THAT WE HAVE STRIVEN FOR WILL BE LOST.

11. DR. KISSINGER RECEIVED AT THIS POINT TEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER (WHICH HE READ TO PRESIDENT THIEU) IN WHICH THE PRESIDENT URGED THIEU TO GIVE HIS MOST CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO OUR PROPOSALS - THAT REJECTION WOULD HAVE THE MOST SERIOUS EFFECT ON THE PRESIDENT'S ABILITY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT.

12. THIEU ASKED ABOUT THE REPLACEMENT OF WEAPONS. DR. KISSINGER POINTED OUT THAT IN ARTICLE 7 "EQUALITY" HAD BEEN REJECTED BY US AND THAT WE HAD ALSO DELETED "FOR PURPOSES OF PEACE". BOTH OF THESE CHANGES HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE OTHER SIDE. HANOI HAD ALSO DROPPED THEIR POSITION ON THE RELEASE OF ALL CIVILIAN PRISONERS; DROPPED THE PROVISION FOR FORMATION OF THE NCRC IN 15 DAYS, AND FOR THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS IN SIX MONTHS.

13. WE ARE TAKING OTHER MEASURES TO BACK UP THE GVN, SUCH AS KEEPING OUR ENTIRE AIR FORCE IN THAILAND AND PROPOSE DESTRUCTION OF THE CHUP PLANTATION IN ORDER TO DESTROY THE ENEMY'S BASE AREA; AND TO SPEED UP OUR EXPENDITURES IN LAOS.

WE NHTHNDWDRG

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

IT O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE 221152Z OCT 72 (VIA CASE CHANGED) (BUNKER)
SECTION T

OF THREE J

FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0220 IMMEDIATE
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR GENERAL HAIG
REF: HAKTO 32

14. DR. KISSINGER REITERATED THAT WE WANT TO PRESERVE HIM (THIEU) BECAUSE WE THINK HE IS ESSENTIAL TO THE FUTURE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM. THE CONTRADICTION WE NOW FACE IS THAT THE NORTH HAS LOST THE WAR AND ACTS AS IF IT HAS WON, WHILE THE SOUTH HAS WON THE WAR AND ACTS AS IF IT HAS LOST. WE MUST GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE DOMINATING EVENTS; THAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED POLITICALLY OUR JANUARY 25 PROPOSALS AND MILITARILY OUR MAY 8 PROPOSALS.

15. THIEU REPLIED THAT HE HAD CONSIDERED ALL THAT DR. KISSINGER HAD SAID AND WILL NOW HAVE TO REPORT TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL. HE CANNOT GIVE A DEFINITE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT STRATEGY DR. KISSINGER SHOULD PURSUE BECAUSE HE DOES NOT KNOW ALL U.S. INTERESTS - THIS HE MUST LEAVE TO PRESIDENT NIXON.

16. IN VIET-NAM THE TIMING OF A CEASE-FIRE IS NOT AS IMPORTANT AS ITS TERMS. IF THERE IS NO PROVISION CONCERNING WITHDRAWAL OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS, THIEU SAID THAT HE COULD SIGN THE AGREEMENT AND THEN ATTEMPT TO FORCE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE MILITARY TO ACCEPT IT. HE COULD NOT, HOWEVER, SIGN WITHOUT NOTIFYING THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE MILITARY. UNDER THE GVN CONSTITUTION THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MUST AGREE TO ANY PEACE SETTLEMENT. HE DOES NOT KNOW JUST HOW TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

17. DR. KISSINGER RESPONDED THAT HE IS CONVINCED THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF DOING ANYTHING ABOUT THE WITHDRAWAL OF NVN FORCES. THIEU, HOWEVER, CAN GIVE THE PROVISION (9 H) A UNILATERAL INTERPRETATION STATING THAT THE GVN RESERVES ITS RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES. HE BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THERE IS A 50-50 CHANCE OF GETTING AGREEMENT ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE CNRC. DR. KISSINGER SAID THAT HE WOULD NOW SEND A MESSAGE TO HANOI SAYING HE IS IN PHNOM PENH AND CANNOT GIVE AN ANSWER REGARDING HIS ARRIVAL THERE. THIS WILL PROVIDE 12 HOURS GRACE. DR. KISSINGER REPEATED THAT IF HE DOES GO TO HANOI IT WILL BE WITH A MINIMUM OF PUBLICITY; HE WILL MEET WITH NO ONE EXCEPT LEADERS AND THIEU SHOULD ANNOUNCE THAT HE HAS GONE WITH THIEU'S CONCURRENCE. WE SHOULD ALSO ISSUE A STATEMENT TO THE PRESS SAYING THERE IS NO DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN US.

18. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF HE RETURNS TO WASHINGTON HE WILL HAVE TO SPEND ALL HIS TIME EXPLAINING WHY WE HAVE REJECTED THE AGREEMENT. IN THE MEANTIME, ALL OF THE ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT WE HAVE PROMISED IS MOVING. IN ANNOUNCING OUR AGREEMENT TO THE PEACE PROPOSAL, WE WOULD SAY AGAIN THAT WE RECOGNIZE ONLY THE GVN AS THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH VIET-NAM, OUR SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT THIEU, AND THAT PRESIDENT NIXON HAS INVITED HIM TO MEET WITH HIM AFTER OUR ELECTIONS. PRESIDENT THIEU CAN DECLARE THE CEASE-FIRE SUBJECT TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY RATIFICATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF DR. KISSINGER RETURNS TO WASHINGTON AND WE ATTEMPT A HOLDING ACTION, IT CAN BE FOR THREE WEEKS AT THE MOST AND WE WOULD THEN FACE A WORSE SITUATION.

19. THIEU REPLIED THAT HE HAS BEEN TRYING TO AVOID THE KIND OF SITUATION THAT WE RAN INTO IN 1.68. HE HAS CONVENED MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND POLITICIANS TO INFORM THEM OF DEVELOPMENTS IN ORDER TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION. HE HAS BEEN ASKED PROVOCATIVE QUESTIONS WHICH HE HAS AVOIDED ANSWERING AND HOPES THAT WE CAN HAVE SOME INFLUENCE ON THE FOREIGN PRESS. DR. KISSINGER REITERATED THAT NONE OF US HAVE TALKED TO THE FOREIGN PRESS, THAT THE PRESS IS VIOLENTLY OPPOSED TO PRESIDENT NIXON AND TO PRESIDENT THIEU, THAT THE AMERICAN PRESS HAS A VESTED INTEREST IN DEFEAT IN VIET-NAM. ONE REASON WE WANT AN AGREEMENT IS TO CONFOUND THE ATTITUDE OF THE PRESS AND LIBERAL OPINION IN THE U.S.

20. THIEU THEN SAID WE WOULD MEET AGAIN AT 1700 THIS AFTERNOON. THERE IS LITTLE QUESTION THAT THIEU IS MORE KEENLY AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF A CONFRONTATION WITH US AND THAT A MEETING OF THE MINDS IS ESSENTIAL. WE BOTH LEFT THE MEETING MORE ENCOURAGED THAT THIEU WILL BE TRYING TO FIND A WAY THROUGH HIS PROBLEMS.

21. I KNOW THAT THERE HAS BEEN CONCERN ABOUT THE ENEMY'S INTENTIONS TO MOUNT A HIGH POINT DURING OCTOBER. THERE IS, HOWEVER, A LARGE GAP BETWEEN THE ENEMY'S INTENTIONS AND HIS PRESENT CAPABILITIES. WE HAVE REVIEWED THE SITUATION COUNTRYWIDE WITH EACH OF THE OSA REGIONAL CHIEFS AND WITH OSA DIRECTOR. WE HAVE ALSO REVIEWED THE SITUATION WITH GENERAL WEYAND. OUR CONCLUSION IS THAT DESPITE COMMUNIST INSTRUCTIONS AND EFFORTS BY THE ENEMY TO CARRY OUT THESE INSTRUCTIONS, HE HAS BEEN UNABLE TO DO SO EFFECTIVELY AND HAS SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES IN THE EFFORT.

22. WARM REGARDS.

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

EXCLUSIVE EYES ONLY

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

ONLY

72 OCT 22 1972 001 221 PM 2 33

HAIG
HOWE
LORD

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

T O P S E C R E T S E N S I T I V E 221620Z OCT 72 VIA CAON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS
FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY APPLY

SECTION 1 OF 2

FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0223 FLASH

TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR GENERAL HAIG

1. DR. KISSINGER MET WITH THIEU AT 1700 THIS AFTERNOON MN HIS RETURN FROM PHNOM PENH. HE REPORTED THAT LON NOL'S REACTION TO OUR PROPOSAL, LIKE SOUVANNA AND THANOM, HAD BEEN EXTREMELY FAVORABLE.

2. DR. KISSINGER THEN SAID HE HAD BEEN WONDERING HOW TO DEAL WITH THE TWO ISSUES WHICH PRESIDENT THIEU HAD RAISED THIS MORNING. IN WASHINGTON WE HAVE HAD ANOTHER APPROACH FROM THE SOVIETS INDICATING THEIR NERVOUSNESS AND THEIR ANXIETY TO MOVE ALONG IN THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT. DR. KISSINGER SAID HE WAS CONTEMPLATING INFORMING HANOI THAT HE WOULD ARRIVE WEDNESDAY INSTEAD OF TUESDAY AND WOULD BRING WITH HIM A NUMBER OF CHANGES.

I -- A FORMULA FOR THE NCRC WHICH GETS AWAY FROM THE State Department review completed

THREE-SEGMENT LANGUAGE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE TWO SIDES WILL DISCUSS WITH EACH OTHER AND AGREE ON COMPOSITION REPRESENTING ALL POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS TENDENCIES.

-- PROPOSE TO HANOI THAT SOME DIVISIONS BE PULLED OUT OF MR 1; WE WOULD RELY ON ARTICLE 7 OF THE AGREEMENT TO KEEP THEM FROM RETURNING.

-- HE WOULD ALSO SUGGEST THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WRITE TO BRESHNEV SAYING THAT DR. KISSINGER WAS GOING TO HANOI AS AN EVIDENCE OF OUR GOOD FAITH.

3. SHOULD DR. KISSINGER RETURN WITHOUT AN AGREEMENT DELAY FOR SOME PERIOD OF TIME COULD BE JUSTIFIED ALTHOUGH IN THE LONG RUN WE WOULD HAVE TO CAVE. DR. KISSINGER SAID HE WOULD PROPOSE TO FOLLOW THIS COURSE UNLESS PRESIDENT THIEU HAD SOMETHING DIFFERENT TO PROPOSE.

4. THIEU SAID THAT THE REACTIONS OF THE THAIS, LAOTIANS AND CAMBODIANS WERE PREDICTABLE. LAOS AND CAMBODIA BOTH HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THEY ARE NOT BEING ASKED TO SACRIFICE ANYTHING. THEY ACHIEVE BOTH CEASE-FIRE AND A WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN FORCES FROM THEIR TERRITORIES. THEREFORE, THEY ARE NOT BEING SACRIFICED BY THEIR ALLIES.

5. CONCERNING SOUTH VIET-NAM OUR POSITION IS VERY UNFORTUNATE. WE HAVE BEEN VERY FAITHFUL TO THE AMERICANS AND NOW FEEL THAT WE ARE BEING SACRIFICED. THE PROPOSED AGREEMENT IS WORSE THAN THE 1954 AGREEMENTS. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE U.S., SOVIETS AND CHINA HAVE AGREED THAT THERE ARE THREE COUNTRIES OF INDOCHINA; THAT VIET-NAM STRETCHES FROM THE CHINESE BORDER TO CA MAU. THE DISGUISED COALITION EMBODIED IN THE AGREEMENT WILL LEAD TO THE COLLAPSE OF THE GVN. THERE ARE TWO POINTS APPLIED IN THE AGREEMENT.

THEY WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN SOUTH VIET-NAM.

-- THE PRACTICAL ONE. SINCE THEY ARE THEY WILL NOT WITHDRAW.

6. THIEU SAID "I HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPECT THAT THE U.S. HAS CONNIVED WITH THE EOVIENTS AND CHINA. NOW THAT YOU RECOGNIZE THE PRESENCE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE HERE, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE WILL ASSUME THAT WE HAVE BEEN SOLD OUT BY THE U.S. AND THAT NORTH VIET-NAM HAS WON THE WAR."

7. FURTHERMORE - "I DO NOT RECALL WHETHER PRESIDENT JOHNSON OR PRESIDENT NIXON SAID IT" - IF NORTH VIET-NAM WANTS TO DENY ITS PRESENCE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND WITHDRAWS WITHOUT AN UNDERTAKING TO DO SO, WE CAN ACCEPT THAT AS WITHDRAWAL.

8. DR. KISSINGER SAID THE OTHER DAY THAT LE DUC THO HAD BURST INTO TEARS, BUT I CAN ASSURE HIM THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE ARE THE ONES WHO DESERVE TO CRY, AND THE MAN WHO SHOULD CRY IS I.

9. THERE ARE THREE PROBLEMS WHICH I DISCUSSED WITH THE NSC THIS MORNING, AND WE CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE WAS NO WAY OUT. THE THREE PROBLEMS ARE:

1) VIET-NAM WAS SEPARATED AS A RESULT OF THE 1954 AGREEMENTS, AND NOW IS THE TIME TO OFFICIALLY CONFIRM THAT THERE ARE TWO SEPARATE STATES PENDING REUNIFICATION AS RECOGNIZED BY THE 1954 AGREEMENTS; AND THAT THE DMZ DIVIDES THE STATES IN ORDER TO INSURE THAT NORTH VIET-NAM CANNOT VIOLATE SOUTH VIET-NAM.

2) THAT WE CANNOT ACCEPT THE PRESENCE OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY IN THE SOUTH. AS A SOLDIER, I HAVE BEEN FIGHTING COMMUNISM FOR 25 YEARS. AS A SOLDIER AND AS PRESIDENT, I CANNOT ACCEPT IT. THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE BROKEN DOWN THEIR FORCES INTO SMALL UNITS SO AS TO SOUTH VIETNAMIZE THEIR ARMY. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES IN SOUTH VIET-NAM NUMBER LESS THAN 300,000.

3) THE POLITICAL SOLUTION. I HAVE REAFFIRMED MY POSITION THAT A TRIPARTITE CNRC IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE.

10. IF THE PRESIDENT AND DR. KISSINGER THINK THEY CAN HELP US, WE WELCOME IT. BUT IF THE U.S. WANTS TO ABANDON THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, THAT IS THEIR RIGHT.

11. MY LAST COMMENTS CONCERN MY OWN PERSON. EVER SINCE THE U.S. ASKED ME TO RESIGN AND BARGAINED WITH ME ON THE TIME OF MY RESIGNATION, HAD I NOT BEEN A SOLDIER I WOULD HAVE RESIGNED, BECAUSE I SEE THAT THOSE WHOM I REGARD AS FRIENDS HAVE FAILED ME. HOWEVER GREAT THE PERSONAL HUMILIATION FOR ME I SHALL CONTINUE TO FIGHT. MY GREATEST SATISFACTION WILL BE WHEN I CAN SIGN A PEACE AGREEMENT. I HAVE NOT TOLD ANYONE THAT THE AMERICANS ASKED ME TO RESIGN, SINCE THEY WOULD SHARE MY HUMILIATION, BUT HAVE MADE IT APPEAR VOLUNTARY ON MY PART.

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12. DR. KISSINGER SAID, "I ADMIRE THE COURAGE, DEDICATION AND HEROISM WHICH HAVE CHARACTERIZED YOUR SPEECH. HOWEVER, AS AN AMERICAN, I CAN ONLY DEEPLY RESENT YOUR SUGGESTION THAT WE HAVE CONNIVED WITH THE SOVIETS AND THE CHINESE. HOW CAN YOU CONCEIVE THIS POSSIBLE WHEN THE PRESIDENT ON MAY 8 RISKED HIS WHOLE POLITICAL FUTURE TO COME TO YOUR ASSISTANCE. WHEN WE TALKED WITH THE SOVIETS AND CHINESE, IT WAS TO PRESSURE THEM TO EXERT PRESSURE ON HANOI. WE GENUINELY BELIEVED THAT THE PROPOSED AGREEMENT PRESERVED SOUTH VIET-NAM'S FREEDOM - OUR PRINCIPLES HAVE BEEN THE SAME AS YOURS AND WE HAVE DEFENDED THEM. YOU HAVE ONLY ONE PROBLEM. PRESIDENT NIXON HAS MANY. YOUR CONVICTION THAT WE HAVE UNDERMINED YOU WILL BE UNDERSTOOD BY NO AMERICAN, LEAST OF ALL BY PRESIDENT NIXON.

13. AS TO SPECIFICS: WE HAVE NOT RECOGNIZED THE RIGHT OF NORTH VIET-NAM TO BE IN THE SOUTH. WE HAVE USED THE LANGUAGE OF THE GENEVA ACCORDS, SINCE WE THOUGHT THIS THE BEST WAY TO WORK OUT A PRACTICAL SOLUTION. HAD WE WANTED TO SELL YOU OUT, THERE HAVE BEEN MANY EASIER WAYS BY WHICH WE COULD HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THIS. WE DO NOT REGARD THE AGREEMENT AS EMBODYING A COALITION GOVERNMENT, BUT AS A MAJOR COMMUNIST DEFEAT.

14. WITH RESPECT TO THE DMZ WE MAY BE ABLE TO ADD ANOTHER SENTENCE WHICH WOULD CLARIFY THIS POINT.

15. WE ARE FACED WITH A PRACTICAL PROBLEM. CONCERNING THE IMMEDIATE SITUATION, IT IS IMPERATIVE NOT TO HAVE A CONFRONTATION. SHOULD THE U.S. WITHDRAW, IT WILL AFFECT ALL OF YOUR NEIGHBORS.

16. THE LONGER TERM PROBLEM IS WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR RELATIONSHIP? I DO NOT SEE HOW THE U.S. CAN JUSTIFY TO THE CONGRESS WHAT IT IS WE ARE FIGHTING FOR. WE HAVE NOT DESTROYED YOUR GOVERNMENT; WE HAVE OBTAINED BETTER TERMS THAN ANY AMERICAN WOULD HAVE BELIEVED POSSIBLE. CONCERNING YOUR RESIGNATION, WE THINK THAT THE JANUARY 25 SPEECH GOT US THROUGH THIS CONGRESSIONAL PERIOD AND ENABLED US TO GET APPROPRIATIONS IN AN ELECTION YEAR. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WHO RISKED THE SUMMIT MEETING WITH THE SOVIETS COULD CONCEIVABLY UNDERMINE YOU. IT IS CLEAR NOW THAT WE CANNOT CONTINUE WITH THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS. I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW HOW YOU VIEW THAT WE SHOULD PROCEED FROM HERE.

17. PRESIDENT THIEU SAID THAT DESPITE ALL THAT HAS HAPPENED, I WISH TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO PRESIDENT NIXON FOR ALL THAT HE HAS DONE FOR SOUTH VIET-NAM. I KNOW THAT HE HAS TO ACT IN HIS OWN INTERESTS AND THE INTERESTS OF HIS PEOPLE. I ALSO HAVE TO ACT IN THE INTERESTS OF MY PEOPLE. I HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF ORGANIZED SLANDER IN THE U.S. PRESS AND PICTURED AS AN OBSTRUCTION TO PEACE. AS FOR ME, MY OBLIGATION IS TO DEFEND MY COUNTRY. I RECALL THAT THE U.S. ASKED ME TO HELP CAMBODIA; NOW WE FIND THAT WE HAVE TO BE SACRIFICED.

18. THE U.S. HAS BEEN NEGOTIATING ON OUR BEHALF. IF YOU NOW TELL NORTH VIET-NAM THAT THEY HAVE TO TALK TO US, THAT WILL BE VERY GOOD. RECENTLY THE PRG HAS WANTED TO NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY WITH THE U.S. AND PHAM VAN DONG HAS SPOKEN OF US AND OF ME IN VERY DEROGATORY TERMS. THIS HAS BEEN A GREAT HUMILIATION. IF I CAN NEGOTIATE WITH NORTH VIET-NAM, I WILL DO SO IN THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION.

19. DR. KISSINGER SAID THAT HE MUST RETURN TO WASHINGTON AND MUST TRY TO FIND SOME WAY TO PREVENT PUBLICATION OF THE PROPOSALS. HE ASKED TO SEE THIEU BRIEFLY BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE AND SAID THAT HE CONSIDERED THIEU'S PRESENT COURSE SUICIDAL FOR HIM AND FOR HIS COUNTRY. "WE HAVE FOUGHT FOR FOUR YEARS, HAVE MORTGAGED OUR WHOLE FOREIGN POLICY TO THE DEFENSE OF ONE COUNTRY. WHAT YOU HAVE SAID HAS BEEN A VERY BITTER THING TO HEAR". DR. KISSINGER SAID HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE PROPOSAL WOULD HAVE ACHIEVED OUR MUTUAL OBJECTIVES. HAD THIEU SPOKEN OPENLY IN THE BEGINNING, WE COULD HAVE SPENT THE PAST FOUR DAYS IN MAKING PLANS ON HOW TO PROCEED; NOW WE ARE TOTALLY ON THE DEFENSIVE, A SITUATION DOING ENORMOUS DAMAGE TO US WITHOUT BENEFIT TO YOURSELF. HAD I KNOWN OF THIS ATTITUDE, I WOULD NOT HAVE SENT EMISSARIES TO THE OTHER COUNTRIES.

20. THE QUESTION NOW IS WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE, FOR YOU MUST NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS IS A MATTER THAT CAN BE EASILY REPAIRED. THIEU SAID THAT ON THE QUESTION OF THE TIME SPENT HERE IN SAIGON, HE WOULD LIKE TO ASK HOW MANY MONTHS DR. KISSINGER HAS SPENT ON THIS AGREEMENT. AFTER HAVING BEEN PRESENTED WITH THE DOCUMENT IN A GENERAL MANNER, AND AFTER HAVING DISCOVERED THE TRICKS OF THE COMMUNISTS, IT IS NOT CONCEIVABLE THAT THE GVN CAN BE ACCUSED OF FAILURE.

21. "PERHAPS WE HAVE TWO DIFFERENT CONCEPTS. LET ME ASK YOU, IF YOU WERE A VIETNAMESE, WOULD YOU ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN RESTORED IN THE AGREEMENT IN A CLEAR MANNER? WOULD YOU ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE CAN HAVE 200,000 TO 300,000 TROOPS IN THE SOUTH AND CAN YOU ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE CNRC SHOULD BE COMPOSED OF THREE SEGMENTS? REGARDING THE ACCUSATION THAT I AM SABOTAGING THE COUNTRIES IN THIS AREA, IF I WERE KOREA AND THAILAND OR LAOS AND CAMBODIA, I WOULD ASK FOR NOTHING MORE THAN THEY ARE SECURING. BUT IF WE ACCEPT THE DOCUMENT AS IT STANDS, WE WILL COMMIT SUICIDE - AND I WILL BE COMMITTING SUICIDE."

22. THIEU SAID THAT HE WOULD BE FREE TOMORROW UNTIL 1000 HOURS. WE AGREED TO MEET AT 0800.

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